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FREE e-publication

## “SMOKE’EM IF YOU GOTT’EM” - THE ZIPPO LIGHTER IN WWII *by Barbo*

Founded by George Blaisdell in the early 1930’s, the Zippo lighter has become no less than an American icon. Manufactured in Bradford Pennsylvania, the “windproof” lighter has a rectangular case and hinged top. The chimney-style design enabled flame under the most adverse conditions. As a result, the lighter looked good and was easy to use.

Why “Zippo”? Blaisdell came up with the name. He liked the sound of the word “zipper” and settled on “Zippo,” deciding it had a “modern” sound to it.

The first Zippo lighters sold for \$ 1.95 a piece. And, from its humble beginnings, were backed by Blaisdell’s unconditional lifetime guarantee - *“It works or we fix it free.”*



No other event in history increased the popularity of Zippo lighters than World War II. From 1943 through the end of the war, Zippo’s entire production was allocated to the armed forces. The military initiative led to the production of the steel-case Zippo with black “crackle” finish. Today collectors refer to these rare models as “black crackle lighters.” Zippo has continued the military connection with a number of commemorative editions.

The fact that millions of American military personnel carried them into battle is a testament to its durability, flexibility and reliability. Canadian and British forces also enjoyed the lighter. Even the enemy knew how valuable Zippos were. There are photographs of German and Japanese troops using them too.

The Zippo Company archives are filled with letters describing the many uses of the lighter including: heating meals in a helmet, lighting campfires, sparking fuses for explosives, hammering nails and signaling fellow soldiers with the famous Zippo click. On several occasions, a Zippo lighter even saved a life or two. It is reported that by being carried in a shirt or pants pocket, it actually deflected bullets!

So, if you gott’em, smok’em, and remember the contribution this little gem offered our soldiers. If only all military equipment worked as flawlessly.



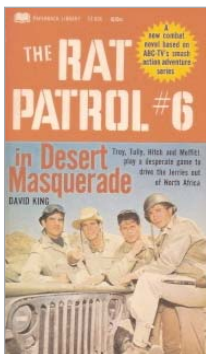
Sources:  
zippo.com, zippoclick.com

## Book Review

### **The Rat Patrol #6 - Desert Masquerade**

by David King

Reviewed by Sgt. Victoria Moore



Beaten and battered at his stronghold at Sidi Abd, Capt. Dietrich and his Jerry column retreated across the swirling Saharan sands, the Allies chasing. But the wily Hauptmann withdrew to a strategic position on a ridge overlooking a key pass. With the sea to the north, a barren sand marsh to the south and a heavily armed slope between his forces and the Allied troops, Dietrich was sitting pretty.

For weeks the stalemate between Dietrich and the Allies continued. Col. Wilson knew all he needed was a map of the minefield, the route of safe passage, and the location of Jerry's mortars and machine guns. With that, and his top-secret rocket launcher, he could take the ridge. But how was he to get the needed intel?

He came up with a plan, one that called for the Rat Patrol.....and it was a doozy! Even Troy shook his Aussie Bush hat.

The Lads left their lair sans identifying hats and flew to a secure location. G-2 agents there briefed them and began the Lads transformation from hardened desert fighters into the Enna Brothers, late of Chicago.

After shaving their heads, G-2 agents glued dark wigs, sideburns and thick mustaches on the Lads and gave each a pair of black contact lenses to complete the transformation. Troy received a gold cap for a front tooth and Tully a fake two carat diamond pinkie ring. Outfitted in garish gangster garb, they took their seats in the Hispanzo-Suiza Italian touring car.

G-2 had thought of everything. In the trunk were hampers of imported cheeses and sausages, wines and liquors, and dishes. Oh, for a glass of burgundy and a Camembert and ham sandwich two days into the mission.

Their cover? They were to offer to kill the Rat Patrol for Dietrich while in fact gaining access to the needed strategic information for Wilson.

To keep the charade alive, Wilson meanwhile had four soldiers wearing the Lads' distinctive hats remain in the Allied camp.

One can imagine Dietrich's look as he commented on the Enna Brothers' family resemblance. Alas, Manfred was not Dietrich's foil in this novel. Lt Grosse played the part, trying repeatedly to warn Herr Hauptmann of the masquerade, but to no avail.

Dietrich was not the only one to fall for their story. Tully and Mark return to the Allied camp and fool Col. Wilson. Finally realizing he's been duped, Wilson falls on the ground laughing until he cries, leaving his soldiers to wonder if the Colonel hadn't lost his marbles.

The last of the Rat Patrol tomes ends with Troy humiliating Dietrich, drunk on bourbon. Rather than take him prisoner - then who would make their lives interesting? - Troy and Moffitt truss him in camouflage netting and leave him on the road with gourmet treats to be found by his soon to be retreating forces.

Lest you be concerned, armed with the needed intel Col. Wilson and his forces took the ridge and once again routed Herr Hauptmann.

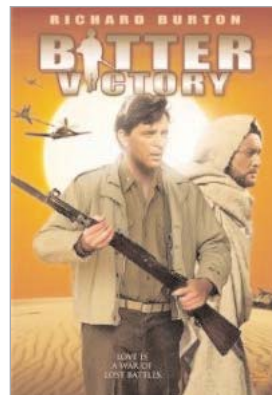


## Movie Review

### **Bitter Victory**

Starring Richard Burton & Curd Jurgens

Reviewed by Val



"Bitter Victory", a 1957 movie in black and white starring Curd Jurgens and Richard Burton, begins with General Paterson's plan to send a commando raid behind enemy lines in Benghazi in order to steal important secret documents from the Germans. He is considering two candidates for this difficult mission: Major Brand, a career officer; and Captain Leith, an archeologist, neither of whom has seen any action before. They also have a shared history through Brand's wife, Jane, who had an affair with Leith before the war.

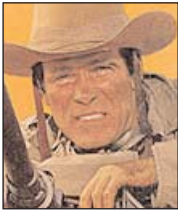
The mission is an easy success, but as they quickly depart the city, our courageous British soldiers are followed by German cars, intent on catching them. A skirmish ensues, in which our heroes emerge victorious and take a German colonel prisoner. After that, Brand decides they must continue, but leaves Leith behind in charge of the wounded. Brand and his prisoner must then make their own way until, against all odds, Leith eventually catches up to them. Then begins the harsh march back to Allied lines, through the unforgiving desert...

The movie dwells mostly on the tensions between Brand and Leith, principally centered around Brand's jealousy of Leith. That jealousy is triggered by the attraction between Leith and Brand's wife, but also by Leith's courage, as opposed to Brand's own cowardice. Under these circumstances, the walk back home is a long one indeed.

Mostly, this movie strikes me as average in many regards. The technical quality is all right (the decors don't look too much like decors), the acting is fine, the story is sufficiently well-paced... but nothing really stands out significantly, and Brand's internal struggles feel more petty than meaningful. People who like desert war movies will probably enjoy this one if they have one and a half hours to kill, especially since it shows the obligatory march in the desert sequence, but other than that there is nothing much to say in favour of "Bitter Victory".







Dear David,

I hope this note finds you. I'm still here in North Africa. I think I'll be here for the duration. That would suit me just fine. My unit is tops! We are working so well together. Great support from Moffitt. My two privates are the best, - Hitch & Tully. As a matter of fact, I'm at a hospital in Bengazi getting Tully checked out. He took one in the shoulder the other day. We helped the "enemy" get a girl out of a well, believe it or not. We got her out okay, but there was a bit of mistrust during our truce, as you can well imagine. Anyway, got to go. Tully's okay and standing impatiently at my tent flap. Stay safe.

Your loving  
brother Sam

# RAT PUZZLE PAGES THE TRUCE AT ABURAH – Fill-In Puzzle By Janet B.

Put the words below into the correct spaces in the grid.



**3 LETTERS**  
HUT

**4 LETTERS**  
GIRL  
LOOP  
ROPE  
SONG  
WELL

**5 LETTERS**  
BEADS  
BOARD  
CLIFF  
CROSS  
DUNES  
LEDGE  
RADIO  
TREES  
TRUCE

**6 LETTERS**  
ABURAH  
MOTHER

**7 LETTERS**  
BUSH HAT  
BLUE FOX  
GRENADE

**8 LETTERS**  
EARRINGS  
RED GOOSE  
TAILGATE  
WATER JUG

**9 LETTERS**  
BRACELETS  
MOUNTAINS

**10 LETTERS**  
FLASHLIGHT

**11 LETTERS**  
ADOBE BRICKS

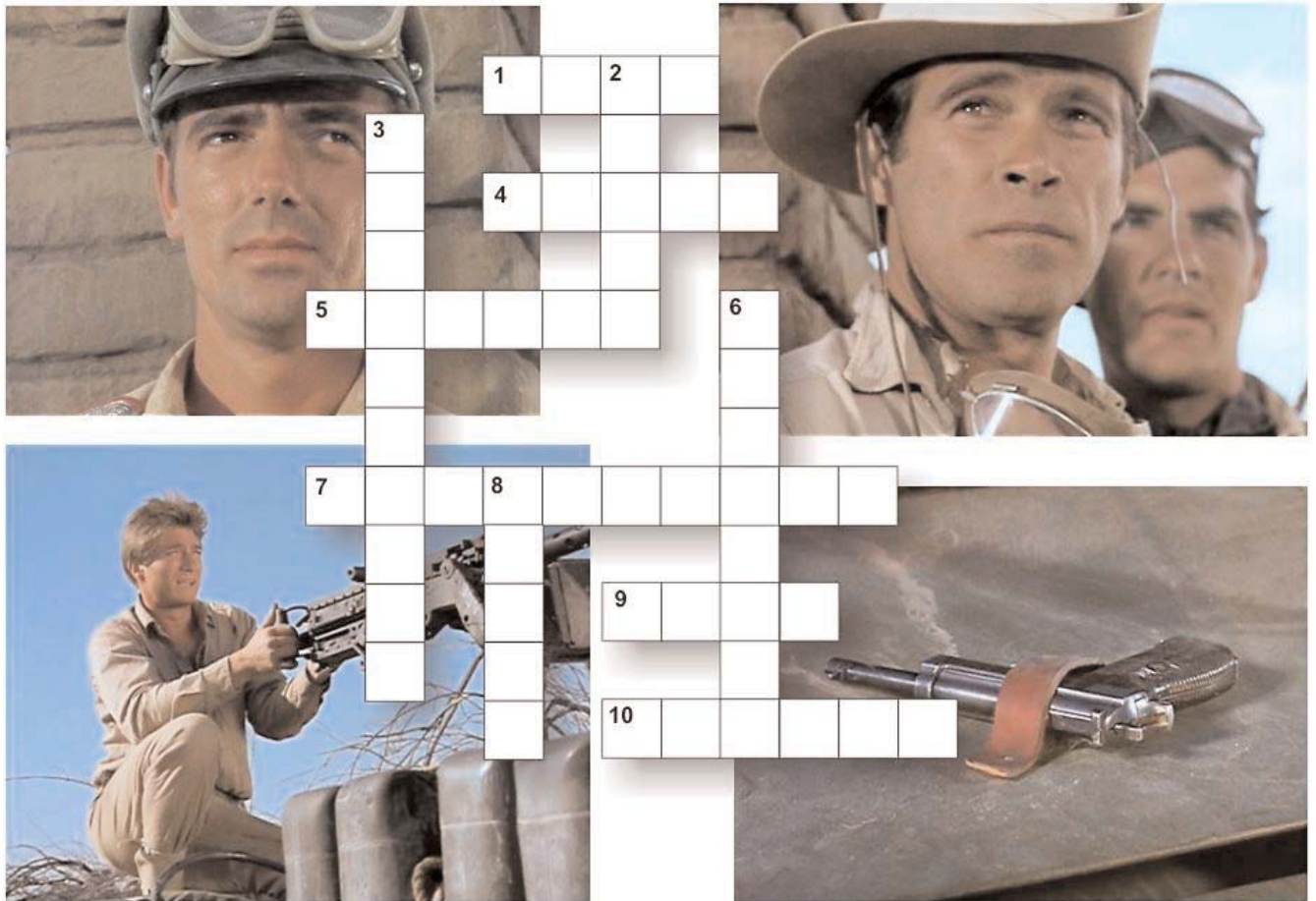
**12 LETTERS**  
COLORFUL WALL  
SOLE SURVIVOR

**14 LETTERS**  
HONOR THIS TRUCE

**16 LETTERS**  
TRUCK STUCK IN SAND



# THE TRUCE AT ABURAH – Crossword Puzzle *by Libby*



## ACROSS

- 1 The name of the little girl in the well.
- 4 Which one of the Rat Patrol did NOT show a watch on his wrist?
- 5 The name of the sector the Rat Patrol was to proceed to.
- 7 What Tully went back to the jeep to get.
- 9 The time shown on Troy's watch when he was on the radio.
- 10 How many tons of assorted equipment were in the Allied convoy?

## DOWN

- 2 The name of the director for this episode.
- 3 What Dietrich wore around his neck for the entire episode.
- 6 The radio codename for Troy.
- 8 The name of the commander of the Allied truck convoy.

## How the Rats Came to Be

By Anne

**After the Rat Patrol's first successful mission with Sergeant Moffitt, he has a few questions about his new comrades.**

In the approaching darkness the four men were relaxing after the labors of the day and anticipating a little R&R in town. Hitch was lighting a lantern for Troy, who was poring over a map, and Tully sat on the ground, leaning against one of the jeep tires with a faraway look in his eyes.

Jack sank down on the sand beside him. "Tully, I must admit I am curious. Care to tell me how you three ended up in North Africa? I understand your country entered the war barely a month ago."

Tully chewed on his matchstick for a moment before replying. "It's a doggone shame, too. But the Sarge, Hitch, and me, we knew a long time before Pearl Harbor that the world was in a heap of trouble, and we each decided to do something about it."

"I must say we in Britain wondered what was taking the Yanks so long," Jack admitted.

Tully shifted his weight on the cold sand. "Guess most people thought all that stuff in Europe was too far away, and wasn't any of our business."

"But you didn't agree?"

"No sir. I joined right after Dunkirk. I figured you folks could use a hand. Same with Sarge and Hitch, except Sarge signed up a lot earlier, right after Britain declared war."

"How did you three become a team?"

"Well, Doc, after I finished boot camp I got a chance to join the commandos. Met the Sarge and Hitch during training—Sarge was our instructor. We seemed to understand each other and figure out how the other guy was going to react in a situation. Then they asked for volunteers to go overseas—we jumped at the chance. We were attached to the Long Range Desert Group for awhile, working with the New Zealanders."

"And now?"

"I reckon you could say officially we're part of the 111th Armored Recon Battalion. But you probably noticed that we don't exactly have much in the way of troops or equipment over here."

"Frankly, yes," Jack said.

"It'll be months before we can mount a major offensive here in the desert," Tully said, shaking his head. "In the meantime, here we are, helping the 8th Army, trying to keep Jerry from doing business as usual."

Jack looked across at Tully. "I'm glad I was chosen to join your team, but I'm afraid I've much to learn."

Tully raised his head quickly. "Hell, Doc, we've all got a lot to learn. That first couple of weeks with the New Zealanders—navigation, demolition, yessir, we learned a lot from the Kiwis. And I reckon you can teach us a lot more about the desert and the folks who live here."

"Perhaps." Jack hesitated. "In fact, I've a book written by my father on the subject in my pack, if you would care to read it?"

"Doc, that would be great. Thanks." Tully leaned across and the two solemnly shook hands.



## Gone Fishin'

By Keryn H.

The morning was warm, but a soft breeze cooled Tully's face as he pushed his way through the brush to his private fishing hole. He'd found it as a young boy, and as far as he could tell, no one else knew about it. It was his own personal paradise.

Most times when he was there it didn't matter if he caught anything, he just loved being by the river, but today he was on a mission. Company was coming and Ma wanted a nice mess of catfish for dinner. In the Pettigrew's little corner of Kentucky Ma was famous for her batter fried catfish. She refused to reveal her secret, but Tully knew it was just a big slug of Pa's special 'shine.

Pushing aside a curtain of wild grape vines, he was there. Seating himself with his back to his favorite gum tree, he cast his line into the water. Downstream a blue heron stalked the shallows, slowly placing each spindly leg, making hardly a ripple on the placid surface of the river. Suddenly the heron thrust his great beak into the water and came up with a wriggling fish. Tully shook his head in awe. If he could fish like that they'd have Ma's catfish breakfast, lunch and supper. Just then the red and white bobber twitched. Tully set the hook and reeled in a fat channel cat. "That's one fish you won't get, Mr. Heron!"

In the distance Tully could hear his old hound baying. He'd probably treed some critter. Tully wasn't worried, Tut knew where to find him. They'd spent many happy hours side by side on the river bank.

Settling back to await the next bite, Tully pulled a worn "National Geographic" from his tackle box and lost himself in visions of Egyptian pyramids and pharaohs' treasure. Ever since Miss Peters had shown pictures of King Tut's tomb to his eighth grade class, Tully had been fascinated by ancient Egypt. The school librarian had loaned him a book by an archeologist who had been at the

continued on page 7



**Gone Fishin'** *continued*

opening of Tut's tomb. What an exciting time that must have been, being the first people in thousands of years to see Tut's treasure. Tully promised himself that one day he would see it for himself.

As Tully sat daydreaming, a buck stepped lightly into the clearing and down to the river to drink, sun-

light gleaming on its chestnut hide. After drinking its fill it turned to Tully, nudged him and said, "Shake it Tully, it's your turn to fix breakfast."

Tully rubbed the sleep from his eyes and surveyed the sandy camp. It sure had been great to be home again for awhile, even if it had been just a dream.



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## Missing Scene

### Aftermath at Aburah

by Pat Shaw

Hans Dietrich rose to his feet and looked around. His men lay dead, littered around the floor of the desert. Again the Rat Patrol had bested him, but this time he had at least a grain of respect left.

His eyes were drawn to the damaged wall some metres away where a young Arab woman sat holding a child in her lap. The girl was around the age his niece would be now, six, seven, he could never remember exactly. When the girl had fallen into the well her mother had implored him and the Rat Patrol to put aside their enmity and get her daughter out.

It had been a fraught endeavour, neither side really trusting the other to keep the fragile peace long enough to complete the task. An added complication appeared in the form of Hauptmann Bruener, another German officer who had been assisting Deitrich to capture the Rat Patrol. Bruener, not aware of the truce, had started firing at the Patrol until he, Dietrich, had informed him of the mission they were engaged in. Bruener had then held his fire, but only until the little girl was clear of the well. After that 'all hell' broke loose. Dietrich had flung himself to the ground and stayed there. He had no stomach for turning immediately on the men who had helped in rescuing the girl.



Now the dust had settled and he walked towards the woman and her child. The toe of his boot lifted a pretty red necklace from the dust and he stooped to pick it up. Looking at it he was again conscious of a memory concerning his niece. He had given her a locket the day she had been born. Had someone close to this girl given her the necklace?

Dietrich continued walking towards the couple on the wall. Neither of them acknowledge him as he approached. The mother was lost in her lamenting, rocking the child back and forth. Dietrich could not see if the child was conscious or not, but he took her hand and placed the necklace into it, closing the tiny fingers around it. The girl responded with a gentle squeeze of her mother's arm. Dietrich sighed heavily in relief. It had been worth teaming up with Troy and his men to save the little girl.

He turned and began to walk away from the scene.

Once in the Kubel wagon he put his hands on the wheel and sighed again. Taking a cigarette from his shirt pocket he lit it and inhaled. As he slowly exhaled the smoke he marshalled his thoughts. Explaining away the loss of men and equipment would give him a minor headache but nothing compared to what losing his honour would have. He had concluded a truce and expected every German to respect his decision. It had not been made lightly, he never did things lightly.



# Missing Scene

## Worth

by Keryn H.

The shooting had stopped, the *verdammte* Rat Patrol gone in a cloud of dust. Hauptmann Dietrich stood amid the carnage, once again wondering how four men in two jeeps could wreak such havoc.

It was all so unnecessary. If only that idiot Hauptmann Bruener had taken longer to free his stuck halftrack, or had the decency to respect the truce, none of this would have happened. Yes, once again the Rat Patrol would have eluded him, but now all these lives were lost, including Hauptmann Bruener's, and they had escaped anyway.

There would be hell to pay when he made his report. He could hear Herr Oberst now, berating him for sacrificing so many German lives for one insignificant Arab brat. Perhaps from a military standpoint that was correct, but Dietrich knew he could never have lived with himself if he hadn't done all he could to save the child.

The war ground away all decency, turning men into machines. The fact that he had hesitated to trust Sergeant Troy was evidence of that. He knew that Troy was a crafty devil, but he also knew he was a man of his word. If he lost the ability to trust, he would lose his humanity and become no better than the

hated SS. His back straightened as he resolved never to let that happen.

As he surveyed the monochrome landscape, a flash of color caught his eye. A string of red glass beads reflected the burning sun. The child must have dropped them when she fell. As he stooped to pick them up, he thought of his niece Gretchen. She too liked to play with her mother's jewelry. She had been about the age of the Arab child the last time he had seen her, before he left for the war. A faint smile softened his face at the memory. She wore her mother's slip as a ball gown. Draped with gold chains and pearls, she skipped across the floor, begging him to dance with her. Humming the "Blue Danube Waltz", her tiny feet on his shiny black boots, they'd danced, her delighted laughter filling his ears. It was a memory he cherished as an antidote to this futile war, so far from the life he'd known.

A soft sound brought him back to the present. The Arab woman sat on a low rock wall murmuring to the motionless child in her arms. For a moment it seemed the child must be dead. The thought that it had all been in vain was a bitter one. His shoulders slumped as he started to turn away. Just then the child reached for her mother's hand. He smiled as he gently laid the beads in her lap, his hand lingering a moment on hers.

He turned and slowly walked away. He might end his military career as a *gefrierter* on the Russian front, but it was worth it.



## RAT HOBBIES

### Rat Fridge Magnets

by Keryn H.

Keryn, creator of these unique (and delightfully rattie) fridge magnets, says this:

One of my hobbies is needlework on plastic canvas. When contemplating what to do with leftover pieces from a larger project, the idea of 'fridge magnets came to me.

The frame is stitched, then a piece of plastic canvas slightly smaller than the frame is sewn to the back leaving one side open to accommodate the picture. Pieces of an advertising magnet were glued to the back. The frames can be made to fit any photo.





## not always a rat



**JUSTIN TARR**  
Acting Student c. 1965



**GARY RAYMOND**  
Martin Chuzzlewit 1964



**CHRISTOPHER GEORGE**  
Enter the Ninja 1981



**ERIC BRAEDEN**  
Lt. Franz Von Klemme c.68



**LARRY CASEY**  
Suave Party-goer 1966



## THROUGH THE FIELD GLASSES



Apparently, Tully stayed in Africa after the war and opened up a coffee line for Keurig (a large coffee company in the USA). Well spotted, Hogan!

Photo by Hogan Macgyver

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