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Article Summary: A brief article about Nebraska's war correspondents during World War II with an excerpt from an article written by Walter Cronkite (misspelled "Kronkite" in the magazine).

Cataloging Information:

Names: Dougald Werner, Elmont Waite, William H Lawrence, Robert Bellaire, Walter Cronkite



NEBRASKA'S WAR CORRESPONDENTS

IN THIS ISSUE

Upper (Left to Right): Dougald Werner, Elmont Waite.

Lower: William H. Lawrence, Robert Bellaire.

Nebraska's War Correspondents - II

Knowing that the progress of the war has become the first thought of each day, those whose duty it is to keep the records of this great struggle feel deeply the responsibility of preserving its dramatic scenes and tense emotions. Nebraska boys are on the front reporting and supplying interesting accounts to be collected into permanent files. To us at home their reports are in our own vernacular.

Whether it be Kronkite and Werner reporting from Britain's foggy air-fields, Elmont Waite on the battle-blazoned shores of Kwajalein, Tillman Durdin in far India on the precipitous Ledo Road, Billy Lawrence in the shadow-flickering catacombs of the Odessa underground, Robert Bellaire viewing the Axis from Tokyo, or Murlin Spencer with MacArthur in the South Pacific finding "Nebraskans Everywhere," the accounts are vivid and gripping. They speak for themselves and can be appreciated only when read. Likewise, the nature of the work and the risks taken by the correspondents are often evident on the face of the reports.

Walter Kronkite, youthful dean of American air-war writers for the United Press in London, speaks for those in his own branch of the service, and his dispatch is a worthy foreword to those that follow.

Under the caption, "Reporting the Air War on Germany," he wrote:

Standing up in crowded trains, crawling over fog-shrouded roads in bouncing jeeps, riding bicycles over muddy lanes, American correspondents in Britain covering the air war are working night and day to keep pace with the mounting 'round-the-clock allied aerial offensive.

With air bases now scattered almost the full length and breadth of England, the reporter's job involves hundreds of miles of arduous traveling—sometimes hundreds of miles within a single day—to report accurately and effectively the story of American and RAF air operations.

These correspondents are "musette bag and typewriter" soldiers. The musette bag slung over their shoulder contains their shaving kit, a towel, a bar of soap and—with luck—a clean shirt. That and their portable typewriter are "home."

And when the air war is at its peak—when the Eighth is out day after day and the RAF night after night—the unshaven faces and the redness of the sleepless eyes of these Soldiers of the Press match those of the fliers and ground crews themselves.

Constantly on the go to cover every facet of the American side of the air war are two young United Press veterans, Collie Small and Dougald Werner.

They are the boys with the musette bags. Where—or whether—they will sleep when night comes—they never know.

They may visit as many as four different bases, each as much as a hundred miles from the others. There they get the basic facts of the day's mission, and the human, personal-experience stories from the men who have just returned from fighting five miles high in the skies for their countries and for their lives.

After these fliers have turned in to rest for the next day's job, Small and Werner assemble and write their stories and send them, despite communication ball-ups and hazy, dim transmission lines.

Then they may go around to the back door of the mess to beg a late meal from the chef—perhaps all their food that day. Later they grope their way to a strange barrack where they'll crawl in beside some weary flier or bomb loader or an intelligence officer destined to be awakened in an hour to plan the next day's mission. . . . Then they are at the grind again.

A Bomber's Return

DOUGALD WERNER *

This reporter (whose boyhood name was Merle McDougald Werner), writing from a base in England on February 15 last, gave a thrilling example of the stories that come home with the bombers. No sort of activity in the home field could compete with the satisfaction of making these daily reports on the way our boys are taking it to the supermen.

The radio operator turned his blinded, bleeding eyes to the top turret gunner and pleaded:

"Throw me out! I'm hit badly and no use to you now. It'll save 175 pounds and maybe get you back to England."

They told about it at this base today as they framed a recommendation for a congressional medal of honor for that radio operator—T/Sgt. Forrest L. Vosler of New York.

* On the staff of United Press, London.