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FRONT LINE FILMS HELP STRATEGISTS PLAN FUTURE CAMPAIGNS

America's most intent
movie audience is
a small group of
military experts

By

U. S. Army Pictorial Service



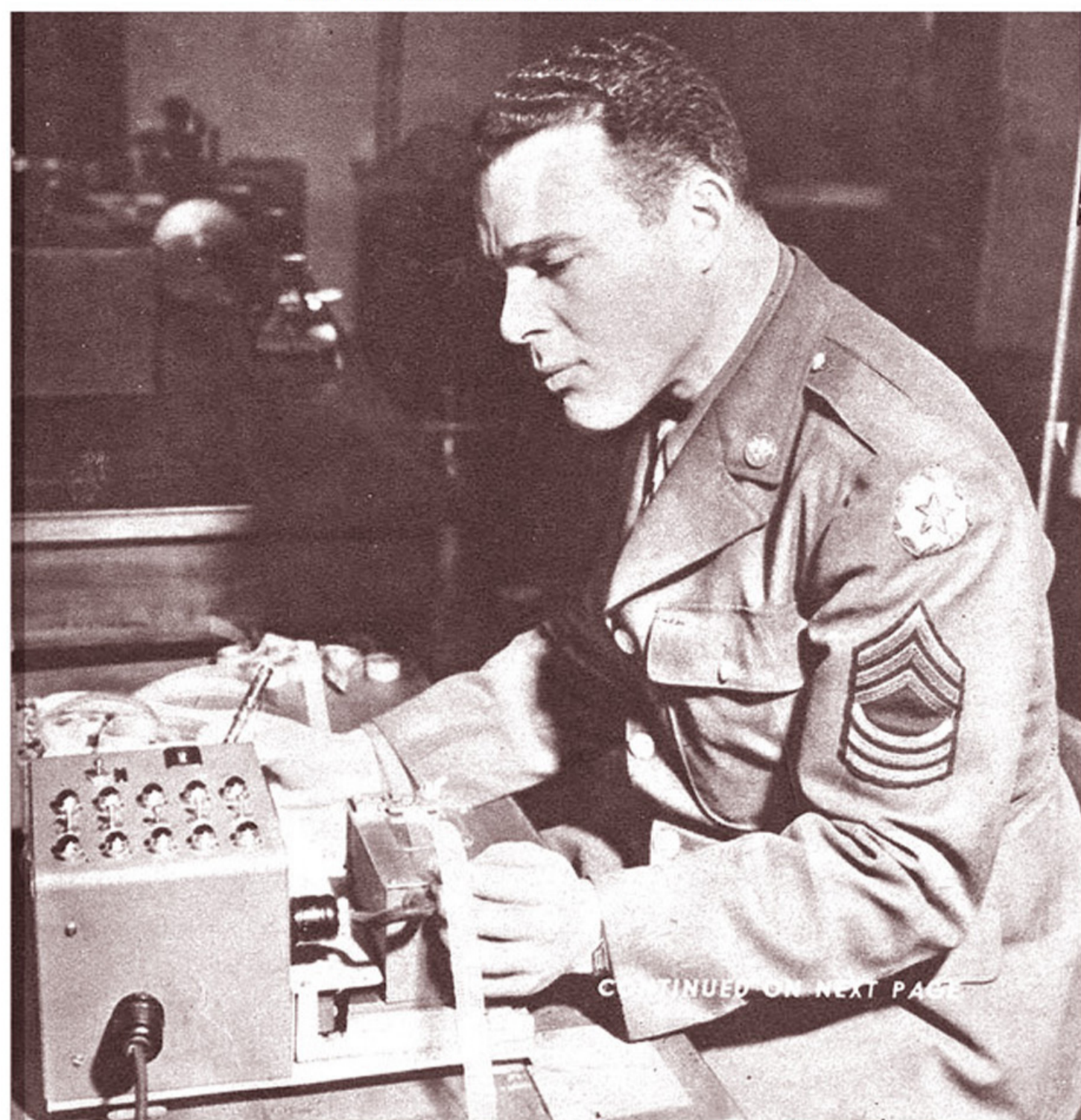
TWENTY MEMBERS of the Military Board of Review, from all branches of the armed forces, view films made at the front, select portions for study.

Battles are now brought into the laboratory. They are battles recorded on celluloid. When our armed forces land on a tropical beachhead, or blast their way past a pill-box fort beside the Mediterranean, the Signal Corps cameramen are on the job every minute, catching the details of each operation both in motion pictures and still photography.

The public at large sees very little of their work—90 per cent of motion picture film footage is either too secret for popular showing or else would strike a civilian audience as dull stuff indeed. Our cameramen in uniform are more likely to be interested in the crater produced by a bursting shell, the damage done to buildings in enemy-held territory, than in the dramatic scene of the shell-burst itself.

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THE U.S. ARMY FILM SECTION



WHEN REVIEWER throws a switch, perforations are made on paper tape synchronized with movie film. This sergeant checks individual requests.

Every detail of these films is scrupulously studied by a group of experts—officers and engineers representing the Army Ground Forces, the Navy, the Marine Corps, the Army Air Forces, the Signal Corps, the Armored Forces, the Quartermaster Corps and other military units. Naturally, these services are interested in different sections of every film. To facilitate their studies a device known as the Multiple Film Selector is used.

The reviewers sit in the War Department projection room behind a long desk. Before every man is a switch which causes perforations to be made on a paper tape which is synchronized with the film. When one of the experts wishes a certain section of film supplied to his department for further study he presses the switch and the selection thus marked on the tape is printed up and delivered to his branch of the service within 24 hours.

The unloading of a consignment of canned goods will interest the Quartermaster Corps who will look for evidence of damage, will check on the most efficient methods of handling and may wish to change present regulations in view of circumstances revealed in the film. Views of a captured Japanese position will interest the Ground Forces whose staff will study the methods of defense and devise new and more effective means of overcoming them.

Motion pictures of landing parties will interest the Navy and Marine Corps, to whom a knowledge of the most effective methods of establishing a beachhead may mean the difference between a successful mission or a serious expenditure of personnel. Naturally, the Army will also want prints of such sections of the film, for all the Services have men fighting afloat and ashore.

One of the most significant uses of the detailed study of films taken in combat areas is the analysis which is made of American planes shot down in conflict with the enemy. The pictures often reveal a plane's weak spot—the best position from which it may be attacked. This spot frequently can only be determined after actual combat and will be eliminated in future production due to the study given the film record. But until the new models reach the field, no hint of such a vulnerable spot may be allowed to reach the enemy—the lives of our airmen depend upon its being kept secret.

The Multiple Film Selector itself is a fine example of American ingenuity and efficiency. Before its development some 300 hours of screenings were necessary each week; the projector had to be stopped and the required footages marked. The selector has cut this viewing time by 95 per cent. It was designed by a group of Signal Corps officers in collaboration with Western Union Company engineers and from the inception of the idea to the actual functioning of the system only 28 days elapsed. If necessity is the mother of invention in times of peace it is a thousand times more evident in time of war. The Multiple Film Selector is just one example of technological progress which has been accelerated by the urgencies of the speediest possible victory over the Axis.

The pictures accompanying this article have all been released for publication from the Signal Corps files. Some of them are enlargements from 35 millimeter film, some from the small exposures made by the 16 millimeter camera which is often used under fire because of its portability. But wherever possible still photographs are taken at the same time because of their greater clarity and register of detail. Every one of these pictures has been studied with great care. And valuable lessons have been learned from them—lessons which save soldiers' lives and bring victory ever nearer.

THE U.S. ARMY FILM SECTION



ORDNANCE

THIS GERMAN VERSION of the American "jeep," captured in North Africa, reveals defects in design—spare tire blocks driver's vision, smooth tires afford poor traction in desert sand. Our Ordnance and Army Ground Forces officers analyze photographs carefully to aid in estimating enemy power.



AIR CORPS

THIS CLOSE-UP PHOTOGRAPH shows ground crew freeing the wheel of a B-17. After having shot down five Axis planes and taken part in 15 bombing raids, it fell victim at last to North African mud. Air Corps officers studied the picture in order to map out plans for overcoming problems of such terrain.



NAVY

AN ENLARGEMENT from motion picture film shows problems encountered by the Navy and by Army Engineers in landing a road-building tractor on the coast of Algeria. New methods of transport are constantly being worked out as a result of Signal Corps' inclusive film record of land and sea operations.

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THE U.S. ARMY FILM SECTION



MEDICAL CORPS

THIS AFRICAN SOLDIER, wounded while fighting the Nazis, receives first aid from American Allies. Sections of film dealing with actual emergencies in the field are used to train the Army's student doctors for service in combat areas. Mistakes can be pointed out and avoided, battle conditions analyzed.



ENGINEERS

BRINGING THIS 10-WHEEL TRUCK from the landing boat (seen on horizon) and across the sandy beach to solid ground, was an engineering feat. It was accomplished by use of the portable road made of steel mesh which distributes weight, prevents bogging down. Picture may suggest improvements.



QUARTERMASTER

THE QUARTERMASTER CORPS studies this picture of a water supply tank captured by U. S. Rangers in French North Africa, and learns the enemy's methods of construction and use. If details suggest improvements for our own tanks, they will quickly be adapted. Heavy timbers guard it against shrapnel.

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