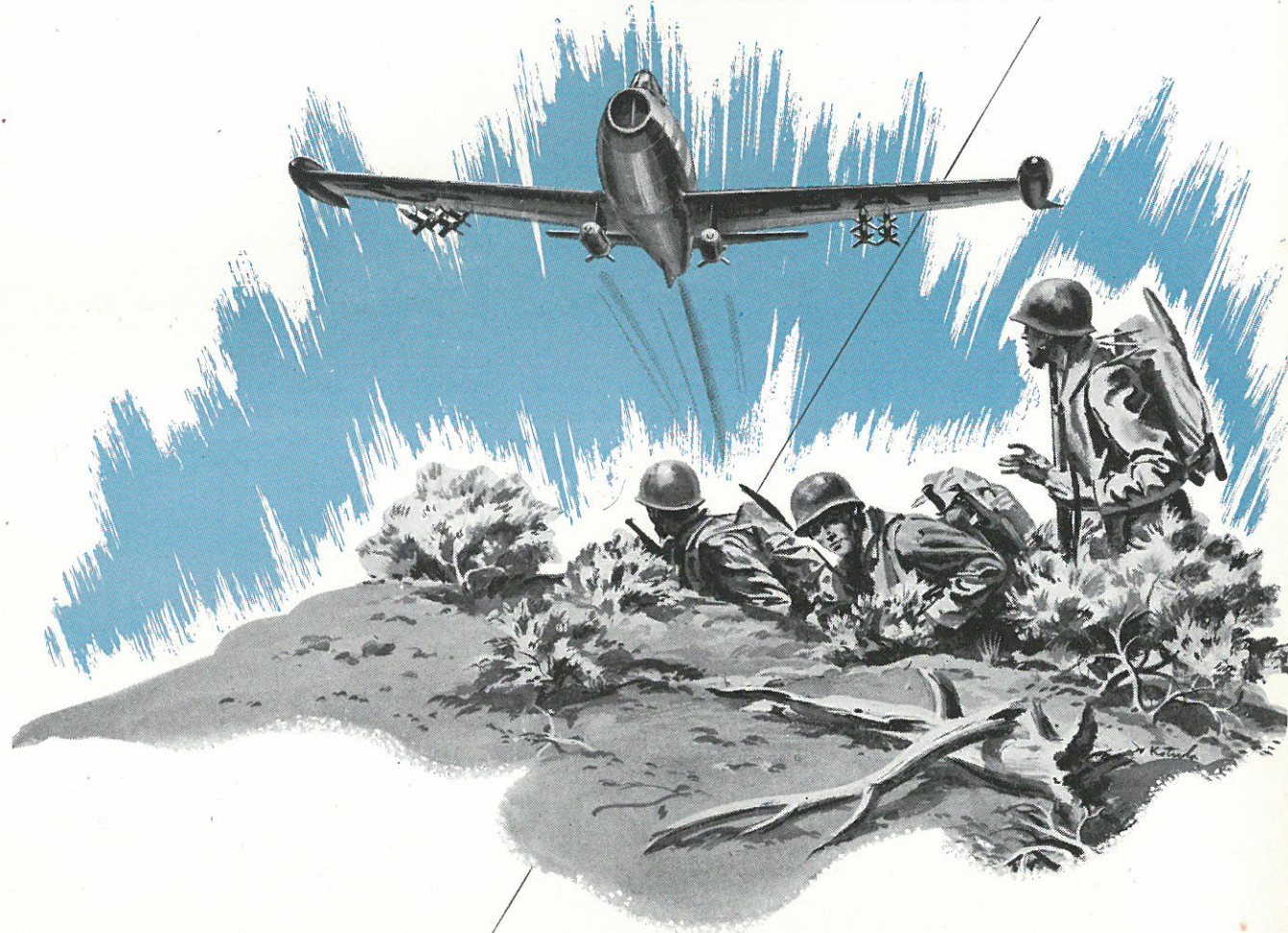


A Salute TO THE LOW-FLYING MEN!



All hail to the ace in the "wild blue yonder" . . . but let's give with some man-sized cheers for the lads who slug it out at hill-top level. From the time they take off . . . till the mission is completed, these strategic fighter bombers and tactical close support pilots face a brutal blasting all along the way.

➤ ➤ ➤ Sniped at by small arms and machine guns . . . bracketed by flak with the constant hazard of limping home harassed by enemy aircraft . . . these are the stout warriors for whom we've planned Republic's rugged THUNDER-craft . . . to get them there . . . do the job, and bring them back.

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dear guardsmen:

When an editor gets a letter that starts out bluntly quote I have a COMPLAINT unquote, he sighs, wonders "What now?" and braces himself for the worst.

But the letter that prompted this blurb went on like this:

"Your June shipment of magazines to my part of the country was in a mail car that was wrecked and burned. I saw some of the magazines that came out of the car and they were in pretty bad condition. I guess my copy didn't survive. I keep all copies through the year and have them bound in ORDNANCE colors with insignia and all the trimmings. The bookbinder is a friend of mine so I come out with a beautiful volume for almost nothing. Naturally I want a complete set. I'm sending a quarter to cover the cost.

"Your magazine is just wonderful—keep up the good work."

Capt Durwood F Harris of Little Rock, Ark, who—obviously—is an Ordnance officer, wrote that. We sure were glad to see the pleasant twist his letter took after an alarming start.

But that brings to mind several other things:

(1) Don't believe it's often that a mail car wreck accounts for non-delivery of THE NATIONAL GUARDSMAN. But if you don't get your copy within a reasonable time after the first of each month, let us know, and we'll see if the trouble lies in our power to correct. Delivery time, we've found, varies from place to place—there's a wide variation even within a city that's served by several postal substations—and that's out of our hands. And be sure you've advised us, direct, if you're moving or have moved.

(2) Lucky for us that not everyone can chisel a handsome binding job off of a good friend; otherwise, we'd never sell the volumes we have bound every year, just to take care of people who like to preserve their magazines in attractive shape. Volumes for all past years, except 1947-48, can be obtained for \$5.00 per single volume, \$4.50 each for two or more.

THE STAFF

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our cover

Peacetime training for a wartime mission is the National Guard's job. And the feeling of deadly seriousness is conveyed in our cover photo of men of Tank Co, 150 Inf, West Virginia, passing up the ammunition for stowage in the fighting compartment of one of their armored vehicles, preparatory to range firing.