

Liberation of Paris

"I had thought that for me there could never again be any elation in war. But I had reckoned without the liberation of Paris—I had reckoned without remembering that I might be a part of that richly historic day. We were in Paris on that first day—one of the great days of all time."

So began a descriptive mark written some fifty years ago by someone luckily to be at the right place at the right time, Ernie Pyle. He was only one of hundreds of international correspondents who hoped to cover combat and the liberation of Paris.

Liberation day, August 25, occurred during a period experiencing some of the most confusing, warm days of war. At this point in history, Patton's Third Army was racing across France and had begun to cross the Seine. His U.S. troops actually first touched the Seine River one rainy night on the 18th—but no one other than themselves knew it—and through the quiet night and the next day, they got across the river.

The French metropolis was militarily going to be bypassed initially, although after some debate and a civilian uprising, allied field generals decided to liberate it. Nobody knew if the Germans were going to fight for it or where.

About the week of August twentieth, every newscaster, writer, photographer, newsreel camera person and radio bigwig who could be able to, plotted some way to get into a convoy bound for the direction of Paris. Before the big break, virtually

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