



The following is from a record kept by Sergeant Robert M. Hunter, son of Mrs. M. E. Ault, Mayfield Avenue. Though now in Clovis, New Mexico, he was in Trinidad when he wrote down this account last fall.

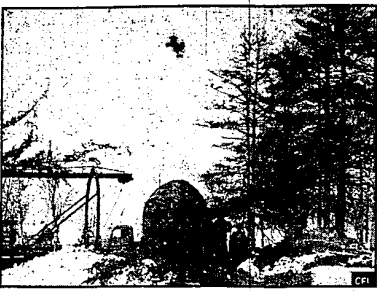
Thanksgiving Evening, 1943
Following is the way I spent my Thanksgiving evening. Since Tuesday night we have been hearing the weird beat of Tom Toms close to the field. After investigation we found that just a short distance from the field are a cult of African Voo-Do worshippers. This required looking into which I venture to say that most of the field did last night and all night. The ceremony took place under a grass roof, hard benches lined two sides of the small covering. Off in one corner were three men constantly beating tom-toms until the noise of them almost drove all of us into a state. Also accompanying the tom-toms were crude looking marachas, but gave the same effect that we all recognize with a rumba band. The voo-dos have a King and Queen of this four day affair, and it's my recommendation that the Queen be used as an all-time model for Halloween masks — and as for having a poker face, she put Ned Sparks to shame. She wore a red robe of some cheap fabric. The King wore a regular white undershirt, had his trousers rolled to his knees, and wore a chain around his waist. Last night the Queen played the important role of curing those with aches and

breaks. This she did by standing in front of a very crude shrine of their own making, with candle light, leaves and holy pictures. The stick stood in front of the shrine while the Queen went through some antics that are unbelievable to the civilized population. At times I thought she would throw her neck and shoulders out of joint. From time to time she would do some sort of cake walk into the so-called arena (with all apologies to the Castles) and then went to work on a few African dances to the tune of tom-toms boom-boom! She in turn spilled drops of water in the feet of certain women sitting on benches and that seemed to be their cue to go wacky, and that they did. They would wiggle out of their seats, and they themselves around while the sullen and believers sang songs. They would dance until completely exhausted and most of the time seemed to be in a sort of coma.

They worked themselves into a frenzy and threw themselves all over the ground, dragged themselves around, until some gallant knight came and helped them up to resume their feet so they could continue on with their jitter-bugging. Arthur Murray missed a fortune by not being there to record some of these extremely entertaining steps. Two nights ago the Queen did a dance on hot coals and in bare feet. She danced on the fire until it was scamp-out—this to us is commonly known as the hot foot. To her it was sacrifice. But she has sore feet today.

After staying with the Voo Doos for about four and one-half hours, we finally headed back for the field. The sound of the tom-toms was in my heart and I believe I twitched and shook myself silly all the way back. This morning came the king's big chance to show his authority. A mountain sheep was the great sacrifice and

ANCIENT TREE GETS NEW HOME



SANDWICH, ILLINOIS—Spl. CFI photo from Bette Scott—This sugar maple tree, twenty inches in diameter and seventy years old, was moved from the Fred Voris farm north of here onto the property of Frank McQuown on Lafayette Street. The tree had a thirty-eight foot spread and weighed eighteen tons.

was sacrificed at sunrise. To make all your hearts lighter, I patted the sheep last night and gave it last absolution, so it died with a saved soul.

This morning the boys, carrying cameras, went out again. A prayer was said, tom-toms beat once more, the sheep was led to the front of the hand-made shrine, being coated with a tree branch with leaves. The king raised a mighty hand, machetta outstretched, wham — and with the down beat of the poor "kuttie, agectia" head was gone. But there was still a little life left in the old boy, because he jumped around as though he had St. Vitus dance. Now the Queen came life once more. She picked up the head of the bleeding sheep, danced around like crazy, and let the blood drip all over her stomach and face while she drank it. After this she picked up the body of the sheep herself, and carried it to a small shack where she proceeded to skin it, and then roast it for the sacrificial feast. I think this one time during the year they eat sheep — and they look like it.

At any rate, if I don't hurry with this description, I shall miss out on a good lamb chop. These Voo-Doos participate in this savagery once a year. It is their custom to sacrifice a beautiful virgin girl, but British authorities have taken them in hand and do not allow them to make a human sacrifice any more. This all sounds like a fairy tale, but it's all true and more, and to me, has gone down on record as a memorable Thanksgiving, although I still would have rather been with all of you.

The parents of Dale Tailman, busy in the South Seas, were delighted to receive two letters from him this last week. He says he has safely passed through several big battles and hopes to come home safe and well.

Ralph Houtz, home on leave at the home of his parents, appeared at the Red Cross meeting at LaVonia Town Hall Tuesday night, and gave the opening of the Red Cross drive a real boost by making an impressive speech in behalf of the Red Cross work.

Li. James M. Tagg of Camp Claiborne, Louisiana, is spending a ten day leave at the home of his parents, Mr. and Mrs. A. C. Tagg.

Coolman, son of Mr. and Mrs. H. B. Coolman of 20418 Shady-side. His wife is the former Theresa Himmelschlag.

13 February, 1944
Southwest Pacific

To the Editor:
I must apologize for being so long in sending this letter. I wish to thank you for sending the Enterprise to the many places I've been in the past three years. Your paper has followed me around for nearly 25,000 miles in that time, and I've certainly appreciated it. There's nothing that can compare with news of what is happening in the home town.

I also wish to thank the Blue Star Mothers and the Daughters of Isabella for the fine Christmas boxes I received. They were certainly appreciated.

This evening, thanks to the efforts of the U.S.O. I have a very pleasant lump in my throat. The Special Service Division of the Army, in conjunction with the U.S.O. brought three lovely girls, the first female entertainers to arrive on this island, and Ray Milland, to put on a series of shows. The girls were Frances Faye, Mary Elliot, and Rosita Carminna. I was fortunate enough to occupy a table at dinner with Rosita and developed a case of nerves that nearly upset my coffee and dignity. If I had a lump the size of my fist in my throat, I have no doubt that there were a few hundred others who had larger ones, as there are many boys here who have been overseas two years. They have probably not seen a girl from the States for at least sixteen months. Ray Milland said he had a thing or two to tell Dorothy Lamour when he got back and I can well imagine. This is the season when it rains, and when it isn't raining it's comparable to a steam bath. There are always mosquitoes and other insects that seem to enjoy a meal at our expense. During what is char-

itally called the dry season it only rains on the average of about three times a week, but there are very few insects to bother us. Everything moulds at this time of year. Shoes, clothing, truck seats, wood and no doubt a lot of human resistance. In spite of the weather, much has been done to make living a little more enjoyable. Notably among them are better foods and many movies in addition to other entertainment programs. We also have a very good PX system now which helps immensely. Thanking you again for the paper, I remain, Sincerely, L. A. Thomas Brown.

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