

deal of damage, yet the airfield we were over had been completely bombed. The field looked as if it had undergone a severe case of smallpox. Two bridges were completely wrecked, one bridge looked as if it might be about half the span of our George Washington Bridge. The countryside was green and beautiful; every inch of land seems to be under cultivation and it looks as if the French peasant is going to eat.

Arrival at Paris

We arrived in Paris at 5:24 p.m. E.W.T., approximately 30 hours out of Washington, with 6 hours on the ground at scheduled stops, making our flying time 24 hours.

Deplaning at Orley Field, our Army's airdrome in Paris, we were met by Kingsbury Smith (INS Manager), Joe Willicombe, Jr., and Lieutenant Watts of the Army, our future conducting officer.

I told a friend returning home on our ship to be sure to put his blankets on the floor at the rear of the plane alongside the door, thereby enabling him to stretch out and get a good night's sleep. This I learned from a Colonel who monopolized this coveted spot coming over.

What a great sight at Orley Field! It is now 11:24 p.m. Sunday, Paris time. There must be 3,000 people sitting about the air terminal, mostly soldiers, all waiting to fly somewhere. The untiring Red Cross girls pass out coffee and the great American doughnut to the boys.

Johnnie Hanes and I stood fascinated, and never moved. The boys took care of our passports, papers and baggage, and in about half an hour we were escorted to a car and told we were being taken to our billet—the George V Hotel. Lieutenant Watts is a very efficient young man.

At the George V, two beautiful rooms awaited us in which were

two bottles of champagne and a tray of sandwiches. Johnnie and I each had a sandwich and a glass of champagne or, shall we say, two glasses—and then off to bed.

The hotel looked exactly as it did in pre-war days. Headquarters now of the Army General Staff, the service is perfect. We were among the very few civilians who have been admitted. Had a wonderful night's sleep. Waking, I telephoned for breakfast and a WAC's voice told me it was not customary to serve breakfast in the room, but exception would be made for us as we arrived late. Within ten minutes came orange juice, ham and eggs, toast and coffee. Our shoes were cleaned in the customary pre-war French manner, and a valet took care of our clothes.

Kingsbury Smith came around with a car to take us to the office. Again, a springlike morning. One would never know Paris had been at war except for the lack of motor transportation. There is not a car on the streets of Paris apart from Army cars. Everywhere one sees the inevitable jeep; and the city, with doughboys everywhere, looks as if it were an Army camp in America.

We went to the Hotel Scribe, which had been taken over for the use of American correspondents. We saw the briefing room for the American correspondents, and I met any number of newspaper boys I knew. One youngster with the United Press insignia on his shoulder came up and spoke to me. He was one of the boys who used to come to my home in Smithtown.

The briefing room was interesting beyond words—the walls were covered with maps. Here during the war the Army briefed the correspondents each day, showed them the progress of our advances in France and Germany.

Went over to Harper's Bazaar office and met old friends. Was told there is nothing in Paris to buy for you—an evening gown costs \$1200.

Joe Smith drove us about Paris with a photographer who took pictures at the Place de la Concorde and other spots. Saw very little damage other than one or two official buildings bombed by the Germans. Everywhere the streets were crowded with American

G.I.s—it was to me a complete reenactment of Paris as I had seen it in the last war.

Back to the George V for luncheon. We were introduced to General Lee, Commanding General of Command Z and General Eisenhower's aide in handling the Paris district.

The General, very gracious, told us that he was delighted to have us at the hotel. He hoped, however, it would not be a precedent for more civilians to come. He had received letters from General Somervell and Secretary Patterson asking him to extend us full courtesies. Accordingly, the courtesies of the European theatre were ours.

Having asked for accommodations to London that afternoon, we were told the plane would be at the field at 4:30 and that the car would call for us.

At 3:30 Lieutenant Watts took us to Orley Field. While we waited for the plane, another of our C-54's (the same plane in which we flew to Paris) came in, and General de Gaulle, with a French escort, deplaned amidst much fanfare.

G.I. Revelations During Hop to London

Our plane was a paratroop one with two rows of seats against the port and starboard bulkheads—tin seats, and not very comfortable riding. On this plane were thirty G.I.s who had just come down from Germany and were going to England for a seven-day leave. All had had a big night in Paris and looked a little weary. They told us they had blown in a month's pay in one day in Paris. In the usual G.I. fashion, they were loquacious, grumbling and happy.

One youngster said, "This is a blankety-blank war when you are going to get killed some way and I suppose I will get mine in Japan where I am told I will be ordered immediately upon my return from leave."

Another soldier, when Johnnie and I (the only civilians) came