

in Germany in the black market for a dollar Mickey Mouse watch. The seller in turn converts the Russian occupation marks into American funds, sending the money home in the form of a Money Order. Accordingly the American taxpayer is out \$500 and also a watch, which goes back to Russia. We afterward saw black market performances going on in the Tiergarten in Berlin.

Later in the day I met our INS reporter, Jim Kilgallen, who had just come from Berlin; I also talked to Mme. Corsant about buying some lingerie to take home. Was informed that the price of slips was 8,000 francs or \$160.

From Paris to Reims

Tuesday, July 31

Left the hotel early by motor car on a beautiful ride to Reims. Passed the American cemetery of the past war . . . the British monument at Fleury where some 30,000 British soldiers are buried from the last war . . . through Chateau Thierry, where we saw the same bridge blown out in this war as it was in the last. German tiger tanks lay demolished all along the road going up to Chateau Thierry; and we saw pill-boxes that were relics from the first World War. Chateau Thierry was the same sleepy little village, full of American troops, it was in 1918, although it did not suffer in this war as in the last.

At Reims we were met by Major General Royal B. Lord, who commands the assembly area here. We lunched with him.

Reims is the re-deployment center to which American soldiers are shipped from all over Europe, preparatory to being sent home or via Marseilles to the Japanese theatre. There are some 18 camps, each with a capacity of 15,000 to 25,000 men, the area being about 100 miles long and 60 miles wide.

We inspected Camp Cleveland, one of the large camps. The boys all live in tents, and everything possible is done for them. We inspected the kitchens and the mess—saw tons of food—beef,

fresh eggs, bananas, oranges, ice cream. There are U.S.O. shows, motion picture theatres, boxing arenas, and Red Cross headquarters with the inevitable doughnuts and coffee. Parenthetically, the American Army is the best fed, best cared for group of men in the world. None of the boys lift a hand. Some 3,000 German prisoners of war do all the work while the boys play baseball, indulge in sports, read and loaf.

There is a special Post Office that wraps souvenirs for them to be sent home; hospitals, dentists, dental clinics, libraries—a huge city all under canvas filled with thousands of boys all griping and asking the eternal question, “When are we going to get home?” The Commanding Officer tells us that when the boys get into the camp, they will not even go on leave for fear that a call might come for them to be sent to a port for transport home. They all know, however, that they cannot stay here more than a few weeks at the most, as this is the first step toward being shipped.

The Commanding Officer of the camp, Col. O. P. Bragan, lives in a trailer. He is an Infantry Colonel who fought all the way across France—a real tough he-guy, every inch a soldier. These officers take great pride in showing you their installations, and well they should, for they are indeed a credit to our Army.

When you consider the engineering force that has built these tent cities that hold up to 30,000 men . . . installed sewerage systems, electricity, running water . . . and supplied the camps with all the conveniences humanly possible in a flat, dust-ridden area, you marvel at the efficiency of it all.

General Lord, an able, competent and young Major General, made a pertinent observation when he said, “I want these boys to spend their last month in Europe in as much ease and comfort as possible. They are a fine bunch of youngsters, they won a war, and we want to send them home with happy memories. Selfishly, as an Army officer, I realize we are going to be working for them in 6 months and we want their good will.”