

GEORGE'S MILITARY SERVICE

How I Got Into the Army

by

George Steward Parlin, Sr.

My military service may not have been very distinguished but in the annals of the War Department it must be unique. I served in both World I and II. I held only two ranks: Private and Major. I never was promoted while on active service. After my service had been terminated for physical disability, I was twice promoted to the rank of Lt. Colonel. While I have four of the five possible battle stars on my campaign ribbon for service in the Mediterranean Theatre, the only battle I ever won was with the War Department. I collected my terminal pay on the basis of the rate of my higher grade from the earlier of the two dates. At the time, this filled me with great pride.

But let's go back to the interrupted conference. What the War Department wanted to say that day, was that orders had just been mailed saying that I was to report within ten days to the Army Specialist Corps School of Military Government at Charlottesville, Virginia, but that, as the Class had already started, they would appreciate it if I would report the following morning.

I called Dorothy and told her that we could discuss the matter that evening. She took it matter-of-factly, as she did all great crises, and merely said that there was nothing to discuss. Why not go right down to Wanamakers and get my uniform? So I did.

The following evening, all decked out in my new uniform, I went up to the hospital to see my father. It was the last time I was to see him. I was afraid that he would not approve of my deserting my wife and two young sons to go off to war, but I explained that the Army Specialist Corps was a sort of civil service with Civil Service Grades roughly corresponding to the grade held in civil life and that the only reason for a uniform and a simulated military rank, was so that in the event of capture, I would be entitled to prisoner-of-war status and would not be shot as a spy.

Father made no comment. I thought he was doped up and might not even know I was there. As I started to leave, he said, "If I were a

young man, I would do the same thing." It is the only time I can remember that he expressed any approval of anything I proposed to do. I was overcome.

At that point, the night nurse came in and forced Father to drink a shot of whiskey. He fought it to the last, but she finally held his nose and poured it down. I knew then that he would not survive and that I would never see him again. There was nothing I could say so I merely stood in the doorway and gave him the snappiest military salute I could muster. Then I started for Charlottesville and the School of Military Government.

When I arrived in Charlottesville, I found that the Class had been going for two or three weeks. That didn't bother me particularly as most of the Class were taken from Army Units and the men from the Army Specialist Corps were just beginning to arrive. What did concern me, was the announcement by Col. Harvey Dillard, the Assistant Dean of the School that the Army Specialist Corps had been abolished. However, he begged us to stay and finish the course. He said they were trying to work out some plan by which we would be offered commissions in the Army. I decided to stay and, after finishing sixth in a Class of 125, I was duly commissioned as a Major in the Corps of Military Police.

We were never given any explanation for the abolition of the Army Specialist Corps but it could not have been anything having to do with the School of Military Government. It was a fine school and gave us a broad education in the military administration of civil affairs. The story which was passed around, and generally accepted, was that it was caused by a distinguished engineer who had been commissioned as a full Colonel. He reported to the War Department in Washington in a perfectly tailored uniform with eagles glistening on his shoulders, highly polished dress shoes but wearing a civilian hat. The Army Chief of Staff took one look at the civilian hat and abolished the entire Army Specialist Corps!

I finished the course, was duly commissioned in the Army of the United States, and was assigned to the faculty of the School and ordered to do some research on the organization of the Civil Affairs by the Japanese in the Philippine Islands. From this, and a few guarded

remarks by General Wickersham, I had no doubt that I was destined for occupation work in the Orient, probably in Japan or Korea. The way the war in the Pacific was going in the early months of 1943, it looked as if I would be there in Charlottesville for a long time.

I still thought so when I saw a note on the bulletin board to the effect that Major Parlin should report immediately to the Adjutant. When I reported, the Adjutant ordered all of the civilian personnel out of his office. Then he locked the door, twirled the knob on the office safe, and brought out a folder. All I was permitted to see was that the enclosed order directed me to report to the Port of Embarkation at Camp Shanks with full equipment for overseas service. Then the Adjutant cautioned me about not breathing a word of this to a living soul on penalty of death. Then he unlocked the door and let the civilian personnel go back to work. I walked slowly back to my boarding house wondering what it all meant. At the door, I met my landlady, Mrs. Graves, who said, "I understand that you are assigned to the Claims Commission in North Africa." All I could say, and that very truthfully, was, "If you know that, you know more than I do."

After ten days of delightful Embarkation Leave, I reported to Camp Shanks for a final check on the required overseas equipment. One of the items I was issued, was a .45 pistol and I was ordered out to the firing range for instruction as to its use. Our group of ten "Casual Officers" was assigned to a grizzled old regular Army Sargeant for instruction. The Sargeant must have sized up the group instantly because he started out by saying, "Now, this here pistol goes in the holster on the right hand side of your belt; and them there ammunition clips go in the ammunition pouch on the left hand side of your belt. If you never put the two of them any closer than that, you probably won't get in any trouble!"

Fortunately, I had had a little pistol practice in Charlottesville and easily qualified with the minimum required score. While I enjoyed target practice at every opportunity, and occasionally it was a comfort to me to know it was there ready for use if need be, I never wore it except when ordered to do so and I never had occasion to fire it in anger.

When the day for embarkation arrived, we entrained at midnight, disentrained about a mile from the Erie Station in Hoboken, stumbled

along the tracks to the waiting ferry carrying our barracks bags and eventually arrived, utterly exhausted, at a dock on Staten Island where I collapsed on my barracks bag wondering how I could drag it up a gangway to a deck that seemed as high as Mt. Everest. At that point, a Red Cross girl saw me and asked whether I would like a cup of coffee and a doughnut—or maybe two cups of coffee!

With this stimulant, I staggered up the gang-way and into my cabin (a single cabin which I shared with five other field grade officers). As I entered the cabin, I lurched and my .45 (fortunately unloaded and in its holster) hit with a resounding crack against the skull of a Major in the Adjutant General's Office who was trying to sleep in the lower right hand bunk. He said sleepily, "Are you going to fight a war with that thing?" I indicated that I intended to and asked him what he fought wars with. He replied stiffly, "I fight wars with mimeograph machines!" It was some months before I appreciated how true that was.

After ten days at sea, enlivened largely by scuttlebut as to where we were to land, and what our destination might be, our convoy of about thirty transports and destroyer escorts was met by a squadron of sea planes which flew cover for us until we passed Gibraltar. Almost immediately, we ran into a pack of submarines. We were ordered to stay on deck and put on life jackets while the sea planes and the destroyers began throwing out depth charges in all directions.

It was then that I received one of the nicest compliments of my life although I did not come to appreciate it until much later. Major Lewis H. Weinstein, son of the rabbi at Portland, Maine, and a former Note Editor of the Harvard Law Review, was standing at the rail with me watching the exciting panorama before us. As a depth charge threw up a shower of water and spray close off our starboard side, he said, "You know, I think you and I have more in common than any other two people on this ship. If we can, let's try to stick together wherever we're assigned." I agreed without knowing how much that was to mean to me.

When we passed the Rock of Gibraltar and slipped into the calm waters of the Mediterranean Sea, it became obvious that we would land in North Africa, probably either at Oran or Algiers. We practiced all day for the landing. The plan was based on the understanding that we

could use three gang-ways. The word was passed around that we would land at Mers el Kabir, the port for Oran; that the Germans had bombed it from the air the night before and were expected to return at any moment. It was therefore of the utmost importance that we land as quickly as possible and get away from the dock area.

As it turned out, the Luftwaffe took a day off and it was lucky for us that it did. The landing was one big snafu. Instead of three gang-ways as planned, there was only one. Instead of landing at midnight and having everything out of the dock area in a couple of hours, the ship was barely unloaded before the Germans came back two days later. But Lew and I stumbled through another blackout, found a good-natured truck driver, threw our barracks bags onto his truck, and reported at Allied Headquarters in Oran just as the sun was rising.

There we were both ordered to Algiers and after shuttling back and forth between Oran and Algiers for the better part of a week, we were assigned to—yes, you guessed it—the Claims Commission in Oran, just as Mrs. Graves had told me back in Charlottesville in what now seemed many long years before.

The first Friday night we were in Oran, Lew asked me whether I would like to see the Moorish Temple in Oran. He explained that the service would be in Hebrew but that a Jewish Army Chaplain would translate the important parts as many of the Jewish soldiers could not understand classical Hebrew. He said that there would be skull caps on a table by the door and that I could put one on if I wanted to but that most of the Army personnel merely wore a Garrison or Overseas cap. I said that I would be delighted as I had never had an opportunity to attend a Jewish service. It was an interesting experience.

The pulpit was in the center of a large auditorium. On three sides, were sort of bleacher seats where the men sat. On the fourth side was a balcony for the women. Aside from this arrangement and the portions of the service which were in Hebrew, the service might have been held without any appreciable change in any Protestant church in the Middle West.

As we entered the Temple, Lew again offered me a skull cap from a table by the door but I noticed that all of the American servicemen

merely put on their overseas caps, so I did as Lew did. The sermon, as repeated by the American Chaplain was an excellent one and I soon became engrossed in it. Then my subconscious took over and seemed to say, "Sonny boy, do you realize that you are sitting in church with your cap on?" In great embarrassment, I tried to take my cap off but Lew grabbed my arm and brought me back to earth. Lew had to repeat this rescue operation about every thirty seconds. The sermon was fascinating and as soon as I lost myself in it, I would try to take my cap off. Lew would firmly grab my arm and break the spell.

Half way through the service, there was a ten minute intermission during which we started to walk around the arcade which went all the way around the Temple. The men walked around clockwise while the women went around counter-clockwise. Lew explained that this was to give the boys a chance to look over the girls and vice-versa. This was the time when everyone exchanged gossip with his friends, made dates, arranged for dinners, etc.

The reason we didn't get very far around the arcade was that everyone wanted to speak to Lew. I complimented him on having become a social lion in such a short time but he had a more modest explanation, namely, that in the Army of Vichy-France, a Jew could not hold any grade higher than that of a buck private and a Jewish "commandant" who was fluent both in Hebrew and in French was a great novelty. When he explained that his "bon ami" spoke neither Hebrew nor French, I was included in the invitations also. This was lucky for me as otherwise my social life in Oran would have been very dull indeed. As it was, I slid all over Oran on the tails of Lew's coat. Probably the high point for me was the evening we were invited to dinner at the home of the Erumies. Marie-Jo, who was not quite six, entertained me by sitting in my lap and reading me, "The Three Little Pigs" in French. I didn't know much French, but I could follow the plot perfectly. It is exactly the same in Algeria as it was ten years before in Glen Ridge.

Lest you get the impression at this point that all of my time in North Africa was spent having a good time, perhaps I should write a little about the serious side of what we were doing and the circumstances under which we worked. First, let me say, that Lew and I

modestly admit that we won the war in North Africa and we have a certain amount of statistical and circumstantial evidence to back up our claim. We landed in Oran on May 11, 1943, and General Rommel surrendered unconditionally on May 13th.

One of the first claims I was assigned to investigate, was filed by the Madame of a Maison d'Tolerance. Her story was that to comply with the crazy whims of an American Medical Officer, she had remodelled her house to put in an examining room and running water in the lavatory. This had cost her 40,000 francs and, after the remodelling was completed, another officer had put her house, "Out of bounds for all American troops." To my surprise, the Colonel in charge would not accept my recommendation that the claim be disallowed out of hand. He suggested that I go up to the big base hospital and get the story from Major Murphy. This I did and the ensuing interview was very educational.

It seems that a Division which had been badly mauled in the fighting at Kyserine Pass, had come back to Oran for rest and recuperation. After they had thrown a few hand grenades and wrecked the Military Police Station, the Commanding General thought the best thing to do was to have the Medics check over the houses, examine the girls, put the worst places out of bounds and permit those that could be rehabilitated, to operate under medical supervision. When the first report of a climbing venereal rate reached Washington, he sent his crack V.D. man, Major Murphy, out to take charge. The first thing he did was to have the Commanding General relieved and sent home. Then he placed every known house out of bounds to all American troops. The venereal rate promptly dropped from over 60 cases per thousand to less than 40 cases per thousand which is the rate for camps in the United States located near a heavily populated area.

Major Murphy gave me a little lecture which was to help me a great deal later when I was faced with a similar problem in Italy. He said that, from the Army's point of view, prostitution was not a moral question but merely one of "man hours at the front". You can't win a war with soldiers sitting around in a base hospital. The Surgeon General's Office has studied the problem exhaustively and concluded that the only thing to do is to make prostitution as hard to find as

possible. Later, when I had to sit as a Judge in a Prostitution Court, I often thought of Major Murphy and, while it seemed like an odd way to help win a war, his lecture did give me the comfort of knowing that I was doing something that had to be done.

The population of Algeria, I was told, was 10% French, 10% Jewish, 10% Spanish and 70% Arab. I was also told that in the French Courts, the rule of thumb was that a camel was worth more than a donkey, a donkey was worth more than a horse, a horse was worth more than a cow, and anything was worth more than an Arab. This may help to explain why Algeria is no longer a part of France. But in the summer of 1943, it was still a part of France and, although it was no longer occupied by the Germans, and officially it was cooperating with the Americans and British, there was still a strong undertone of sentiment for the Vichy Government. Let me give a few brief illustrations.

Just outside of Oran, there was a prisoner of war cage with thousands of prisoners awaiting trial months after Rommel's surrender, charged with having aided and assisted the Allies.

In the Museum of the French Foreign Legion at Sidi-bel-Abbes, the place of honor was reserved for a huge Nazi flag and a large picture of Marshall Petain.

When the owner of a large Jewish Department Store offered to make it available for a gala party to honor the American Officers, the local prefect ordered the store closed and the party cancelled on twenty-four hours' notice.

One day I was given a letter from the Captain of an American Infantry Company asking me to adjust a claim for him as his unit had been moved out of the area. He said that his unit had been quartered in a winery just outside of town. The owner was entitled to payment for the use and occupancy of the premises and for any damage the troops might have done although the damage, if any, was very slight. I found the winery and verified all the Captain had said. Then I prepared a Claim Form and went to see the owner, a fine old French lawyer. I had great difficulty in making him understand and I thought he was disputing the amount agreed upon with the Captain. When I finally made him understand that he could sign the Claim Form and present it at the Army Payments Office, he broke into a broad smile, tore the Form

into small pieces and dropped them into his waste basket. Then he told me his side of the story. It went something as follows: When the Company first requisitioned his property, they were strangers and paid for everything they used. They were fine boys and they left the place in spotless condition. When they left, we were sorry to see them go. Then after the battle at the Pass, those that were left, stayed at the winery for a few days. By then, they were no longer strangers. We were good friends. They stayed with me as my guests. They drank a little wine but they did no damage. I wouldn't think of filing a claim!

This and other similar incidents, convinced me that we could not buy the friendship of the French in North Africa by making payments through the Claims Commission for damage done by our soldiers after the capitulation. Our friends would not file claims and those who filed claims were not our friends and never would be. So when the head of the Claims Commission asked me whether I would like to stay with the Claims Commission for the duration of the war, I replied in the words of the old Methodist hymn, "I'll go where the Army wants me to go and I'll be what it wants me to be." This was, in part, that I had been brought up on the old Army principle that one should never refuse an order or volunteer for an assignment.

I had hardly returned to my desk, when I was handed an order to report to Headquarters in Algiers for an interview and assignment. I was disappointed when I found that Lew had not received a similar order and I gloomily packed my things for the twenty-four hour trip by train to Algiers. There I was interviewed by a Board of British Officers who were selecting the men to form the civil affairs team for Italy. I was kept waiting an unconscionable time without food and when I did get in, I was thoroughly annoyed and must have shown it. The British Officers asked me a few stupid questions which I answered in kind and rather sharply. One was: "Do you think you could do better in Italy if you spoke Italian fluently?" I replied that I did and that I spoke no Italian whatever. The one American Officer on the Board, Major Boettinger, President Roosevelt's son-in-law, tried to calm me down but I left the room thinking that I was definitely on the British black list as far as Italy was concerned.

To my great surprise, I was called back and told that I had been assigned to the small top echelon groups which would direct the

operation of all of the Allied Military Courts in Italy. It wasn't until months later, that I learned that the British were afraid of having any American Officers of Italian descent assigned to Italy. They did accept a few but they were never given any responsible work to do in spite of the fact that some of them were able men, such as Ed Palmieri (later a District Judge in the Southern District of New York), and Matt Correa (formerly an associate of Charles and mine at Cotton, Franklin, and later U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of New York).

Perhaps you will understand some of the following better if I digress at this point and tell you a little about the organization of G-5, the Civil Affairs Section of the Army, as it was in Italy while I was there. When I was at the School of Military Government at Charlottesville, everything was top secret. Dorothy wanted to know what I was doing but I could not tell her. Finally I discovered that the Army Field Manual covering civil affairs operations was published by the Superintendent of Documents. I wrote Dorothy that I could not tell her what I was being prepared to do but that, if she would send ten cents to the Superintendent of Documents and ask for Fm125, she might be interested. She did, and so learned the whole organizational set-up.

The Manual specified that the government of occupied territory should be organized under 22 different functions: legal, police, prisons, public utilities, education, agriculture, industry, etc. The Provost Marshall General headed up both the Civil Affairs Section and the Corps of Military Police. As I was already at the School of Military Government under his jurisdiction at the time, I was commissioned in the Corps of Military Police as there was not any branch of Civil Affairs. Most of the other Officers had been commissioned in some other branch, such as Infantry, Cavalry or Field Artillery. The importance of this to me may appear later in my narrative, but although I wore the crossed pistols which are the insignia of the Provost Marshall's branch, I was never assigned to police duties.

The operation in Italy was a joint British and American operation. The agreement with the British was that the Commanding General should be British and that the Chief Officers in charge of the 22 subdivisions, were to be equally divided between the British and Americans; and for every Chief of Section who was British, his Deputy Chief should be an American and vice versa. The same principle was to

be applied to all officers so that every American Officer served under a British Officer and, in turn, had a Junior British Officer working under him. It looked fine on the Table of Organization but didn't work out in practice. Let us take, for example, the Legal Subdivision.

This was to have been headed by an American.

The Legal Section was to have been headed by an American Colonel. He was Colonel Chandler, formerly the Corporation Counsel of the City of New York. The British Officers always said that he was not big enough for the job, and had to be removed and sent back to the United States. I never believed it, but that was the British version. So the British sent back to England for a Captain who was in charge of an anti-aircraft battery and named him as Deputy Chief Legal Officer. This would call for a Lt. Colonel, but in the absence of his Chief, he assumed the duties and was thereupon promoted, not to the rank of Colonel, but that of Brigadier which is one rank higher and made him the senior to all of the American Colonels. Then the American, Lt. Colonel Wilmer (formerly the Washington partner for Cravath's office, became Deputy Chief. Then the British Lt. Colonel Pollock, a barrister from London, and I came last as low men on the totem pole of Field Grade Officers. But this I must say. Brigadier Gerald Upjohn was an able lawyer. After the war, he "took the silk" (became King's Counsel), was knighted by Queen Elizabeth II and named to the Law Committee of the House of Lords (roughly the equivalent of our U.S. Supreme Court).

This was the organization of the Legal Subdivision when we were ordered in August to the holding center at Tizi Uzou in the foothills of the Atlas Mountains about 80 kilometers north of Algiers. For about four months we studied Italy and the Italian language but in the evening, since there was not enough light to read, I got trapped into playing Bridge.

As it had a profound influence on the rest of my life in the Army, I must tell you about how it all started.

We were quartered in what had been a school for young ladies. There was no entertainment in Tizi Uzou and there was a strict curfew against being on the streets after sun-down. So, when three officers with whom I was billeted, asked me to make a fourth for Bridge, I accepted their invitation with some apprehension. My apprehension was increased when I was told that it was standard practice to play for

two francs per hundred, which was about four times as high a stake as I had ever played for.

The first four evenings I played with this group, I lost about five dollars a night and I wasn't at all sure that I could afford it even though there was no choice but to go to bed right after dinner. In running over the hands on which I had lost heavily, I concluded that my troubles all originated with Colonel Simmons. He had been the Superintendent of Schools in Cleveland but was a most erratic and unpredictable Bridge player. Whether he was my partner or my opponent, he always got me in trouble. I kept a careful record of my winnings and losses which I kept up as long as I was in the Army.

I decided that I would try one more night but this time I took the precaution of dropping into Colonel Simmons' room for a few minutes of chat before dinner. I inquired about his bidding system. He said it was very simple. He only counted aces and kings; an ace counted one and a king counted one-half. If the hand added up to two and a half or more, he opened the bidding or raised. He said that he never bluffed and if he bid, he had an honor count of two and a half. Since he was a Colonel, and I was only a Major, I didn't tell him what I thought of his bidding system but I tucked away in the back of my mind, the information he had given me.

That night I had a terrible run of cards, and when I came to the last hand, I was again, pretty well down in score. Somehow both sides got vulnerable and then I picked up the biggest Bridge hand I have ever held: two aces, 3 kings and a seven-card Spade Suit solid down to the nine. Then to my surprise and fascination, Colonel Simmons, who was my partner, opened the bidding with "one club."

I was in a quandary. If what Colonel Simmons had told me was true, we had between us all of the aces, all of the Kings and three of the queens. If he had been kidding me, we could go down but, with any kind of luck, not too far down. So, with a dead pan expression, I bid, "Seven No Trump."

Colonel Simmons jumped up out of his chair as if he had been shot. He shouted and screamed and tore his hair saying, "What kind of bidding is that—one club, Seven No Trump!" It rattled our opponents so that, for some reason I could never analyze, they doubled. Colonel Simmons said, "I should think you would!" When it came around to

me, I decided that if Colonel Simmons had lied to me, he ought to go down, although I really didn't think he had. So I re-doubled. Then the Colonel really screamed. When my opponent led, the Colonel shamefacedly put down his hand and, sure enough, he had the two aces and one king. There was no play to the hand. We had seventeen top tricks if we could have taken them!

Shortly after that, Colonel Simmons was sent on to Italy and he seemed to go to all of the places I was later sent to but about two weeks earlier. Everywhere he went, he warned the mess of that crazy Major Parlin, "If you bid one club he'll jump you to seven No Trump; and if his opponents double, he'll redouble and make it."

I made it a rule never to play Bridge when there was light enough for reading but most of the time there wasn't. Then, if anyone wanted a fourth, I was available. Invariably, after mess in the evening, three officers I did not know, would ask me to make a fourth and I obliged. The stakes in North Africa were two francs a hundred; in Italy they were five lire a hundred. In either case, it amounted to about a tenth of a cent a hundred. As there rarely was any entertainment available, that was cheap amusement, I figured, but to be sure that I did not spend more than the amusement was worth, I kept a very strict accounting of what I won and lost. At the end of each month, I would balance my account. In all of the time I was overseas, there was only one month when I had a net loss. The other months, I ended up a little ahead. So, in the end, my amusement not only didn't cost me anything but I was able to send a little home to Dorothy although in a wartime economy, there wasn't much that she could do with it to amuse herself.

By late November, we were all itching to get over to Italy and start the work for which we had been training and we were delighted when we boarded our ship at Algiers for a quick run to Naples. At the last minute, it was found that the ship was overloaded and all officers below the grade of Lt. Colonel had to debark and return to the holding center at Tizi Uzou. Then as the Senior Major, I had to command the great retreat from Algiers. When I brought my command into the mess hall, we got the royal raspberry from those who hadn't even gotten on the list of those to go by ship. Within a couple weeks, however, we were ordered to Bizerte and flown over to Palermo, Sicily, where for the first time, I held Court in a Sicilian Court decorated with the flags of Great

Britain and the United States and guarded by two carabinieri in full dress uniforms. I must have been impressive, judging from the deference I was paid. When the Interpreter translated what I had said, rolling his Italian "Rs" in a magnificent bass voice, even I was impressed.

While I was still at Tizi Uzou, I had another strange, but quite different, evening at the Bridge table. As I was finishing my evening meal, I was approached by three American Captains looking for a fourth for Bridge. I had never seen any of them before and never saw them again after that evening. But I recall them vividly.

As we sat down and began to shuffle the cards, I introduced myself. The man on my left, introduced himself as Captain de Gersdorff. To make small talk, I said that the only man I had ever known by that name was the senior partner of Cravath, Henderson & de Gersdorff, the New York law firm with which I had been associated when I first got out of Law School, and with which my brother-in-law, Wilbur Davis, was still associated. The Captain replied that that deGersdorff was his father and that he knew Wilbur Davis who was in his class at Law School where, because of alphabetical seating, they had sat next to, or near, each other in most of their classes for three years.

At this point, the man opposite me showed considerable interest. He said that he was Captain Loeb and that he had been associated with Kuhn, Loeb & Co., the New York banking firm for which Cravath's firm was counsel; and that he had occasion to call Wilbur nearly every day.

Then the man to my right spoke up and introduced himself as Captain Brennan. He said that it was strange that he should again be with three graduates of Harvard Law School as he was, in addition, a graduate of the Sorbonne but all of his practice had been in Algiers. Then he added slyly, "You may be interested to know that this Wilbur Davis you were talking about, is my cousin!"

At that point it became old home week in Tizi Uzou. When I discovered that Captain Brennan was scheduled for Civil Affairs work in France, but had lost his field jacket, I gave him an extra one that I had and he, in turn, gave me an Italian grammar which I needed as badly as he needed my field jacket. This was one of Wilbur's favorite stories that he would urge me to tell any guest who happened in at his apartment

on those occasions after the war when I stayed with Wilbur after an office party. I tell it here merely as an illustration of the almost unbelievable coincidences that happen in war time.

Another such one, was a telephone call I got from Lew Weinstein shortly after he had gone into Paris as an aide and interpreter for General de Gaulle. The fact that Lew was able to call me from Paris while I was somewhere in Italy, is in itself a miracle. He asked me whether I knew a Frenchman in Paris (I've forgotten the name) who claimed to know me as a New York lawyer. Lew said that the man claimed that I had done some work for Dillon, Read before the war.

I assured Lew that, while I had done some minor things for Dillon, Read while I was with Cotton, Franklin, I had never done any work for their Paris Office. I knew no one there and had never heard of the man. Lew hinted, as broadly as he dared, that the man had been accused of being a collaborator and that through some friends he had been asked to do what he could for the man. Then it occurred to me that this might be someone that Charles knew and I told Lew that the man undoubtedly confused me with Charles. At that point, the wire went dead and I never knew whether the man was shot as a collaborator or not until Charles filled in some of the missing pieces for me—but that is his story and not mine.

Christmas of 1943 I celebrated in Palermo, Sicily. As a special treat, the Army flew over from Italy, an opera company complete with orchestra and stage sets. They put on a version of, "La Boheme," the like of which may never be seen again. The performance was three hours late in getting started but the G.I. audience sat patiently in an unheated theatre shivering in their overcoats and galoshes. The first act scenery had to be used for all four acts because the plane carrying the bulk of the sets was attacked by German planes and had to turn back. The orchestra had a bowl of hot coals which they passed around to keep their fingers from freezing. Whenever a man had a long rest in his part, he would grab the bowl and warm his hands. I don't know the score well enough to be sure, but I suspect that the opera has never been performed with so many rests for so many instruments. When the curtain came down on the first act set for the fourth time, I hurried back to my billet and went to bed to keep warm.

On New Year's Day of 1944, we loaded onto an LST for an

overnight trip to Naples. The next day we set up Headquarters in Salerno. Then we were ordered to Brindisi. Then, shortly, I was ordered back to Naples. It made no sense to me and, being low man on the Legal totem pole at Headquarters, was pretty boring. Mostly I was assigned to reviewing the reports of actions taken by Provincial Legal Officers with a view to affirming or disaffirming the action taken. It was boring, frustrating work and when I was offered a chance to work in the field as the Legal Officer with the group at Santa Maria Capua Vetere, I jumped at the chance.

The first thing I did, was to have a conference with the Italian Criminal Lawyers who would be practicing in my Court. I explained our peculiar ground rules to them and then offered to answer any questions.

Avv. Fusio, the leading lawyer of the town, asked me whether in a proper case, an accused person could be released from jail in the custody of his attorney. When I said that it was possible, he inquired whether the lawyer would be held liable if the prisoner did not show up for trial. I said he would not but that the lawyer would probably never receive any favors from the Court thereafter. Everyone laughed and I was off to a good start.

About a week later, Avv. Fusio came to my chambers, said he knew it was not proper for him to discuss a pending case with me in chambers but that a daughter of an old friend had been arrested and he reminded me of our conference. He requested that I release her in his custody. Thinking it a good time to try out my theory, I signed the proper release from custody and promptly forgot the whole matter.

The next week, when I held Court, there was a whole batch of prostitution cases. When we got down to the end of the line, and the last case was called, Avv. Fusio came forward holding by the hand the cutest little ten-year-old girl I saw in Italy. She was wearing a pretty little starched dress with a colorful ribbon in her hair. As Avv. Fusio came forward, holding the girl by the hand, she gave him a happy little smile and made a pretty curtsy to the Court. I turned to Corporal Valone, my interpreter, and asked what she was charged with. He gave me a broad grin and said, "Prostitution, sir." My face must have shown my utter disbelief because he added with an even broader grin, "Believe

it or not, sir, that's the charge." Avv. Fusio, with a perfect deadpan face said, "This is the accused that you released in my custody. I think I have an air-tight defense. It is entirely documentary." Then he handed me a certificate of an American Army Doctor that he had examined the girl and she was a virgin. I tried to keep my face straight as I declared her not guilty and ordered all record of the case to be expunged. With another pretty curtsy to the Court, and a happy smile at Avv. Fusio, she skipped gracefully down the aisle and out of the courtroom.

I turned to the M. P. Sargeant and asked him what had happened. He said, "I really don't know, sir, but I can guess. We raided a house that had caused us a lot of trouble. The girls were kicking and screaming and a large crowd gathered as we grabbed them and shoved them into the wagon. Probably she was crowding in to get a look at what all the excitement was about and she got shoved into the wagon by mistake." This was one of the few cases which I was sure I had handled correctly.

In Naples I had my first taste of police work. I had finished a Bridge game and was just starting out of the Red Cross Headquarters, when I heard the Red Cross girl say to a couple of young Lieutenants, "Honestly boys, you have to go home and let me get some sleep." I turned so that the insignia of my rank with its crossed pistols would be clearly seen. I said to the girl, "Are you having trouble with these boys? Could I be of assistance to you?" The young Lieutenants jumped to their feet and stammered, "No, sir, we were just leaving." The Red Cross girl looked relieved and I started out for my hotel. As I approached it with my retinue of chagrined Lieutenants, I ducked behind the black-out curtain while one young Lieutenant saluted sharply and said, "Thank you very much, sir," and responded to my, "Goodnight, boys" with a sigh of relief.

The next day, as a holiday in honor of the 4th of July, I spent the day at routine paper work and at noon started out for the Galleria. As I went out of the little compound used by the Judges, an enormous Texan stepped in front of the driver of my car and began beating on the hood of the car. I felt that this required some action on my part and without thinking the matter through very carefully, I got out of my car, ordered the Texas infantryman to get into the car, and we went to the place we used as a police station. The Sargeant on duty asked what charge I

wished to make against the soldier. I replied that if he would assure me that the soldier would not be permitted to get into any trouble for the rest of the afternoon, I would not prefer any charges. The Sargeant in charge of the desk took a quick look at the Texan and at my insignificant 5'4½" and said with a smile, "I think I understand, sir. We will take care of the matter from here on." By that time, the soldier was just a weeping drunk and I was glad to instruct the Sargeant to see to it that he did not get into any further trouble the rest of the day. I then went on to my lunch in the Galleria. On returning to my Headquarters, I found orders to report the next day at Santa Maria Capua Vetere.

In many ways, my short assignment at Santa Maria Capua Vetere was my most interesting assignment of the war. The head of our Civil Affairs group was a British Lt. Colonel and I was the Senior American Officer. Lt. Colonel Simpson had served Her Majesty's government in small outposts all over Africa and Asia and he ran his district efficiently and well. We got along reasonably well except for his habit of ragging me at mess, especially when we had high-ranking British Officers as guests. A couple of illustrations will suffice:

One lunch we had a British Brigadier as a guest. Lt. Colonel Simpson called down to my end of the table, "I understand that we have one American Unit here where 60% of the men have V.D." I said nothing and he went on, "That's true, isn't it, Major?" I simply said, "No!" but he went on, "How do you know, when you don't even know what unit I'm talking about?" I replied evenly, "For two reasons. First, venereal figures are kept in cases per thousand, not in percentages. Second, if it were 60 cases per thousand, or only 6%, it would be so far out of the experience of the American Army, it would call for a Congressional Investigation."

This stopped him for a moment but soon he was back at me with this, "I understand that you give a decoration called "The Purple Heart" every time a man goes to a hospital for anything and that you have given out over a million of them. Is that true, that so far in the war you have given out a million "Purple Hearts?"

I told him that I thought the figure was about right as it was the oldest decoration awarded by the American Army; that it was originally awarded by George Washington to every officer who was killed or

wounded by the British in our War for Independence; that since then, it has also been awarded to every officer or enlisted man who is killed or wounded in combat; and that, so far in this war, since we have had about a half million killed in combat who were given the award posthumously, the figure must be about right.

Another one of the cases where I felt reasonably sure I had reached the right result regardless of the facts, was one at Santa Maria Capua Vetere of a girl charged with prostitution.

At Santa Maria Capua Vetere, a young girl was arrested by the carabinieri. When her case was called, I was busily writing up the preceding case and did not notice the girl until her name was called. She stepped forward in response to the Judge's question, "Vere non e vere." I looked up from my writing as the girl said in beautiful Italian, "What the sargenti says is true but I wish to explain. My father was a Colonel in the Italian Army in Abyssinia. I had 7 brothers who were all officers in the Italian Army. I believe they are all dead. It is very difficult for a girl in Italy to earn a living and I was fortunate enough to get a job doing the laundry for an American teniente. The teniente is an officer in the Railroad Transportation Corps. I sleep with him. He does not pay me any money but provides me with bars of soap and food which I use in the preparation of his meals. It is customary in the Railroad Transportation Corps for Junior Officers to pay the Italian girls who work for them with gifts of food and soap. They do not receive cash payments. I was fortunate in getting such a job with my teniente. He gives me food and soap while I, in turn, launder his clothes, keep them mended, and sleep with him in a corner of an Army boxcar I have renovated as living quarters for him. The carabinieri who arrested me, asked if I would sleep with him. I said, "No, I sleep with only one man. The carabinieri then arrested me, charged me with prostitution and brought me to this Court for trial."

At this point, justice in the person of a middle-aged American Officer, acting as Joudici Militari, decided that while the girl's conduct might not be entirely moral, he could not say that she was guilty of prostitution and declared her to be Not Guilty of the charge made by the carabinieri. As the Court pronounced the girl, "Non e culpavole", the middle-aged Judge posing as Cupid, received a beautiful smile as the girl curtsied and left the courtroom.