

The Dallas Morning News

JUNE 14, 1945 Pp. 1 & 6

300,000 Extend Wild Welcome To Heroes Returning From War

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SAN ANTONIO, Texas, June 13.-- First Lt. Audie L. Murphy, wearing every possible decoration for gallantry in action, will return to his Farmersville home Thursday as guest of Mayor Gus Mauerman of San Antonio.

The typical Texas lad, who will celebrate his twenty-first birthday June 20, will leave here at 6 p.m. Thursday.

As soon as he arrives at Love Field, Dallas, American Air Lines would have a car ready to take him to the home of his sister, Mrs. Poland Burns, in Farmersville.

Stars fell on San Antonio, in profusion Wednesday as Lt. Gen. Ira Eaker, chief of air staff at Washington, and commander in chief of the Mediterranean Allied Air Forces, led a big parade of heroes through the streets of the historic city.

Trails once followed by the Conquistadores and the padres of early Texas resounded with the throbbing of Army vehicles as the victory parade wound through historic San Antonio streets. Mayor Mauermann estimated that at least 300,000 persons lined the streets for probably the biggest turnout in local history.

But of all the thirteen Generals and the many other officers, non-commissioned officers and enlisted men who came here directly from Paris, there was none who outshone the shy Farmersville boy--one of

two men in the entire United States Army wearing every possible decoration for combat ground gallantry.

Murphy doesn't know yet what he will do about getting out of the Army. He thinks he will remain in service, at least for a while, and perhaps will go to Army schools to get training in radio work which he loves.

Having had to leave school in the eighth grade to go to work, Murphy's first desire is to get some more education, especially in English, mathematics and history.

Takes Plaudits Calmly

The small, freckle-faced soldier took quietly the plaudits heaped on him by many admirers. He hadn't notified his relatives he was returning and it was not known he would be with the group until a short time before the three large Army transport planes landed at San Antonio.

As soon as Mayor Mauermann learned Murphy had no definite plans except to see if the Army had transportation for him, the mayor made the transportation arrangements.

Murphy wears the Congressional Medal of Honor, highest award this country can give, and the Distinguished Service Cross, a Silver Star and cluster equivalent to two Silver Stars, three awards of the Purple Heart, the Bronze Star and the Legion of Merit.

Indicative of Heroism.

The citation of his Legion of Merit is indicative of the Farmersville boy's heroism. It stated, among other things, "First Lieutenant Murphy has always carried out his missions, no matter how hazardous, with marked ability. He often assumed leadership of his platoon in the absence of sufficient commissioned personnel and so intelligently and courageously led his men that he was commissioned an officer during the French campaign."

Murphy enlisted June 30, 1942, and went overseas in February, 1943, to Casablanca. From there he went into French Tunisia and Morocco, invaded Sicily and fought through that campaign. Then he went into Salerno and went on to the Anzio beachhead, following that up by going into the southern France invasion.

Repulsed Attack.

He went on up through France and German, doing heroic work to help turn a German counterattack at the Colmar pocket. He was in Nuremberg when that city was taken and later had quite a chuckle when he took a bath in Himmler's former home in Salzburg.

Both Murphy's promotions came on the battle lines. Even when he was wounded, he kept on fighting to show the stuff he was made of. Only one other man in the Army, Capt. Maurice Britt of Arkansas, has the decorations Murphy wears.

Happy people gave the heroes a tumultuous welcome. They heaped flowers on every car that passed in the crowded streets.

Tears came to the eyes of many of the officer and men as they saw the welcome and responded to the greetings

As the heroes went to the St Anthony Hotel, they found big baskets of fruit awaiting them as gifts from the City of San Antonio.

Dallasite in Party

Among the officers arriving by plane was Brig. Gen. C. P. Cabell of Dallas, brother of former Mayor Pro Tem Ben E. Cabell and Earl Cabell.

General Cabell, whose grandfather was a General in the Confederate Army, said he expects to visit Dallas Thursday before returning to Washington, where he is in the headquarters of the Army Air Force plans division. General Cabell returned from Europe recently after acting as director of operations and intelligence for the Mediterranean Allied Air Forces.

San Antonio was especially proud of the heroes for the group included several who made their homes here or are well known in local Army circles.

General Eaker is a native of Liano county and is --- in San Antonio.

Lt. Gen. Lucian King Truscott Jr., a native of Chatfield, Navarro County, one of the top men in the party, served as commander of the Eighth Corps in Italy prior to assuming command of the Fifth Army.

Brig. Gen. Harold D. Clark, San Antonio, commanding General of the Fifty-Second Troop Carrier Wing, laid out Randolph Field in 1927 when he was a captain here. He and his wing participated in the March 24 invasion of Germany when

the First Allied Airborne Army spearheaded the British Second Army's Rhine River crossing. It also participated in the Sicilian invasion and other Mediterranean operations as well as the D-Day invasion and the Holland campaign.

Other Texans Included.

Other Texas officers in the party included Lt. Col. John M. Green of Abilene, Lt. Col. James M. Minor of -----wood, First Lt. L. D. Stephenson, of -----, and Col. Dorr E. Newton Jr., of San Antonio.

Other officers in the party were Lt. Gen. A. M. Patch, commander Seventh Army; Lt. Gen. J. K. Cannon, commander Twelfth Air Force in Italy; Lt. Gen. H. S. Vandenberg, commander Ninth Air force; Lt. Gen. J. L. Collins, Seventh Corps; Major Gen. Robert C. Macon, 83rd Infantry Division; Major Gen. N. D. Cote, 28th Infantry Division; Major Gen. J. M. Cavin, 82d Airborne Infantry Division; Major Gen. I. D. White, 2d Armored Division; Major Gen. H. M. Turner, 1st Air Division, Eighth Air Force.

Texas enlisted men in the party were Pfc. James H. Priest, Texarkana; Pfc. Johnny B. Jennings, Sulpher Springs, S-Sgt. Michael D. Harkin, Belton; 1st Sgt. Leonard P. Hooker, Houston; T-Sgt. Aubrey V. Miller, Sweetwater; T-Sgt. William A. Dorman, Wheeler; S-Sgt. Sam H. Gingles, Cleveland; S-Sgt. Henry E. Thornton, Bogata; S-Sgt. Clifford D. Sherrill, Bay City; Cpl. Russell D. Derrick, Konah; Pfc. Arthur J. Coffman, San Angelo; S-Sgt. Alfred P. Delazerda, Pfc. Roy E. Kelly, Pfc. Leonard G. O'Neill and Pfc. Salvador R. Gutierrez, San Antonio and Pfc. E. N. Ratcliff, Tyler.

The heroes left Paris, France, shortly after noon Sunday, landed at the Azores Islands, then in Newfoundland, Presque Isle, Maine, arriving in Houston late Tuesday night.

Held Press Conference.

The high Generals held a press conference after the parade and then prepared to witness a gondola parade down the historic San Antonio River and then be guests for a reception and banquet at La Villita in the heart of San Antonio.

During the press conference the Generals paid high tribute to Russians for their friendship for Americans and for their valor. they told how many Russian women do important jobs in the Russian army and then paid tribute to good work done by the Women's Army Corps of the United States Army.

The General predicted the same effect of air power on Japan as was done in whipping German and indicated that much larger air forces soon will be giving the Japs terrific blastings to paralyze industrial output.

One of the big troubles in Europe now is with dislocated people, officers said, but they believe many of the people, especially of the smaller countries, are anxious to see democratic ideals progress in their lands.

One General expressed the opinion, in answer to a question, that the French army was not as efficient a fighting machine as it was in World War I.