

## 2 GEORGIANS HELP HOLD TINY POST IN NEW GUINEA

Two Georgians—one from Atlanta and another from Winder—along with several other Southerners, are serving their country in an isolated settlement which is the last foothold in the Dutch East Indies still in Allied hands, the following dispatch from the Southwest Pa-

By GEORGE WELLER

Special Dispatch to The Atlanta Journal and the Chicago Daily News. Copyright

SOMEWHERE IN NEW GUINEA, June 2.—(Delayed.)—Merauke, the last foothold of the Dutch Indies, is a mosquito-clouded little settlement on the eastern bank of the Digoel River. After photographing it carefully in order to make sure no risk of fighter interception was involved and being convinced that no aircraft existed in its endless swamps, the Japs dropped scores of bombs therein, nearly hitting Americans

who have stuck beside the Dutch holding Merauke for more than 10 months.

It is not downhearted. That is because there are still Dutchmen around like Captain William Aernout, who, in Java, holds the record for saving castaways—79 in a single Dornier—and was twice shot down. Aernout is growing a black beard now, but otherwise he is still the same hot pilot who brought his wife with him from Bandoeng in Java in a crippled Catalina.

Or, taking another Dutchman



LT. GLENN BIRD OF ATLANTA Helping to Hold New Guinea Post

at random from those few who escaped from the Indies and got out their loved ones first, there is tall, thin, affable Lieut. Colonel Dick Van Den Berge, whose wife lives in Brooklyn, N. Y. Stationed here in this tiny fragment of unconquered Holland, Van Den Berge goes nights to the American camp to listen to shortwaves from New York and imagine his wife nearby.

You find Americans everywhere in the world today. But remembering those Texas artillerymen whom we left fighting the Japs on the outskirts of Batavia, it is good to see that others have come to take their places and that, like Holland, the United States has never been fully driven from the Netherlands East Indies.

Captain John D. Sides, of Birmingham, Ala., a Howard College graduate, with a solid, rather Dutch face and thinnish brown hair, tells you in his screen-meshed cottage that Tokyo now broadcasts programs especially "for Americans in Dutch New Guinea."

"We've coined one of those names for ourselves like OWI and WPB. We're the first and original USAFIDNG. Guess you can figure out that one."

### Georgians in Unit

Blond Lieutenant Glenn Bird, of Atlanta, just grins when his Alabama friends, Lieutenants William Faber, of Montgomery; James McKenzie, of Eufaula, and Alabama Polytechnic graduate Sterling Chadwick, of Blecker, tell the story of what happened when the Japs again bombed Merauke.

The outfit's biggest cusser had always been a big, country-bred Georgian, William Segars, of Winder. He achieved records in expletives during his Pacific crossing. But when the Japs began hitting the Dutch, Bill raised his voice amid the flying dirt and yelled, "Now don't let's get blasphemous."

When the Americans first reached this bit of Holland on the Arafura Sea, the GI dogfacs had an easy time because the natives were eager to do their spadework and wash their laundry for two cigarettes daily. They are both Javanese and "Kiakia," or natives. When the bombs fell some fled, but most have returned and resumed the personal attachment which has now lasted happily for nearly a year.

### Fresh Beef

This outfit brought Merauke its first electric light, first telephone system, first ice cream and first auto vehicle. In the evening a 7-year-old boy, Piyang, plays the Victrola for Captain Sides for one hour in return for a handful of hard candy while mosquitoes poke their probosci through the screen.

And the USAFIDNG eats fresh meat, buying its own cream-colored Brahma steers at \$25 each, which Sergeant John Teal, of Clanton, Ala., butchers. Pigs cost as much as cattle and the outfit's barbecue master is Corporal Hayes Wood, of Eufaula, Ala.

Smoke from the barbecue's burning palm log is one of the few things that Merauke's mosquitos cannot quite master.

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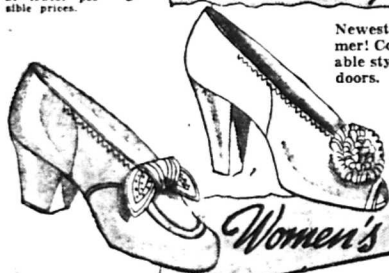
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