



Photo Courtesy 10th Mountain Division Assn.

ITALY, MARCH 1945

Mountain Division: "They look at the war as though it were a game: 'It's all sport with them.'" With the 10th it was SOP to do the job which included taking Riva Ridge will always be remembered, a winter and spring, 1945.

win battles with either infantry or artillery alone. But the division was able to rest in bivouacs after the last hand-to-hand battle fought among the wind-packed peaks. Fire had to be lifted when the enemy made close contact. It fulfilled its suppression mission, but the real fighting didn't start till the doughboys were scaling those heights to fight the enemy and elements.

They are proud to be an organic part of the 10th Infantry Division. They know that with them we can easily engage the Axis in any territory their leaders choose. — **The Rocky Mountain News.**

German POWs Build Still

Mar. 7, 1944 — An undisclosed number of crudely fashioned whisky stills and from forty to fifty gallons of apricot liquor have been seized by military police and other army officers at the Camp Hale German prisoner of war camp, Sheriff Angelo J. Travison of Leadville disclosed Tuesday. Telephoned from Denver in effort to confirm a report here, Sheriff Travison answered that an investigation was under way at the prisoner of war camp and a number

Camp Hale Becomes POW Camp And Sensational Story Of Treason Unfolds

Mar. 10, 1944 — A sensational story of collusion and friendship between a number of U.S. soldier and Nazi war prisoners at this mountain center, in which the Americans were alleged to have aided two Germans escape and five WACS were charged with writing romantic notes to enemy internees, was made public tonight. Three of the WACS have admitted their guilt.

Col. John Chase, commanding officer, said eight additional American soldiers were disclosed to have been involved in the recent escape of two Nazi prisoners — an episode for which Pfc. Dale Maple of San Diego, Calif., has been charged with treason.

Chase said the new developments came after days of questioning of Maple who was arrested in mid-February just south off the Mexican border with Erhard Schwichtenberg and Heinrich Kikilliu, former Africa Corps member.

The commandant said four of the men were directly implicated in the escape plot by Maple.

Chase named the four men as

of prisoners were being held for questioning in connection with alleged operation of the stills, believed to number three or four.

The brand of liquor was said to be "pretty good," made by German prisoners who "apparently knew how to make fine spirits" and evidently had some experience at the work in their native country, another source said.

The stills were said to have been closely hidden in walls of the prison camp. How they were discovered was not learned. Neither was it ascertained how long the plants had been in operation, but a "considerable quantity" of liquor was believed to have been run off.

Sheriff Travison said he understood many of the Germans had been saving apricots and similar fruits with which to brew their schnapps, and must have been carrying them away from the prison's mess hall concealed about their person.

The commanding officer and his aid could not be reached at Camp Hale Tuesday and local federal law enforcement officials either could not be reached or had no disclosures to make.

It was reported unofficially that some of the prisoners were being held in county jails in Eagle and Lake counties, after widespread arrests and segregation of Germans believed to have constructed and operated the stills. — **The Denver Post.**

Pvt. Theophil J. Leonard of Stone-wall, Texas; Pvt. Paul A. Kissman of Erie, Pa.; Pfc. Eric B. Hotelling of Mountain Lakes, N.J., and Pfc. Friedrich W. Siering of Chicago.

It was announced that Leonard, Kissman and Siering had admitted their part in the conspiracy and had involved the other four men, whose names are being withheld for the present. They were said to have been involved also, but less seriously and are being held in confinement at the camp.

Hotelling was said to have denied Maple's accusations.



S/Sgt. Guido Gundish of Milwaukee also was placed in confinement on charges of trafficking commercially with German prisoners of war. He will be tried before an arm court-martial, Colonel Chase said, but not in connection with the escape.

Three of the WACS, accused of writing the secret notes to the prisoners, were identified as Pvt. Frances H. Bundorf of Birmingham, Ala.; Pvt. Florence C. Pechon of New Orleans and Pvt. Marguerite L. Franklin of Oakland, Calif.

They already have been placed before court-martial at Camp Hale. They pleaded guilty and were given sentences ranging from four to six months' confinement. The remaining two are to be tried in the near future.

Lengthy investigation indicates that no other members of the WAC detachment were involved and that the indiscretion of the five in exchanging notes with the prisoners had no connection with the male soldiers involved in the escape of the German prisoners.

Maple, brilliant young graduate of Harvard, now is being held by the Seventh Service command pending court-martial as the first American soldier of the war to be charged with treason. — **The Rocky Mountain News.**

Prospector's Note: Maple was given a death sentence which was commuted to "life" by President Roosevelt. Sgt. Guido Gundish was acquitted. We do not know the fate of the others. Under the terms of the Geneva Convention the German prisoners were to be dealt with liberally.