EDITORIAL: WRITING FOR "THE MEDAL COLLECTOR"

This month's Editorial concerns a subject dear to the heart of the Editor; that is, gathering material to publish in THE MEDAL COLLECTOR. It seems appropriate at this time of year, just before the annual Orders and Medals Society of America Convention to discuss the question of writing for your Journal.

First, THE MEDAL COLLECTOR needs good articles if it is going to appear. It therefore follows that the members of OMSA are going to have to produce those articles, for the Editor cannot produce a 40-page Journal each month by himself. If YOU have something you think worth writing about, please submit it to the Editor.

Second, in submitting material, there are certain things that YOU can do that will make production of THE MEDAL COLLECTOR more efficient:

A) type your submission on a pica typewriter using a 60 space by sixty line arrangement.
B) single-space your lines, except for paragraphing--paragraphs are indicated by double-spacing, with NO indentations.
C) Check your typing for misspelled words and omissions.
D) Begin with the title and your name at the beginning of the article--check old MEDAL COLLECTOR's for style.
E) NEVER paste in your illustrations if they are photographs--the printer prefers them loose. Other illustrations, such as drawings, photos from magazines, books, etc., may be pasted in. Allow space in the article for the illustrations.
F) Photos reproduce best if they are black and white, high-contrast 5x7's or 8x10's. Color photos do not reproduce as well. Always indicate on the back what the picture is.
G) Please remember that while the Editor is happy to return photographs and other illustrations, that they must come to him by mail, go to the printer by mail and then return. Given the mail service, it is well to keep duplicate photos.
H) Before you send in your article, check the style against a recent MEDAL COLLECTOR. One of my endeavors as Editor has been to produce a common style for the Journal.
I) Finally, do not let all of this mechanical business deter you from submitting material. If you have something of value to say, the Editor will be quite happy to retype your material from elite type or handscript.

Third, the Journal needs filler material. This sort of thing includes newsnotes concerning our hobby, identifications sought or given, book reviews, etc.

Finally, advertise in THE MEDAL COLLECTOR. If you are a dealer, take a quarter-, third-, half-, or full-page ad. If you are regular member, use the classified advertising. It does get results, and the more people who advertise, the better results it will get.

I look forward to your submissions. Have an enjoyable time with this issue. WRH
The Italian High Command despatched a single armoured division to Africa. This was the Ariete, which bore a proud name from a glorious past. Aries is the Latin name for a ram, and in antiquity this name was given to the gigantic battering ram with which the Romans broke down the fortresses of the ancient world from Spain to Syria. The Ancient Roman Arietes aroused the admiration and terror of the Nations. The Ariete tanks of Mussolini, however, aroused only the contempt of their enemies and the compassion of their allies. They terrified their own crews. Weighing twelve tons with inadequate armour and a 4 cm. gun, what could they do against the British ack-ack and the British armour? The sandbags packed round the door were intended to give the unfortunate crews in these travelling coffins a little extra safety. "the chance of surviving an attack in such a tank not to speak of success, lay beyond the realms of courage which can be morally demanded." This is what Dr. Monzel, chief German interpreter to the 20th Italian Corps, wrote to me. He was right.

From THE FOXES OF THE DESERT by Paul Carrell

"The reconquest of Cyrenaica was now complete" (as a result of the final battle action on 8 April 1941), wrote General Erwin Rommel, "the Desert Fox," in his diary. (1) The combined German-Italian forces, under his command, had cleared the Italian colony of Libya of the invading British, except for an encircled pocket at Tobruk, and had driven the British back into Egypt past Halfaya Pass. Especially pleasing to the Italians was the capture, near Derna, of the British commanders, Generals Neame and O'Connor, the latter being the executor of their earlier defeat, which had resulted in the despatch of Rommel and his "Afrika Korps" to Libya. (2) Strangely enough, this same General O'Connor had served alongside the Italians in Italy during the First World War, and had been awarded the Italian Silver Medal for Valor. (3)

The Ariete Armored Division had arrived in Tripoli in February of 1941 to find the Italian Military Commander, the hero of Ethiopia, Marshal Rudolfo Graziani, sacked in total disgrace, and the British Army the masters of Cyrenaica (the eastern portion of the Italian Libyan colony). After consulting with General Gariboldi, his nominal superior (who had replaced Graziani), Rommel quickly took hold, sending the Italian infantry and the German troops, as they debarked, to the small village of Sirte, on the coastal road, and the Ariete Armored Division to Buerat, behind the marshes to the west of Sirte. (4) The British had stopped to the east of Sirte to consolidate their gains and to allow their supplies to catch up; Rommel's sudden attack caught them unprepared. Rommel made his main effort along the coastal road, with German and Italian troops, to
clear the Via Balbia, and sent the Ariete through Agedabia, across the desert, in a flanking movement. This drive eventually carried Ariete all the way to the Egyptian border at the heels of the fleeing British troops—until Rommel withdrew them to invest "Fortress Tobruk." Here Ariete came up against Australian and New Zealand troops, some of the finest soldiers of the British Empire. (5) After many desperate attacks, in which Ariete was well represented, Tobruk still held out. Ariete was returned to the main effort against the British in Egypt.

Under the command of General Rommel, one of the outstanding commanders of the Second World War, Ariete wrote many a glorious page in the history of the Italian Armored Forces, despite their obsolete vehicles, their inferior weapons—still they suffered on in these steaming steel coffins, always undergunned, under equipped, and a "step-child" in the allocation of supplies. In spite of all Ariete persevered through the "Benghazi Handicaps," back and forth across the desert, until the final battle of El Alamein, where Rommel himself penned the epitaph of the gallant Ariete Division on 4 November 1942:

Enormous dust-clouds could be seen south and south-east of headquarters where a desperate struggle of the small and inefficient Italian tanks of XX Corps was being played out against the hundred or so British heavy tanks which came round their open right flanks. I was later told by Major von Luck whose battalion I had sent to close the gap between the Italians and the Afrikakorps, that the Italians, who at that time represented our strongest motorised force, fought with exemplary courage. Von Luck gave what assistance he could with his guns, but was unable to avert the fate of the Italian Armored Corps. Tank after tank split asunder or burned out, while all the time a tremendous British barrage lay over the Italian infantry and artillery positions. The last signal came from the Ariete at about 15:30 hours: "Enemy tanks penetrated sout of Ariete. Ariete now encircled. Location 5 km north-west of Bir-el-Abd. Ariete's tanks in action."

By evening the XX Italian Corps had been completely destroyed after a very gallant action. In the Ariete we lost our oldest Italian comrades, from whom we had probably always demand more than they, with their poor armament, had been capable of performing. (7)

Reformed in Italy, and commanded by General Raffaele Cadorna, son of Marshal Luigi Cadorna, commander of the Italian armies on the Austro-French Front in World War I, the new Ariete was faithful to the heroic traditions of the old, when, along with other Italian units, it fought and held north of Rome 50,000 German troops on 9 and 10 September 1943. This action was of immense help to the Allies as these German forces were thus prevented from interfering with the landings at Salerno. General Cadorna escaped from Rome, and for the remainder of the war commanded the military arm of the CTV—Corpo Volontari della Libertà (Volunteer Corps for Liberty), which fought the Germans as partisans in Northern Italy from 1944 until 5 May 1945. Many former soldiers of the Ariete fought the Germans in