

INDIANS AGAIN ON THE WARPATH

By JONAS M. POWESHIEK

The war cry of the American Indian, heard with trepidation by the white man some 75 years ago, has been sounded again. Only this time it has been hurled as a challenging, fear-inspiring cry to the battle fronts of the world. For the American Indian has gone to war and, according to all information, has become one of Uncle Sam's greatest fighting men.

The braves, aided by a heritage of cunning and courage, have put aside their tribal headdress for GI helmets and are now matching their warring skill against the Germans and the Japs.

The Sac and Fox Indians are giving good account of themselves as warriors, as did their forefathers when they were at war against the white aggressors. A large percentage of the young men of the Sac and Fox tribe in Tama county, Iowa, are now in the service of Uncle Sam.

Back in World War I, the Sac and Fox Indians of Tama were exempted from any war service on account of non-citizenship and being wards of the government, which was true of many other Indian tribes of the United States. But the Indians love their homeland so much that they didn't take advantage of being exempted; they wanted to fight for their country, so they volunteered to the extent of 85 per cent, a contribution as large as any of the races in proportion to their number. They invariably performed the duty required of them. Having proved and earned their right to be citizens of their own country, in 1924 the president automatically made all Indians in the United States citizens which gave them the right to vote.

All Indians in this World War II were subject to draft, but frequently they didn't wait for draft. A large per cent volunteered. Today over 23,000 are in the Armed Forces, a ratio of volunteers of inducted men that is higher among Indians than any single racial group in the

country. As good soldiers, already they have established a name for themselves as they did in 1917-18.

The Indian is a born hunter and his experience with wild animals has made him an excellent marksman and skillful nimrod. He is such a perfect mimic of wild animals that he deceives both man and animals. His wonderful power of observation aids him in hunting and also in time of war. The Indian soldier's bravery, courage, and love of country are so outstanding he has earned the title "The Brave"—the only race to hold this title.

A TRIBUTE TO INDIAN TACTICS

A fine tribute to the American Indian as a warrior and military strategist was given by W. O. McGeehan in the *New York Times*, and it is worth repeating here. He wrote:

Who was the greatest American general? Considered from the point of view of his influence upon American field tactics, it was not Washington, nor Grant, nor Lee. It was some nameless Indian warrior whose bones lie in a forgotten mound and whose shade, sitting erect upon a ghostly steed in the happy hunting grounds, grins sardonically as it looks down upon a brigade of khaki-clad United States troops drilling in open order.

He sees the paleface commander deploying his skirmish lines with wide intervals between the men just as he had done, and he notes with grim approval that the infantrymen take advantage of the topography of the country. Then, as he sees the advance by rushes, a squad or platoon darting forward from opposite sides of the line to baffle the fire of the enemy, he knows that field tactics as he designed them were good.

The first of the paleface generals to admit the military genius of the American Indian was George Washington. That was during the French and Indian war, when Washington was attached to the Braddock expedition. The elementary histories tell how Washington tried to impress the stubborn English commander with the folly of fighting in close formation in that wilderness. Washington suggested that the English expedition adopt the Indian tactics and take advantage of the country. Braddock refused and the refusal to adopt the Indian tactics was disastrous to the expedition.

Military science has turned to the Indian point of view since then. It is a primary rule in the tactics of all nations now to take advantage of the terrain—that is, the topography of the country. If there were trees to mask an advance, every advantage which the cover gives is taken for all it is worth. It is no longer con-

sidered unchivalrous or unmilitary to make feint attacks from the front while the main attack from the rear or from the flank is made. Any military tribunal of today would have cashiered Braddock. He would be regarded as a man utterly ignorant of the first principles of military science.

Perhaps we may not be able to prove that the credit for the khaki-colored clothing which makes the modern soldier such a difficult mark for the enemy rifleman belong to the American Indian, but the fact remains that the Indian was the first to adopt a fighting costume which made him hard to distinguish against his background.

The Indian never had any artillery, but he paved the way for the masked batteries. The incendiary bomb used in Europe was another invention of the American Indian. Long before he knew the use of gunpowder the American Indian used flaming arrows to fire fortresses. Andrew Jackson later adopted the scheme when he sent a red-hot cannon ball into the renegades' fort in Florida and blew up the powder magazine. One can almost see the inventor of those tactics watching the struggle from his vantage point on a peak in the happy hunting grounds. The ghostly war bonnet is proudly erect and there is brilliant light in the fierce dark eyes of the great warrior.

"My brothers use my battle plans well," he says, "but the pale-face warriors have mastered my teaching even better. They are great warriors now, the palefaces, for they fight with the cunning that I have taught and in the real American fashion."

And the heart of the great chief will no longer be bitter as he turns to his wickiup. The tactics of the United States army form a flattering tribute to the American Indian's genius for military affairs.

IN THE THIRTY-FOURTH DIVISION

Among the original 3,400 Iowans who could "fight like hell," were a few Sac and Fox Indians, who have experienced some bloody fights and gone through many hardships. Starting November 8, 1942, at Algiers, for 88 days straight they fought at Sened, Faid Pass and Fondouk; at Mateur, Hill 609, and Bizerte. Then they went to Italy, and during the 103 combat days between September 21, 1943 and July 28, 1944, fought some more from Paestum to the Arno River. Up to the first of the year 1945, 437 of the original Iowans were left in the unit—six officers and 431 enlisted men. This is just a part of the experience the 34th Division went through.

The writer had a very nice visit with one of the boys who just returned, Pvt. Melvin Twin, and our thanks to him for the information as to his outfit. After 32 months of service he is pretty badly used and shot up, and it is quite probable he will get his discharge from the service at the termination of his furlough.

The following list gives the name, rank, length of service and location of the Sac and Fox Indians in the Armed Forces, or who have served in World War II, so far as is known to the writer. The letter V following the names indicates the volunteers and the letter D those in the draft.

Pfc. Edward Benson, (V), now located at Jefferson Barracks, Mo. after a rotation furlough following 32 months overseas service with the famous 34th Division in the North Africa, Algiers, Tunisia and Sicily Campaigns. He wears four stars on his European Theatre ribbon and a Combat Infantryman Badge. As a member of the 2nd Battalion which received a Distinguished Unit Citation from the War Dept., he is entitled to wear the Unit Badge.

Pfc. Earl Benson, (D), in service 14 months. Somewhere in France.

Pfc. Phillip Benson, (V), has served nearly two years with the 45th Infantry Division; wounded on the Anzio beachhead; awarded the Purple Heart and the Combat Infantry Badge for extreme bravery in action against the enemy; now drives a supply truck in France.

Pvt. Arthur Blackcloud, (V), in service since Jan., 1945, Camp Hood, Texas.

Pfc. Truman C. Blackcloud, (D), entered service in 1942 in the Armored Engineer Corp; served as training instructor and now somewhere in Europe.

Pvt. Wilson Brown, (D), Honorably discharged.

Curtis B. Davenport, R. M. 3/C, (V), Radio man, entered service in Dec., 1942, and in the Pacific Area for over two years.

Clyde Davenport, R. M. 2/C, (V), entered service in 1942; served in landing troops in North Africa and Sicily and now in the Pacific Area.

Pvt. Martin Davenport, (D), entered service June 22, 1944, training at Perrin Field, Sherman, Texas.

Pfc. Talbert Davenport, (D), entered service in 1942 and went oversea in 1943 in the Army Engineer Corps and was in the area of the recent German offensive.

Pvt. Leroy Duncan, (D), Honorably discharged.

Pfc. Carl Jefferson, (D), entered service in 1942 and went over-

sea July, 1944. He is a crack rifleman and sharp shooter in the Infantry and was in Germany when last heard from.

Pvt. George Edwin Kapayou, (D), Honorably discharged.

Pvt. Kenneth Kapayou, (D), Honorably discharged.

Pvt. Roy Kapayou, (D), entered service in March 1944 and now at Camp Gruber, Oklahoma.

T/5 Dixon Keahna, (D), entered service in 1942 and was stationed for a while in the Alaska area. He is now at the Tank Destroyer Replacement Training Center, North Camp Hood, Texas.

Pvt. Gaston Keahna, (D), entered service in May 1933. He is in a Rifle Platoon, Camp Ritchie, Maryland.

Pvt. Wilbur Kaehna, (V), entered service in March, 1944. He is in the Infantry and stationed at New Orleans, Louisiana.

Pvt. Clifford Lasley, (D), entered service in Dec., 1942, and went oversea in 1944. He has spent about six months in tough fighting along the Burma Road but was back at Calcutta, India when last heard from.

Pvt. Clement Mauskemo, (D), killed in action in the Pacific; posthumous award of the Purple Heart.

Pfc. Norval Mitchell, (D), entered service in July, 1943 and was sent to the Aleutian Area. He is in the Coast Artillery and doing special work in Orientation and travels from island to island showing special movies.

Cpl. Reuben Mitchell, (D), entered service in 1942. He is in the Armored Field Artillery and has been oversea quite a while. He was last heard from in Belgium.

Pvt. Rudolph Mitchell, (D), entered service in 1943 and went oversea in Aug. 1944. On last account he was in the jungles of New Guinea.

Conklin Morgan, (D), inducted in Feb. 1945.

Pvt. Jimmie Morgan, (V), has been on duty in the Aleutians, but is now training for paratrooper at Camp Mackall, N. C.

Gailey Morgan, (D), inducted in Feb. 1945.

Pvt. Robert Morgan, (D), killed in action in Italy; posthumous award of the purple heart.

Roger Morgan, S1/C, (V), in service for about fourteen years. He is store clerk in the Navy and was heard from recently in the Pacific Area.

Richard D. Poweshiek, (V), S1/C, has been on New Caledonia and Guadalcanal and took part in the invasion of the Philippines. He is still in that area looking for Jap ships.

Sgt. Charles Pushetonequa, (V), entered the service in 1942. He is in the ground crew of the Air Corps. He is stationed in New Guinea.

Pvt. Frank Pushetonequa, (V), entered service in 1942. He is in the Air Corps training at Laredo, Texas. He is training for a nose-gunner on a B-24.

Pfc. Dewey Roberts, (V), entered service in 1942 and was shipped

to England in Feb., 1943. He took part in the North African and Italian campaigns. He was wounded in the Italian campaign but has recovered and is driving an army truck in the 7th Army.

Pvt. Ernest Roberts, (D), entered service in March 1943 in an Infantry Regiment. He was in the Italian campaign. He is with the 7th Army in Germany.

Pvt. Frank Jonas Sanache, (V), entered service in 1942 and was sent oversea in Feb. 1943. He was with the 34th Division in the North Africa Campaign where he was taken prisoner in Oct. 1943 by the Germans and sent directly to Germany.

Pvt. Willard Sanache, (V), Honorably discharged.

Pvt. Duard Scott, (D), Honorably discharged.

Pfc. Raymond Slick, (D), entered service Jan., 1942. He is an expert rifleman and has been oversea for about three months. He was wounded while in the Belgium combat area.

George Soldier, MoMM 1/C, (V), Advance Training and Relief Crew 5. In Nov. 1945 he will have been in the Navy seventeen years. He has been in the submarine division for the past eight years and is stationed in Australia.

Sgt. Melvin Twin, (V), in Company E, 34th Division, entered service in 1942 and went oversea in Feb., 1943. He was in the North African Campaigns and has seen 32 months oversea service and is now at the Winnebago reservation in Nebraska, being home on rotation furlough.

Pvt. Alexander Walker, (D), entered service in April, 1942, with the 9th Infantry. He is reported to be in France.

Cpl. Billy Waseskuk, (D), entered service in 1942. He was home recently on a furlough. He is stationed at Camp Livingstone, La., where he trains new recruits to handle rifles. He wears an expert infantryman badge, a good conduct ribbon, and an American Theatre of Operations Ribbon as he was formerly stationed in the Aleutian Islands.

Pfc. Bennie Waseskuk, (D), entered service in 1943 and went oversea in 1943. Since Jan., 1945 he has been in the Philippines. He is in a medical battalion.

Robert Waseskuk, (D), inducted in Feb. 1945.

Pvt. Judy Wayne, (V), entered service in 1942 and went oversea in Feb. 1943. He was captured in Oct. 1943 by the Italians in the North African Campaign. He was taken to Italy where he is said to have escaped but was retaken prisoner by the Germans.

Pfc. Mike Wayne, (V), entered service in 1942 and went oversea in Feb., 1943. He is a veteran of 27 months of oversea service with the 34th Division. He has a medical discharge.

Pvt. Walter Wayne, (V), entered service in 1942. He was wounded in action on Attu in the Aleutian Campaign and was awarded the Purple Heart.

Pvt. Dan Youngbear, (D), inducted in Jan., 1945 and training at Camp Hood, Texas.

Pvt. Dewey Youngbear, (V), entered service in 1942 and went oversea Feb., 1943. He was taken prisoner by the Germans in Oct. 1943 and sent to Germany.

It should be understood that effort has been made to obtain data on each Indian boy in service, but up to now it has been difficult, due to failure of different parties to answer questions through the mail.

The Indian office has on file records of many braves who have been cited both in the Pacific, North Africa, and Italy.

THE INDIAN BRILLIANT IN TACTICS

A recent dispatch from Marine headquarters in New Britain told of an Indian unit demonstrating its heritage of woodlore by silently infiltrating into the rear of the Japanese positions and capturing it after frontal attacks had failed, and Gen. Douglas McArthur, in a message from the Pacific, said that the tactics of the Indian "so brilliantly utilized by our commander George Washington again apply in basic principle to the vast jungle-covered reaches of the present war."

Today the Indian has regained his self respect. He is intensely and sincerely loyal to the United States government; that is the explanation of his splendid war record.

In response to inquiries as to the Indians in Iowa, will state that there are on the government roll today (January 1, 1945) 512 Mesquakies, as they originally called themselves, but better known in history and in government reports as the Sac and Fox Indians. They own their land and have paid taxes ever since 1857. Their land is erroneously called a reservation. Their lands are held in common and they were all paid for by the Indians. Forty years ago they began gradually to build frame houses and today every family lives in a modern and comfortable house. Prior to that time they lived in their wickiups and summer bark houses in their yards. They still have these, but use them to carry on their religious rites and in the summer they do their cooking in them. The purpose in keeping these wickiups and summer bark houses is to make sure they will not lose sight of their old customs,

and particularly their religion. They dress like their neighbors, but insist upon worshipping as did their fathers.

The Sacs and Foxes did a great deal of hunting, for the fur and for the meat; but their food was chiefly corn, beans and squash as well as the meat of wild animals and birds. Before the coming of the white men they had clothing made chiefly of buckskin. Today they dress as anybody else in civilian clothes. However, on special occasions they still wear buckskin clothes and prefer them at their ceremonies and annual public pow-wows.

They are skillful in the crafts and still do a great deal of fine work, especially bead work, basket work, in jewelry, woodwork and rug weaving.

KEENLY ENJOY VARIED SPORTS

In sports they have many different games, and some that the public has never seen. One of their popular games is called *la crosse*. They do much singing and dancing, and in peace time they had annual festivals or pow-wows, which drew many visitors.

There are in Iowa many Indian names for counties, cities and rivers. Out of 99 counties there are 21 with Indian names. Of these there are nine that are Sac and Fox names: Appanoose, Wapello, Keokuk, Muscatine, Iowa, Poweshiek, Tama, Sac and Black Hawk.

The Sac and Fox Indians in Iowa have sent many soldiers into the armies. Their children are being educated. They live in much more comfort than their forefathers. The American Indians have contributed many things that are useful. To agriculture the Indian gave corn, cotton, tobacco, our three great money-making crops. To our tables he contributed tomatoes, the potato, beans, pumpkins and so on. He invented the snow shoe and the bark canoe. He taught how to tan leather, made cunning traps, and set up portable tents for shelter. In addition the Indians have contributed hundreds of words to our American vocabulary, especially the names of places. The Indians in Iowa are becoming prominent in all these affairs

and are not dependent upon others. They love their homes and desire to continue good family life.

PRESERVATION OF INDIAN PICTURES

People never tire of pictures of old-time Indians, for they are associated in our minds with the heroic age of the pioneers. Moreover, their costumes are colorful, and their way of life strikes a romantic note. A camp scene showing smoking lodges, a papoose in its cradle, a warrior on horseback or posing in his native costume are always interesting. Pictures of Indians appear in our magazines as regularly as the years roll by. Everyone has an Indian picture or two.

But the historic value of these old photographs is not always appreciated. Up in your attic, probably, in that old trunk of letters and knick-knacks may be the portrait of some famous chief, of a treaty camp, or a dance no longer practiced. That photo of the beef issue, of the old-time agency, or the mission school, may be the only existing record of the time and place it illustrates. Sooner or later, some one who does not know what it means will burn it. Surely you should send it to the State Historical Department for preservation. Attach a sheet of paper, giving whatever information you have as to the subject of the photograph, the time it was taken, and the place. The state will be grateful.

Now, when everybody is combing his home for scrap to aid in the war effort, is a good time to sort out those old pictures and records and put them where they cannot be destroyed. Even if you do not know what a photograph shows, historians may be able to discover that. Send it in, and give your descendants a fuller knowledge of the good old days. Writers, artists, educators will profit by your gift, which will help them to present a truer and more interesting picture of the past.—Stanley Vestal in the *Chronicles of Oklahoma*.

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