

A Different Kind Of Hell

By Bill Libby

"In war," the war hero said, "we were so intent on death we forgot about life. Poverty and war robbed me of my youth. I never learned how to live. Life in Hollywood," the war hero turned actor said, "is not my idea of living, but it's become the only life I know. Sometimes I think it might have been easier on me if I'd of died back on one of those battlefields. I wouldn't of been unique. Lots of good boys died back there. I'm no better than they were. Who knows what they might of come to? A lot of 'em might of come to a lot more than me."

He had been in his time of heroism baby-faced, freckle-faced and handsome. Now, nearly 25 years later, he remained boyish-looking, though his face had gotten fleshy and his small frame had filled out with a little fat. He was a partner in a production company financed by outsiders who were not Hollywood people, and his office was in a basement of a hotel on Franklin Street. He had made a low-budget film titled "A Time for Dying," and he was struggling to arrange release for it from fellows who already had forgotten him.

He'd been on the phone all day seeking deals for money which might bail him out of debt. He was deep in debt. He owed money to many people and he owed back taxes to the government, which once had given him medals and now hounded him for the

money. And at night, when he went home, he did not go into the main house, as his neighbors assumed he did, but into the adjoining garage which had been converted into living quarters for him, and where, separated from his second wife, he lived alone so he could be close to his two teenage sons. Here, he had drifted through sleepless nights toward pills, which had addicted him and which he was resisting desperately¹.

"Where I've been was bad, but I wonder sometimes if where I'm heading isn't worse," he said. His pale eyes were clear,

¹ Audie Murphy became unknowingly dependent on a powerfully addictive sedative called Placidyl after trusting the advice of his physician. Murphy was legally prescribed the drug because of severe recurring insomnia resulting from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, an illness he acquired after prolonged periods of combat during World War II. Use of Placidyl often leads to slurred speech, mild hallucinations, and strong addiction. In Harold B. Simpson's biography AUDIE MURPHY, AMERICAN SOLDIER Murphy's close friend David McClure is quoted as saying "Some people who saw him during the period that he was on Placidyl presumed that he had been drinking. This was an understandable assumption, the drug having the same outward effect on a person that alcohol does. Audie ... never drank... the only drug that he ever took was Placidyl prescribed by his physician for a definite medical purpose. So rumors that Murphy was reported 'to be drinking heavily' and 'had become a drug addict were untrue" (Simpson, p288).

When Murphy realized he was addicted, he locked himself in a hotel room and withdrew from the drug on his own ... a dangerous process which often resulted in the deaths of other similarly addicted.

but seemed strangely cold. His empty hands fussed with papers on his desk that seemed unfamiliar to him. He said, "I've never found a place for myself. I'm here because it's where I have something I can do, but I don't do it well. The only thing I've ever found I was any good at was war, which is a terrible thing." He shook his head at the thought, depressed by it.

He said, "I used to think there could be nothing worse than war, than killing and maybe being killed and seeing your buddies killed. But in a way that was simple compared to life here in Hollywood. There, everyone understood the rules: You either killed or got killed. Here, the rules are much more complicated. A person gets mixed up in contracts and talent and no talent and big egos and phonies and it is hard to live, let alone have a decent marriage and raise a decent family.

"I have found there is nothing worse than owing people money and having them come after you about it all the time and not knowing how to make it and pay it back. Living like this is as bad as dying on a battlefield. After a while, you kid yourself that it's not real. By then you're losing your self-respect. Well, I'll tell you, I don't want that to happen. I'm strong. I'm too tough for this tough. I won't let it break my heart. I won't let it break me. I'll fight it to the finish." He smiled a little then shrugged and added, "I just wish it was a fight I knew how to fight."

This conversation took place some 18 months ago. Audie Murphy was having hard times, which did not ease with the passing of time. Last June, he had embarked on the last of several long-shot business ventures, which he hoped would save him from bankruptcy, when a private plane in which he was flying crashed in Virginia. In death he was remembered as a hero and given memorial services here and a burial with honors in Arlington, which his widow and his sons and many of his wartime buddies and some fans attended, but which former friends from Hollywood skipped.

He was the son of a poor Texas sharecropper, the product of a broken marriage and dirt poverty. He became famous and rich and admired, and he wound up going through two marriages, worrying about his own sons, poor again, and almost forgotten until the finish.

During the war, he killed or captured 240 men and was awarded 24 decorations. After the war, he made more than 40 movies and earned more than \$2 million. He blew the money and wound up owing more than \$1 million. He had written a book based on his battlefield experiences, "To Hell and Back," which was successful, and he sold it for a film, and starred himself, in it. The movie was successful, too, but he was not. He was our most decorated soldier and one of our least decorated actors. He fashioned for himself a new kind of hell here.

Murphy was born in June of 1924 in Farmersville, Tex., one of 11 children. His parents were poor tenant farmers. His father wearied of the struggle and left the family when Audie was a small boy. "I don't think about him any more. I stopped a long time ago," Murphy said. His mother struggled in the field to get by for her family, which never had much, and died when Audie was 16.

"She worked herself to death. She died of despair," her son said. The younger children were placed in orphanages and the older ones worked to support themselves and each other. The family fell apart. "Some died. Some did other things. It's been hard to keep track of 'em, but few of 'em ever had the chance to do much."

Murphy made do with odd jobs in the fields and in town and had no idea what he would do with his life until World War II came along when he was 17. Then he had the war to do. He had often hunted for his food and like many farmboys he was good with a gun. And he was stirred by patriotism. He tried to enlist in the Marines and in the paratroops, but he was rejected because he was too small and underweight. Finally, he got into the Army, but after basic training he was made a clerk in a post exchange. He kept after his superiors until he got what he wanted – assignment to combat duty with the infantry.

He had never been more than 100 miles from his home when he was sent to combat in North Africa and wound up fighting on

the beaches of Italy and France and in the invasion of Germany. At first, his fellows laughed at him because he looked too young and frail to wage war and endure its hardships. Their teasing tormented him. At first, he found he was afraid. He remembered vomiting in the dirt in the rain.

He remembered clearly the first deaths he saw: "One minute a man is sitting on a grassy slope talking about his family back home. In the distance a gun slams. And in the next minute, the man is dead." He saw many men die. He remembers men with their faces blown away or half their bodies blasted off them. He said, "You never forget these things. They etch themselves in your brain and you keep seeing them in your mind. You try to put them aside, but they're always there. You're thinking of something else and the horror comes back to you."

It disgusted him and drove him to deeds of death of his own. "At first you're forced to fight because you have to and you're being pushed and don't want to be considered a coward, but then you want to because you want to kill those who are killing you, you want to save yourself and get even, because there's nothing else to do there but that, because killing and even dying loses its meaning in a place where there is so much killing and dying all the time," he said years later in that office of despair. He told this writer of fighting in scorching heat, sweaty and dirty, and in bitter cold, freezing and numb.

Once when a buddy was killed, he angrily moved out alone into the open with a machine gun on one hip and crossed a field mowing down Germans. Somehow, he was not hit. Another time, he jumped onto an abandoned tank², turned a machine gun on the enemy and singled-handedly staved off a Nazi force of 250 men and six tanks. The tank was hit three times and he was blown off it, but he was not hurt.

He was not always so fortunate. He caught malaria. One shell injured one foot; another injured the other foot. This second shell landed near him and sprayed fragments around him like some deadly umbrella, killing men further away from it than he was.

A German soldier shot him in the hip, and Murphy turned around and shot the soldier dead. Gangrene developed in Murphy's wound, but treatment cleared it up. His injuries healed. Each time he voluntarily returned from treatment at hospitals to resume fighting at the front, alongside his buddies.

For a long time, he felt proud of himself. He felt like some noble killer. He described a rifle on his lap as "beautiful as a flower and more to be trusted than your best friend." For a long time he just accepted what he was supposed to do and he did it. "I always said you had to be young and ignorant to be a good foot soldier. I was

both," he said in our conversation years later. "It helps if you think you're doing right. I thought so then. I'm not so sure now. In view of the fact that we've had so many wars and so much killing since, I'm not sure it was ever right. Even by the end of my war, I wasn't so sure. When we heard there was going to be peace, I stopped killing. I was supposed to go on. We were still fighting. But I began to miss. My desire had worn away. The heart for it had gone out of me."

He is credited with having killed more than 100 men, having captured more than 100 and having wounded close to 500. In that later time he shrugged and said, "I don't know how they know. Maybe the war Department kept count somehow. Maybe the officers sent in totals. I didn't keep count. I don't know how many. I don't want to know." For this, he won promotion from private to lieutenant in the field and was awarded, among many others, the Congressional Medal of Honor, the Distinguished Service Cross, the Legion of Merit, three Purple Hearts, two Silver Stars and a Bronze Star – more medals than any other soldier in World War II. He said, "Many never got medals they deserved. Many heroes were gotten as they lay dead in the field."

When the war ended, this tiny, simple, shy South-westerner was celebrated. He was the small-town boy who had made good. He did not even know he was the most decorated hero of the war until he

² The vehicle was actually a lightly armored M10 tank destroyer.

returned home, not yet 21 and old enough to vote, and was told so at a victory banquet. Parades and receptions were staged in his honor. Famous men shook his hand, and women, like the kind he'd dreamed boyish fantasies about at the front, pursued him.

A publisher paid him to do his book and Life portrayed him on its cover. James Cagney studied the picture and read the story and suggested he come to Hollywood. "I had nothing better to do so I did," he explained later. "At home, some wanted to hire me because I was a famous killer, others wouldn't for the same reason. I couldn't get a job that left me any self-respect. I did like the idea of maybe making some money in the movies."

He had no money to begin with and slept wherever he could find a bed for a while. At one time, his bed was the floor of a gymnasium which was deserted at night. Then a producer put him to work as a West Pointer in "Beyond Glory" and, after that, others jumped on the bandwagon, trying to cash in on Murphy's fame. He made such unmemorable movies as "Bad Boy," "Ride Clear of Diablo" and "Guns at Fort Petticoat." He was put into pictures in which he could hold a gun in his hand, shoot people and portray a hero. Most were westerns. He was typecast, but didn't look the type. You saw him in a sagebrush shoot-down on the screen and thought, this is silly, this boy couldn't kill anyone – and

then you remembered that in real life he had killed a lot of people.

He had little acting ability and a pale personality, but he got by, getting a bit better as he went, and built a fair following, and, while there still was a market for B movies, he made as much as \$129,000 a film. He was popular at parties, which he disliked. He wearied of being introduced around as "the boy who killed so many lousy krauts." He tried to fit in, to belong. Hangers-on attached themselves to him. He spent freely and was a soft touch for loans. Rather than annoy or offend anyone, he never pressed for repayment and never was repaid, even when he needed it.

He married Wanda Hendrix, an attractive actress but the union lasted less than a year. He tried again, marrying Pamela Archer, an airline stewardess, and had two sons with her before this marriage, too, went bad. They had a fancy two-story English-style house with a pool in the Valley, which he managed to keep for his family. He also bought an 848-acre horse ranch about 60 miles from Hollywood, where he could hide out, and he loved this place more than any other, but he lost it.

As times altered in the late '50s, his acting career careened downhill. He was a freak and he began to flounder. He was a hero as we entered an era of antiheroes. The world was tired of war and violence. He no longer seemed real. And as Hollywood was hit hard by television, his B movies no

longer got made. Murphy began to be offered \$20,000 for starring parts, then less for bits, finally nothing. In the early 1960's, he tried a TV series, "Whispering Smith," which flopped. He refused offers to do commercials for beer and cigarette companies. He said, "How would it look: 'War Hero Drinks Booze'? I couldn't do that to the kids."

Then there were no more offers.

He had made some bad investments. Mainly, he sank \$260,000 into an Algerian oil venture which was wiped out in the six-day Arab-Israeli war. It was with some shock that he found himself not only going broke, but far behind in bills owed. He had to sell his beloved ranch to Bob Hope to keep going, but soon that money was gone, too. Money due him in residuals for showings of his old movies on TV were attached by the Internal Revenue Service which began to press him for overdue past payments.

The '60s turned out to be a tough 10 years for Murphy, who tried it back in Texas for a while, failed there, too, and returned to Hollywood to be near his sons. He lived on hope, along with so many similarly hopeless souls here down on their luck and hustling after fortune in the shape of a movie or a business deal which will make it big and restore their status. He found he had few friends here and few elsewhere, and less hope.

A year and a half ago he sat in that basement office he had opened up and spoke of his life with a striking lack of pretense. He had the aura of a cardboard cutout character, but he was real and he was honest and he would not run from reality. "I had one hangup as an actor," he said, smiling. "I had no talent. I didn't hide that. I told directors that. They knew. I didn't have to tell them. They protected me. I made the same movie 20 times. It was easy. But it wasn't any good. I never got to be any good. No one helped me. No one cared if I got any good or not. They used me until I was used up.

"I only got to make three films with quality people and these were the only ones that got any quality acting out of me. They are the only things I've done in Hollywood I'm proud of. One was John Huston's "The Red Badge of Courage." The critics liked it, but the public didn't. Another was "The Quiet American," which had a chance until it was ruined in the cutting room, and then flopped. The last was my own "To Hell and Back," which was my one big success. It's still playing around the world. It grossed more than \$13 million and was the record money-maker for Universal-International at the time. I made \$800,000 out of the book and film. I have no idea where it went to."

Murphy had worn an expensive suit into his office. He sat at his desk in his shirtsleeves, his collar and tie loosened, but he seemed prosperous. His shoes were

shined, his fingernails clean, his hair neatly trimmed. But, as he pointed out, appearances are deceiving. He said, "Money never meant much to me. I gave a lot away and lost a lot in investment. I hired agents and managers to take care of me, but some took care of themselves and took me, instead. Not all of them. Some of them. They were supposed to protect me financially. They were supposed to build their tax shelters for me. They took their 10 percent off the top, and sometimes much more, but they didn't protect me and anything I built up crumbled."

He shrugged and said, "I don't blame them. I blame me. I didn't know anything about business and money, but I should have made it my business to know. I left it up to others. But a man has to look out for himself. I didn't. No one does anything to you. You do it to yourself or let it be done to you. What the hell, it's an old story; I'm not unique."

Wistfully, he spoke of friends deserting him. "You can't call them friends," he said. "Hell, I don't think anyone has any friends in the industry anyway. Like ships that pass in the night, you make a picture with people, then go your separate ways. When word gets around you're washed up, no one will touch you with a 10-foot pole. You take a little tumble and suddenly they can pass you in the street without seeing you. When you call, they're never in, and they never return your calls. They're afraid you'll ask them for a job. Or a loan. Or maybe

repayment of an old debt. Even the hangers-on move on. People who used to invite you to parties stop inviting you. The good tables in the swank restaurants go to others. Soon you're lucky if you're eating."

He smiled a little and said, "Soon, you feel like a prostitute who's over the hill." He swiveled around in his chair and leaned back and closed his eyes and looked up at his private thought for a few moments. Then he said, "I've left a couple of times to go home to Texas to look around. There was nothing for me to do there, except starve. When this Texan bit the dust, even his fellow Texans suffered paralysis of their trigger fingers. They'd fumble for their wallets and sneak out when my back was turned. So I came back here. I don't know how to do anything but act, and I don't know how to do that very well. I don't know any business except the movie business. I have learned that. I'm too old a dog to learn new tricks. I'm too old to try anything new. Hollywood is my home now. I have to make it here or nowhere."

He found a couple of loyal friends outside of Hollywood who were interested in helping him here. These were Jerry Spellman, a tax attorney who lost a leg in the war, and Rich Clinton, an oilman and patriot. They had backed him in FIPCO Productions, named after Spellman's First Investment Planning Mortgage Co. Murphy didn't have unlimited backing, but he had something. He opened up his small office,

hired a secretary and began to seek people who could make movies cheaply.

He found Budd Boetticher, another outcast who'd once impressed many people in the industry making good B westerns, but depressed others with his temperamental ways and has been in exile in Mexico for years. Boetticher had written a screenplay and Murphy hired him to direct it into a movie, "A Time for Dying." They cast mostly unknowns but also such diverse performers as singer Beatrice Kay, stripper Betty Rowland and rodeo star Casey Tibbs. Murphy played a bit as a bearded Jesse James and even used his oldest son, Terry, in a part. It was brought in for \$800,000 and now Murphy was trying to get distribution for it.

He said he had high hopes for it. He said he had other films planned including a Mexican western in which his son would have another role. He said he wanted to make westerns because they were "sure-fire." He said he didn't want to make any war movies, "which glorify death," or political films, "which preach," or love stories, "which are nothing but sex orgies." He said he wanted to do some acting but also wanted to do some directing. He said he figured he'd get three or films out as fast as he could, "because the way business is, you never know, and if your first two or three are flops, you still may hit it big with your fourth."

His eyes brightened. He became animated and spoke with enthusiasm about the many promising projects that were going to put him back on the top. He said he was planning a television series that would star his son as a kid who befriends a war dog in peacetime and which "just might make it, like Lassie, cause you never know." He said he'd written some poems ("Dusty Old Helmet" was one) and some songs and was going to launch a music publishing and recording firm. He also said he hoped to launch an investment service. "We have big dreams," he said.

He said his debts were down to \$500,000 and his unpaid income taxes to \$58,000, which he expected to pay off in a year or so. "The money sears on me some," he admitted. "Oh, you get used to being in debt in this town. Some say owing money is a sign of success. Actually, borrowing money is a sign of success, but I can't right now. Anyway, what the hell, a man knows what his obligations are. I'm not worried about getting rich. And I'm not worried about leaving a fortune to my sons. They can stand on their own feet. It's just that their old man wants to stand on his own feet, too."

An open man, Murphy was not secretive about his private life. He spoke freely of his marriages. He said "Wanda and I were in love. It just didn't work. It would have worked, I think, if we hadn't been Hollywood stars. There's too much temptation when you're at the top here and

she wanted to be big. She was ambitious and extroverted. She was fun-loving and liked parties. I wasn't ambitious. I was introverted. I didn't care about being a star. I didn't find parties fun. I wanted a home life, but we were never home. Our movies kept us apart. Finally, we came apart. We were divorced. She remarried. She's still acting some, seeking parts. She's a good girl. I have no hard feelings towards here."

He married again and there were two sons by this union. The second marriage, too, did not work out, but it wasn't dissolved. "I didn't want to leave my boys without a father while they were growing up," Murphy said. "So I had the garage fixed up and I moved in. It looks like part of the house. Somehow, I've held onto the house. We never told anyone. People didn't know I never got further than that garage."

He hung his head a moment, his eyes averted. Then he smiled and looked up and said, "My sons are Terry and James and they're good boys and I'm deeply proud of them and I've tried to be a good father to them. I care, you see. Terry has acted some and he sings and plays the guitar, but he's not sure what he wants to be. Jim isn't sure what he wants to be. They're getting near draft age and one thing I don't want them to be is soldiers.

"I'm something of a super-patriot, but these aren't real wars we're fighting these days, except that boys really are being killed. These wars are morally wrong. It's

not right to ask young men to risk their lives in wars they can't win. Anyway, war is a nasty business, to be avoided if possible and to be gotten over with as soon as possible. It's not the sort of job that a man should get a medal for. I'll tell you what bothers me. What if my sons try to live up to my image? What if people expect it of them?"

His voice grew soft and sad. "I've talked to them about it. I want them to be whatever they are. I don't want them to try to be what I was. I don't want dead heroes for sons."

He was silent a few seconds, then said, "Anyway, God willing, they're about ready to lead their own life. During the war, the medics hooked me on pills. Remembering the war, I needed sleeping pills. For years, I couldn't sleep. Finally, I just threw away the pills. I pulled the monkey off my back and kicked the habit. Now I find I can sleep again. Now I want to begin sleeping in a decent bed again. I want to move out. I've been living this strange life, like a watchman, for a long time, but my boys don't need a watchman much longer. I want to find a decent place to live and do decent work and get decently out of debt and forget the war and the hero stuff and the past 10 years and make a new life for myself."

It was easier said than done. His production business and other projects didn't prosper. Many dreams did not materialize. He clung to his family and is said to have tried reconciliation with his

wife. Left with little more than his image, he seemed unable to discard it. He started acting tough. He had been appointed a special officer of the Port Hueneme police force and made some patrol-car rounds and offered help to the Los Angeles police in their efforts to combat the drug problem. Arrested on a charge of illegal possession of black-jacks, he was absolved because of his special status. Arrested on a charge of assault with attempt to commit murder when he backed up a bartender buddy in an argument over another man's treatment of a dog, he was exonerated. He did not seem to mind the publicity and television interviews, which gave him the first prominence he'd had in years.

Recently, he was working with D'Alton Smith³, a former Teamsters' Union member convicted of federal securities violations in Texas, in an attempt to secure Teamster boss Jimmy Hoffa's⁴ release from federal prison. Murphy also was participating in

³ D'Alton Smith, a close associate with mobster Carlos Marcello, also produced rock music festivals in California under Marcello's sponsorship and was part of the organized effort to convince President Nixon to release Jimmy Hoffa from prison. See *Life Magazine, Brazen Empire of Organized Crime*, September 1, 1967, "The Fix", by Sandy Smith, pp. 22, 42b.

⁴ Jimmy Hoffa was an American labor union organizer and leader from 1932 to 1975. He was convicted of jury tampering, attempted bribery and fraud in 1964, was imprisoned in 1967 until 1971 when he was pardoned by President Richard Nixon. Hoffa was last seen in July 30, 1975 in Detroit where he planned to meet with two mafia leaders – Anthony Giacalone from Detroit and Anthony Provenzano from Union City, New Jersey. Hoffa was never seen or found after that day and was declared legally dead in 1982.

patriotic causes with the likes of broadcaster George Putnam⁵, and the week he was killed was scheduled to appear on Putnam's "Selling America" telecast. But on Memorial Day weekend, he was killed while on a trip to look over a Martinsville, Virginia, plant run by Modular Management, which produced factory-built homes and was interested in having the war hero as a front man.

In a thunderstorm, the plane carrying six, including officials of the firm, missed Martinsville and flew into the side of Birch⁶ Mountain in a fiery crash. Searchers picked up the remains out of the rugged woods and the charred wreckage and struggled up dirt roads with the bodies. Because Audie Murphy was one of the bodies, the crash made headlines. He was less than one month from his 47th birthday and more than 25 years from his greatest triumphs. War didn't kill him; peace did.

His body was flown back to Los Angeles, where funeral rites were conducted at the Church of the Hills at Forest Lawn Memorial Park in Hollywood. He was eulogized as "a quiet unassuming, soft-spoken man." More than 800 listened. Many more who could not get into the chapel stood outside on the hills and terraces. But the only Hollywood personality noticed was Murphy's ex-wife Wanda Hendrix, who emerged weeping and

⁵ George Putnam was a legendary 62 year veteran of news broadcasting in the Los Angeles area.

⁶ Audie Murphy was not killed on Birch Mountain. He was actually killed on Brush Mountain.

said, "He was a great soldier. No one can ever take that away from him."

His body was then flown to Washington, D.C. The U.S. Army band played and a horse-drawn caisson carried him to his burial place in Arlington National Cemetery, in the shade of a black oak tree, near other former servicemen, nearly 250 other Medal of Honor winners, near the Tomb of the Unknowns.

Many of his former wartime buddies were there reminiscing about his remarkable battle deeds. His former commanding officer, retired Col. Kenneth Parter, was there; he said, "You can just say he was the best soldier there ever was." Army Chief of Staff William Westmoreland was there. Movie industry people were not there. Few from Texas were there and few from his adopted home town of Hollywood. No great crowd turned out; war heroes are not especially popular these days. But when the casket was lowered into the ground and the flag which had draped it was folded and presented to his wife, she held it in front of

her proudly. She and her sons held their heads up proudly.

The last words this writer heard Audie Murphy speak were as follows: "In the war, we forgot how to live. Since the war, all these years in Hollywood, I've lived an unreal life. The war and the movies gave me a great deal, but they also took a great deal from me." The tense little man shook his head and said, "I've had tough times, but I found out I wasn't afraid of dying so why should I be afraid of living? I don't know how to be scared, do you know that? Since the war, nothing scares me and nothing excites me. What is there in this life that compares to a battle for excitement? What does money mean when a guy who can't act makes a hundred grand a film? Hell, someone could throw a million dollars in my lap today and I'd say, 'What the hell is this for?'" His boyish face broke into a grin and he said, "Well, it was good for me being broke flat. It was good for me being hurt. It rekindled my spirit. It made me want to fight back. It made me want to begin living again," he said.

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By BILL LIBBY

"In war," the war hero said, "we were so intent on death we forgot about life. Poverty and war robbed me of my youth. I never learned how to live. Life in Hollywood," the war hero turned actor said, "is not my idea of living, but it's become the only life I know. Sometimes I think it might have been easier on me if I'd of died back on one of those battlefields. I wouldn't of been unique. Lots of good boys died back there. I'm no better than they were. Who knows what they might of come to? A lot of 'em might of come to a lot more than me."

He had been in his time of heroism baby-faced, freckle-faced and handsome. Now, nearly 25 years later, he remained boyish-looking, though his face had gotten fleshy and his small frame had filled out with a little fat. He was a partner in a production company financed by outsiders who were not Hollywood people, and his office was in the basement of a hotel on Franklin Street. He had made a low-budget film titled "A Time for Dying," and he was struggling to arrange release for it from fellows who already had forgotten him.

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"Where I've been was bad, but I wonder sometimes if where I'm heading isn't worse," he said. His pale eyes were clear, but seemed strangely cold. His empty hands fussed with papers on his desk that seemed unfamiliar to him. He said, "I've never found a place for myself. I'm here because it's where I have something I can do, but I don't do it well. The only thing I've ever found I was any good at was war, which is a terrible thing." He shook his head at the thought, depressed by it.

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hard to live, let alone have a decent marriage and raise a decent family.

"I have found there is nothing worse than owing people money and having them come after you about it all the time and not knowing how to make it and pay it back. Living like this is as bad as dying on a battlefield. After a while, you kid yourself that it's not real. By then you're losing your self-respect. Well, I'll tell you, I don't want that to happen. I'm strong. I'm too tough for this town. I won't let it break my heart. I won't let it break me. I'll fight it to the finish." He smiled a little then and shrugged and added, "I just wish it was a fight I knew how to fight."

This conversation took place some 18 months ago. Audie Murphy was having hard times, which did not ease with the passing of time. Last June, he had embarked on the last of several long-shot business ventures, which he hoped would save him from bankruptcy, when a private plane in which he was flying crashed in Virginia. In death he was remembered as a hero and given memorial services here and a burial with honors in Arlington, which his widow and his sons and many of his wartime buddies and some fans attended, but which former friends from Hollywood skipped.

He was the son of a poor Texas sharecropper, the product of a broken marriage and dirt poverty. He became famous and rich and admired, and he wound up going through two marriages, worrying about his own sons, poor again, and almost forgotten until the finish.

During the war, he killed or captured 250 men and was awarded 24 decorations. After the war, he made more than 40 movies and earned more than \$2 million. He blew the money and wound up owing more than \$1 million. He had written a book based on his battlefield experiences, "To Hell and Back," which was successful, and he sold it for a film, and starred, himself, in it. The movie was successful, too, but he was not. He was our most decorated soldier and one of our least decorated actors. He fashioned for himself a new kind of hell here.

Murphy was born in June of 1924 in Farmersville, Tex., one of 11 children. His parents were poor tenant farmers. His father weariied of the struggle and left the family when Audie was a small boy. "I don't think about him any more. I stopped a long time ago," Murphy said. His mother struggled in the field to get by for her family, which never had much, and died when Audie was 16.

"She worked herself to death. She died of despair," her son said. The younger children were placed in orphanages and the older ones worked to support themselves and each other. The family fell apart. "Some died. Some did other things. It's been hard to keep track of 'em, but few of 'em ever had the chance to do much."

Murphy made do with odd jobs in the fields and in town and had no idea what he would do with his life until World War II came along when he was 17. Then he had the war to do. He had often hunted for his food and like many farmboys he was good with a gun. And he was stirred by patriotism. He tried to enlist in the Marines and in the paratroops, but he was rejected because he was too small and underweight. Finally, he got into the Army, but after basic training he was made a clerk in a post exchange. He kept after his superiors until he got what he wanted—assignment to combat duty with the infantry.

He had never been more than 100 miles from his home when he was sent into combat in North Africa and wound up fighting on the beaches of Italy and France and in the invasion of Germany. At first, his fellows laughed at him because he looked too young and frail to wage war and endure its hardships. Their teasing tormented him. At first, he found he was

afraid. He remembered vomiting in the dirt in the rain.

He remembered clearly the first deaths he saw: "One minute a man is sitting on a grassy slope talking about his family back home. In the distance, a gun slams. And in the next minute, the man is dead." He saw many men die. He remembered them with their faces blown away or half their bodies blasted off them. He said, "You never forget these things. They etch themselves in your brain and you keep seeing them in your mind. You try to put them aside, but they're always there. You're thinking of something else and the horror comes back to you."

It disgusted him and drove him to deeds of death of his own. "At first you're forced to fight because you have to and you're being pushed and don't want to be considered a coward, but then you want to because you want to kill those who are killing you, there's nothing to save yourself and get even, because there's nothing else to do there but that, because killing and even dying loses its meaning in a place where there is so much killing and dying all the time," he said years later in that office of despair. He told this writer of fighting in scorching heat, sweaty and dirty, and in bitter cold, freezing and numb.

Once when a buddy was killed, he angrily moved out alone into the open with a machine gun on one hip and crossed a field moving down Germans. Somehow, he was not hit. Another time, he jumped onto an abandoned tank, turned a machine gun on the enemy and single-handedly staved off a Nazi force of 250 men and six tanks. The tank was hit three times and he was blown off it, but he was not hurt.

He was not always so fortunate. He caught malaria. One shell injured one foot; another injured the other foot. This second shell landed near him and sprayed fragments around him like some deadly umbrella, killing men further away from it than he was.

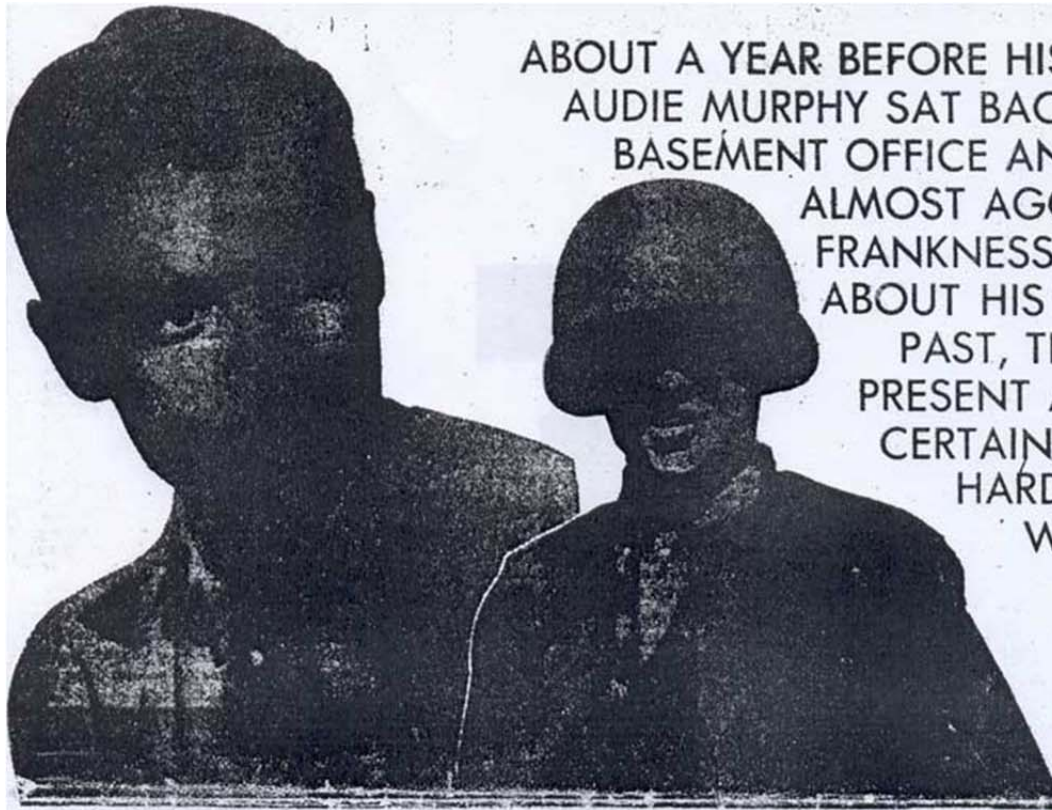
A German soldier shot him in the hip, and Murphy turned around and shot the soldier dead. Gangrene developed in Murphy's wound, but treatment cleared it up. His injuries healed. Each time he voluntarily returned from treatment at hospitals to resume fighting at the front, alongside his buddies.

For a long time, he felt proud of himself. He felt like some noble knight. He carried a rifle on his hip and a beautiful red flower and more to be trusted than your best friend. "For a long time he just accepted what he was supposed to do and he did it. "I always said you had to be young and ignorant to be a good foot soldier. I was both," he said in our conversation years later. "It helps if you think you're doing right. I thought so then. I'm not so sure now. In view of the fact that we've had so many wars and so much killing since, I'm not sure it was ever right. Even by the end of my war, I wasn't so sure. When we heard there was going to be peace, I stopped killing. I was supposed to go on. We were still fighting. But I began to miss. My desire had worn away. The heart for it had gone out of me."

He is credited with having killed more than 100 men, having captured more than 100 and having wounded close to 300. In that later time he shrugged and said, "I don't know how they know. Maybe the War Department kept count somehow. Maybe the officers sent in totals. I didn't keep count. I don't know how many. I don't want to know." For this, he won promotion from private to lieutenant in the field and was awarded, among many others, the Congressional Medal of Honor, the Distinguished Service Cross, the Legion of Merit, three Purple Hearts, two Silver Stars and a Bronze Star—more medals than any other soldier in World War II. He said, "Many never got medals they deserved. Many heroes were forgotten as they lay dead in the field."

When the war ended, this thing, simple, sky South

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ABOUT A YEAR BEFORE HIS DEATH,
AUDIE MURPHY SAT BACK IN HIS
BASEMENT OFFICE AND, WITH
ALMOST AGONIZING
FRANKNESS, TALKED
ABOUT HIS STORIED
PAST, TROUBLED
PRESENT AND UN-
CERTAIN FUTURE.
HARD INDEED
WAS THIS
HERO'S
PILLOW.

westerner was celebrated. He was the small-town boy who had made good. He did not even know he was the most decorated hero of the war until he returned home, not yet 21 and old enough to vote, and was told so at a victory banquet. Parades and receptions were staged in his honor. Famous men shook his hand, and women, like the kind he'd dreamed boyish fantasies about at the front, pursued him.

A publisher paid him to do his book and Life portrayed him on its cover. James Cagney studied the picture and read the story and suggested he come to Hollywood. "I had nothing better to do so I did," he explained later. "At home, some wanted to hire me because I was a famous killer, others wouldn't for the same reason. I couldn't get a job that left me any self-respect. I did like the idea of maybe making some money in movies."

He had no money to begin with and slept wherever he could find a bed for a while. At one time, his bed was the floor of a gymnasium which was deserted at night. Then a producer put him to work as a West Pointer in "Beyond Glory" and, after that, others jumped on the bandwagon, trying to cash in on Murphy's fame. He made such unmemorable movies as "Bad Boy," "Ride Clear of Diablo" and "Guns at Fort Petticoat." He was put into pictures in which he could hold a gun in his hand, shoot people and portray a hero. Most were westerns. He was typecast, but didn't look the type. You saw him in a sagebrush shoot-down on the screen and thought, this is silly, this boy couldn't kill anyone — and then you remembered that in real life he had killed a lot of people.

He had little acting ability and a pale personality, but he got by, getting a bit better as he went, and built a fair following, and, while there still was a market for B movies, he made as much as \$125,000 a film. He was popular at parties, which he disliked. He wearied of being introduced around as "the boy who killed so many lousy krauts." He tried to fit in, to belong. Hangers-on attached themselves to him. He spent freely and was a soft touch for loans. Rather than annoy or offend anyone, he never pressed for repayment and never was repaid, even when he needed it.

He married Wanda Hendrix, an attractive actress, but the union lasted less than a year. He tried again, marrying Pamela Archer, an airline stewardess, and had two sons with her before this marriage, too, went bad. They had a fancy two-story English-style house with a pool in the Valley, which he managed to keep for his family. He also bought an 848-acre horse ranch about 60 miles from Hollywood, where he could hide out, and he loved this place more than any other, but he lost it.

As times altered in the late '50s, his acting career careened downhill. He was a freak and he began to flounder. He was a hero as we entered an era of antiheroes. The world was tired of war and violence. He no longer seemed real. And as Hollywood was hit hard by television, his B movies no longer got made. Murphy began to be offered \$20,000 for starring parts, then less for bits, finally nothing. In the early 1960s, he tried a TV series, "Whispering Smith," which flopped. He refused offers to do commercials for beer and cigarette companies. He said, "How would it look: 'War Hero Drinks Boozie'? I couldn't do that to the kids."

Then there were no more offers.

He had made some bad investments. Mainly, he sank \$250,000 into an Algerian oil venture which was wiped out in the six-day Arab-Israeli war. It was with some shock that he found himself not only going broke, but far behind in bills owed. He had to sell his beloved ranch to Bob Hope to keep going, but soon that money was gone, too. Money due him in residuals from showings of his old movies on TV were attached by the Internal Revenue Service which began to press him for overdue past payments.

The '60s turned out to be a tough 10 years for Murphy, who tried it back in Texas for a while, failed there, too, and returned to Hollywood to be near his sons. He lived on hope, along with so many similarly hopeless souls here down on their luck and hustling after fortune in the shape of a movie or a business deal which will make it big and restore their status. He found he had few friends here and few elsewhere, and less hope.

A year and a half ago he sat in that basement office he had opened up and spoke of his life with a striking lack of pretense. He had the aura of a cardboard cutout character, but he was real and he was honest and he would not run from reality. "I had one hangup as an actor," he said, smiling. "I had no talent. I didn't hide that. I told directors that. They knew. I didn't have to tell them. They protected me. I made the same movie 20 times. It was easy. But it wasn't any good. I never got to be any good. No one helped me. No one cared if I got any good or not. They used me until I was used up."

"I only got to make three films with quality people and these were the only ones that got any quality acting out of me. They are the only things I've done in Hollywood I'm proud of. One was John Huston's "The Red Badge of Courage." The critics liked it, but the public didn't. Another was "The Quiet American," which had a chance until it was ruined in the cutting room, and then flopped. The last was my own "To Hell and Back," which was my one big success. It's still playing around the world. It grossed more than \$13 million and was the record money-maker for Universal-International at the time. I made \$200,000 out of the book and film. I have no idea where it went to."

Murphy had worn an expensive suit into his office. He sat at his desk in his shirtsleeves, his collar and tie loosened, but he seemed prosperous. His shoes were shined, his fingernails clean, his hair neatly trimmed. But, as he pointed out, appearances are deceiving. He said, "Money never meant much to me. I gave a lot away and lost a lot in investment. I hired agents and managers to take care of me, but some took care of themselves and took me, instead. Not all of them. Some of them. They were supposed to protect me financially. They were supposed to build their tax-shelters for me. They took their 10 per cent off the top, and sometimes much more, but they didn't protect me and anything I built up crumbled."

He shrugged and said, "I don't blame them. I blame me. I didn't know anything about business and

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AUDIE MURPHY

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money, but I should have made it my business to know. I left it up to others. But a man has to look out for himself. I didn't. No one does anything to you. You do it to yourself or let it be done to you. What the hell, it's an old story; I'm not unique."

Wisfully, he spoke of friends deserting him. "You can't call them friends," he said. "Hell, I don't think anyone has any friends in the industry anyway. Like ships that pass in the night, you make a picture with people, then go your separate ways. When you're hot, everyone wants a piece of you. When word gets around you're washed up, no one will touch you with a 10-foot pole. You take a little tumble and suddenly they can pass you in the street without seeing you. When you call, they're never in, and they never return your calls. They're afraid you'll ask them for a job. Or a loan. Or maybe repayment of an old debt. Even the hangers-on move on. People who used to invite you to parties stop inviting you. The good tables in the swank restaurants go to others. Soon you're lucky if you're eating."

He smiled a little and said, "Soon, you begin to feel like a prostitute who's over the hill." He swiveled around in his chair and leaned back and closed his eyes and looked up at his private thought for a few moments. Then he said, "I've left a couple of times to go home to Texas to look around. There was nothing for me to do there, except starve. When this Texan bit the dust, even his fellow Texans suffered paralysis of their trigger fingers. They'd fumble for their wallets and sneak out when my back was turned. So I came back here. I don't know how to do anything but act, and I don't know how to do that very well. I don't know any business except the movie business. I have learned that. I'm too old a dog to learn new tricks. I'm too old to try anything new. Hollywood is my home now. I have to make it here or nowhere."

He found a couple of loyal friends outside of Hollywood who were interested in helping him here. These were Jerry Spellman, a tax attorney who lost a leg in the war, and Rich Clinton, an oilman and patriot. They had backed him in FIPCO Productions, named after Spellman's First Investment Planning Mortgage Co. Murphy didn't have unlimited backing, but he had something. He opened up his small office, hired a secretary and began to seek people who could make movies cheaply.

He found Budd Boetticher, another outcast, who'd once impressed many people in the industry by making good B westerns, but depressed others with his temperamental ways and had been in exile in Mexico for years. Boetticher had written a screenplay and Murphy hired him to direct it into a movie, "A Time for Dying." They cast mostly unknowns but also such diverse performers as singer Beatrice Kay, stripper Betty Rowland and rodeo star Casey Tibbs. Murphy played a bit as a bearded Jesse James and even used his oldest son, Terry, in a part. It was brought in for \$200,000 and now Murphy was trying to get distribution on it.

He said he had high hopes for it. He said he had other films planned including a Mexican western in which his son would have another role. He said he wanted to make westerns because they were "sure-fire." He said he didn't want to make any war movies, "which glorify death," or political films, "which preach," or love stories, "which are nothing but sex orgies." He said he wanted to do some acting, but also wanted to some directing. He said he figured he'd get three or four films out as fast as he could, "because the way business is, you never know, and if your first two or three are flops, you still may hit it big with your fourth."

His eyes brightened. He became animated and spoke with enthusiasm about the many promising projects that were going to put him back on top. He said he was planning a television series that would star his son as a kid who befriends a war dog in peacetime and which "just might make it, like Lassie, cause you never know." He said he'd written some poems ("Dusty Old Helmet" was one) and some songs and was going to launch a music publishing and recording firm. He also said he hoped to launch an investment service. "We have big dreams," he said.

He said his debts were down to \$500,000 and his unpaid income taxes to \$50,000, which he expected to pay off in a year or so. "The money wears on me," he admitted. "Oh, you get used to being in debt



"The only thing I've ever found I was any good at was war."

in this town. Some say swing money is a sign of success. Actually, borrowing money is a sign of success, but I can't right now. Anyway, what the hell, a man knows what his obligations are. I'm not worried about getting rich. And I'm not worried about leaving a fortune to my sons. They can stand on their own feet. It's just that that their old man wants to stand on his own feet, too."

An open man, Murphy was not secretive about his private life. He spoke freely of his marriages. He said, "Wanda and I were in love. It just didn't work. It would have worked, I think, if we hadn't been Hollywood stars. There's too much temptation when you're at the top here and she wanted to be big. She was ambitious and extroverted. She was fun-loving and liked parties. I wasn't ambitious. I was introverted. I didn't care about being a star. I didn't find parties fun. I wanted a home life, but we were never home. Our movies kept us apart. Finally, we came apart. We were divorced. She remarried. She's still acting some, seeking parts. She's a good girl. I have no hard feelings towards her."

He married again and there were two sons by this union. The second marriage, too, did not work out, but it wasn't dissolved. "I didn't want to leave my boys without a father while they were growing up," Murphy said. "So I had the garage fixed up and I moved in. It looks like part of the house. Somehow, I've held onto the house. We never told anyone. People didn't know I never got no further than that garage."

He hung his head a moment, his eyes averted. Then he smiled and looked up and said, "My sons are Terry and James and they're good boys and I'm deeply proud of them and I've tried to be a good father to them. I care, you see. Terry has acted some and he sings and plays the guitar, but he's not sure what he wants to be. Jim isn't sure what he wants to be. They're getting near draft age and one thing I don't want them to be is soldiers."

"I'm something of a super-patriot, but these aren't real wars we're fighting these days, except that boys really are being killed. These wars are morally wrong. It's not right to ask young men to risk their lives in wars they can't win. Anyway, war is a nasty business, to be avoided if possible and to be gotten over with as soon as possible. It's not the sort of job that a man should get a medal for. I'll tell you what bothers me. What if my sons try to live up to my image? What if people expect it of them?" His voice grew soft and sad. "I've talked to them about it. I want them to be whatever they are. I don't want them to try to be what I was. I don't want dead heroes for sons."

He was silent a few seconds, then said, "Anyway, God willing, they're about ready to lead their own lives. And I'm ready to begin leading my own life. During the war, the medics hooked me on pills. Remembering the war, I needed sleeping pills. For years, I couldn't sleep. Finally, I just threw away the pills—I pulled the monkey-off my back and kicked the habit. Now I find I can sleep again. Now I want to begin sleeping in a decent bed again. I want to move out. I've been living this strange life, like a watchman, for a long time, but my boys don't need a watchman much longer. I want to find a decent place to live and do decent work and get decently out of debt and forget the war and the hero stuff and the past 10 years and make a new life for myself."

It was easier said than done. His production business and other projects didn't prosper. Many dreams did not materialize. He clung to his family and is said to have tried a reconciliation with his wife. Left with little more than his image, he seemed unable to

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BUS LINE



BUS LINE is a public service column brought to you by the Transit System to answer questions you have concerning its operations. Call and ask for BUS LINE at 227-5371 or write BUS LINE, San Antonio Transit System, Tower Life Building, San Antonio, Texas 78205

MRS. Y., WHAT YOU SAID! (AND WE LIKE IT!)

I read your column every Sunday and finally decided to see for myself what all the raving was about. For the first time in my life, I rode one of your buses, and was I dumb. It never dawned on me that the Nogalitos bus had a way of turning into a Woodlawn bus; I knew nothing about exact fare, zones, or even what the trip would cost.

Well, apparently your driver, D.I. Trevino, has run across these kooks before. He explained everything in a very simple, matter-of-fact way. I could go on about the usual kind, polite, and well-mannered driver. But I'll tell you the things that impressed me most.

First was his compassion and sensitivity towards old people. He always took the time to greet them, to help with excess packages, and make sure they were seated. It was more than patience. This man really cared and it showed. Second was his concentration on all the people and places. He was able to remind people when and where to get off. And last was his pride in the Transit System. To hear him tell it, you could get on, ask for a transfer, and ride straight to heaven on a cool, quiet, air-conditioned bus.—Mrs. S.Y.

What a great letter, Mrs. Y. If only more people would board our buses and discover the pleasures of riding the bus. Like no traffic to fight, no parking headaches, no big gas and oil bills. In fact, lots of people are discovering that a bus makes a perfect second car. And a great way to get to work, too. We'll note your applause of Mr. Trevino and pass on the good words. Because that's telling it like it is!

WE WATCH FOR CHILDREN. SHOULDN'T EVERYONE?

I would like to call your attention to one of your drivers. I was riding the South Presa bus when a man, woman, and child were waiting for the bus. The child, seeing the bus approach, broke away and ran out in front of the bus. The alert driver, E. Valfre III, saw this and stopped in time to keep from hurting the child. And he was still nice and friendly when everyone boarded the bus.—Mrs. L.H.

That kind of alertness is a necessity, Mrs. L.H., and we're glad you've commended Mr. Valfre. And a note to everyone. School has begun, so drive carefully. Watch for youngsters at corners and where children are playing. They do sometimes dart out into traffic. So slow down, especially in school zones. And it's a state law that drivers must stop when approaching a school bus that is loading or unloading children. The bus' red lights will be flashing to signal this. If the bus is merely stopped, proceed with caution. At S.A.T.S., we make safety a daily habit. Join us. And for safer city streets, leave your car at home and ride the bus. You'll like our service. And we'd like to see YOU.

The San Antonio Transit System is solely responsible for the answers in this column.

AUDIE MURPHY

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discard it. He started acting tough. He had been appointed a special officer of the Port Huememe police force and made some patrol-car rounds and offered help to the Los Angeles police in their efforts to combat the drug problem. Arrested on a charge of illegal possession of black-jacks, he was absolved because of his special status. Arrested on a charge of assault with attempt to commit murder when he backed up a bartender buddy in an argument over another man's treatment of a dog, he was exonerated. He did not seem to mind the publicity and television interviews, which gave him the first prominence he'd had in years.

Recently, he was working with D'Alton Smith, a former Teamsters' Union member convicted of federal securities violations in Texas, in an attempt to secure Teamster boss Jimmy Hoffa's release from federal prison. Murphy also was participating in patriotic causes with the likes of broadcaster George Putnam, and the week he was killed was scheduled to appear on Putnam's "Selling America" telecast. But on Memorial Day weekend, he was killed while on a trip to look over a Martinsville, Virginia, plant run by Modular Management, which produced factory-built homes and was interested in having the war hero as a front man.

In a thunderstorm, the plane carrying six, including officials of the firm, missed Martinsville and flew into the side of Birch Mountain in a fiery crash. Searchers picked up the remains out of the rugged woods and the charred wreckage and struggled up dirt roads with the bodies. Because Audie Murphy was one of the bodies, the crash made headlines. He was less than one month from his 47th birthday and more than 25 years from his greatest triumphs. War didn't kill him; peace did.

His body was flown back to Los Angeles, where funeral rites were conducted at the Church of the Hills at Forest Lawn Memorial Park in Hollywood. He was eulogized as "a quiet, unassuming, soft-spoken man." More than 600 listened. Many more who could not get into the chapel stood outside on the hills and terraces. But the only Hollywood personality noticed was Murphy's ex-wife Wanda Hendrix, who emerged weeping and said, "He was a great soldier. No one can ever take that away from him."

His body was then flown to Washington, D.C. The U.S. Army band played and a horse-drawn caisson carried him to his burial place in Arlington National Cemetery, in the shade of a black oak tree, near other former servicemen, near 250 other Medal of Honor winners, near The Tomb of The Unknowns.

Many of his former wartime buddies were there, reminiscing about his remarkable battle deeds. His former commanding officer, retired Col. Kenneth Parter, was there; he said, "You can just say he was the best soldier there ever was." Army Chief of Staff

comment

Continued from Page 34

benefit of quality books that can get youngsters hooked on the rewarding addiction of reading. The format of children's books has greatly changed over the decades; there is more emphasis on illustration and shortness (both qualities have their advantages). And perhaps some of the better children's literature is now being written for youngsters aged three to eight, an age group which 30 years ago except for Beatrix Potter's books...



"I feel like a prostitute who is over the hill."

William Westmoreland was there. Movie industry people were not there. Few from Texas were there and few from his adopted home town of Hollywood. No great crowd turned out; war heroes are not especially popular these days. But when the casket was lowered into the ground and the flag which had draped it was folded and presented to his widow, she held it in front of her proudly. She and her sons held their heads up proudly.

The last words this writer heard Audie Murphy speak were as follows: "In the war, we forgot how to live. Since the war, all these years in Hollywood, I've lived an unreal life. The war and the movies gave me a great deal, but they also took a great deal from me." The tense little man shook his head and said, "I've had tough times, but I found out I wasn't afraid of dying so why should I be afraid of living? I don't know how to be scared, do you know that? Since the war, nothing scares me and nothing excites me. What is there in this life that compares to a battle for excitement? What does money mean when a guy who can't act makes a hundred grand a film? Hell, someone could throw a million dollars in my lap today and I'd say, 'What the hell is this for?'" His boyish face broke into a grin and he said, "Well, it was good for me being broke flat. It was good for me being hurt. It rekindled my spirit. It made me want to fight back. It made me want to begin living again," he said.

THE ARTS

Continued from Page 24

its limitations. The fact that many people critics, are not familiar with the frame which a pot or automobile is constructed their appreciation of the creative process. But the same is true of more accepted Ancient Egyptian paintings or the work of best appreciated when one understands the limitations under which they were created.

There are perhaps valid reasons why a pot takes a rear seat to painting and sculpture. The foremost reason remains that when a pot is carved, no matter how artistically, its first reaction is "What a beautiful bowl," a beautiful carving.

If an object is capable of being functional, the human mind will do so. Pot sculpture, since they serve no practical function than decoration, escape the mental pigeon having made good their escape go on appreciation and acceptance.

EARLY FILM SITE

CANON CITY, Colo. — Once a favorite ground for Ute Indians, this Rocky Mountain town's newspaper boasted in the early 1900s that it was the movie capital of the nation.

Tom Mix got his start in silent films here but a few years later the city's film industry under a damage judgement when a west queen drowned in the Arkansas River during an episode.



Puzzle on Page 1

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