



AMERICAN HEROES

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| 1. Lt. V. Vega, Kansas City, Mo. | 6. Cpl. W. Holsted, Lincoln, Neb. |
| 2. Captain Sorrell, Ozark, Ala. | 7. Cpl. K. Dale, Joplin, Mo. |
| 3. Lt. J. Witt, Edina, Mo. | 8. S/Sgt. A. Vianow, Cedarville, Mich. |
| 4. Lt. E. Sovine, Tenafly, N. J. | 9. T/4 K. Hallingsworth, Hermitage, Mo. |
| 5. T/3 Wilbur Rice, Alton, Ill. | 10. T/5 O. Scheerer, Kansas City, Mo. |
- ▲ Not shown, Lt. D. Lynch, Sapulpa, Okla.

Brains Between His Ears

A combat engineer uses wits, guts and dynamite to win

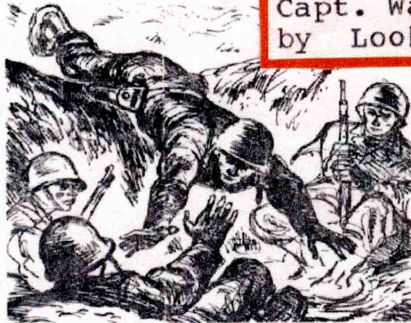
Capt. Walker B. Sorrell, a combat engineer from Ozark, Ala., early this year was awarded the DSC for one of the finest engineering operations of the Italian campaign. Our infantry had been stopped by the Rapido River. An attempt to bring up tanks had failed. The heavy machines bogged down in a low valley south of the river which had been flooded by German demolition of a concrete bridge downstream, converting the bridge into a dam. Without tanks our infantrymen were pinned to earth by German shelling in the same flooded, swampy valley. Captain Sorrell found a solution that required imagination, stamina, dynamite and guts. He had all four to spare.

STORY BY DON WHARTON—DRAWINGS BY ROBERT FRANKENBERG—
40TH IN LOOK'S AMERICAN HEROES SERIES

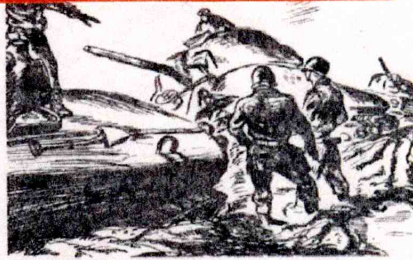
Capt. Walker B. Sorrell story by Look Magazine, July 1944



1 With our tanks needing Engineer help, Sorrell is told to find and aid a Captain Davis near the Rapido River. He sets out under heavy enemy shelling.



2 Advancing by spurts, he crosses waist-deep ditches, finds cover where he can. Diving into a shell hole, he lands on several men—one is Davis.



3 While the shelling continues, Sorrell and Davis talk over the problem: tanks stuck everywhere, belly-deep in marshy fields, blocking the roads.



4 Davis sets out scouting up the Rapido, Sorrell goes downstream. Infantry dead lie all about, next to the living who've burrowed into the ground.



5 Sorrell drops onto the river bed. It's hard and dry. He gets the idea of using it for tanks. A German shell hits nearby, killing several soldiers.



6 An enemy machine gun sprays the trees, but Sorrell checks the river bed further, finds it usable. He hears a shell, jumps in a ditch, is blown out.



7 That night Sorrell's men build a corduroy road across the marsh. The attempt fails, the weight of the tanks forcing the road down into the water.



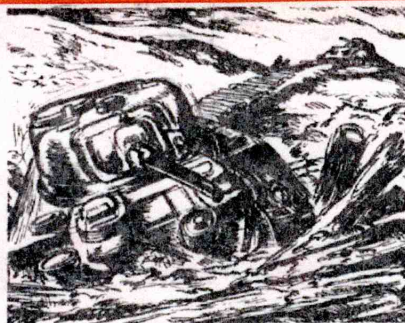
8 Next morning Sorrell tries to find where the river is dammed. With Lts. J. Witt, Robert Gilman (tanks) he locates the bridge blown up by Jerry.



9 For six hours, through several artillery barrages, the men scout the dry, but mined, river bed. They find a road leading off into enemy territory.



10 Back at the command post, Sorrell proposes blasting a tank road down the dry bed. No sale. At dark he is again put to building corduroy roads.



11 Road building goes on all night, under enemy shelling. But the water rises and when tanks try the new corduroy at dawn they belly up again.



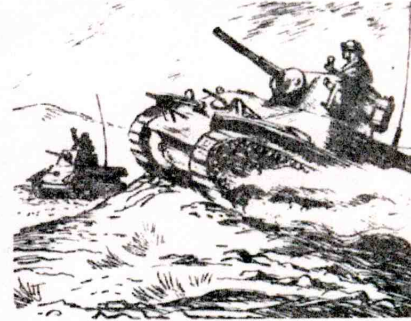
12 In this critical situation, Sorrell's plan is re-considered. Eight engineers volunteer to help him blast the road open. They set out in jeeps.



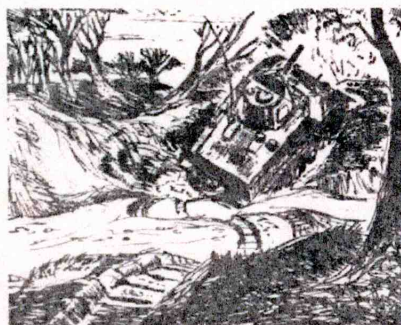
13 Strapping dynamite on their backs, the engineers split into two groups, rush through shellfire to clear two tank obstacles from the dry river.



14 Sovine, Visnaw and Hollingsworth blow away a crater lip. Sorrell, Vega, Scheerer, Dale, Rice and Halsted demolish a concrete footbridge.



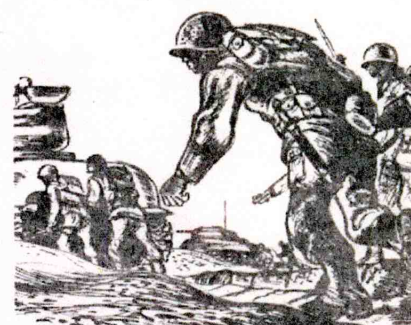
15 Demolition done, Sorrell gets his men back and with Lt. D. Lynch volunteers to ride a light tank testing the trail for a column of mediums.



16 As the test tank advances, it radios progress to the column of mediums. Where it leaves the river, the test tank is stopped by bad terrain.



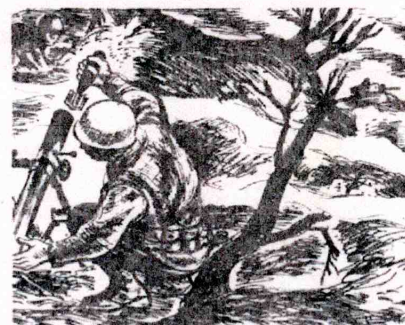
17 Sorrell and Lynch jump out to pick a path for the tank. They bump into a mine field and snipers open fire, but the engineers find a trail.



18 Now the medium tanks come up—with attack infantrymen behind them, walking and running in the tank tracks to avoid enemy mines.



19 The Germans are taken by surprise. Dug in on high ground, they had watched our tanks stuck in the marsh. So, when the tanks go 4,000 yards



away from the enemy's center and turn his flank by coming down the dry river bed, the Germans are hit where they least expect it. The objective is soon taken



by the American tanks and Infantry. Later, Sorrell says, "Too much credit can't be given the Infantry." And too much credit can't be given this engineer!