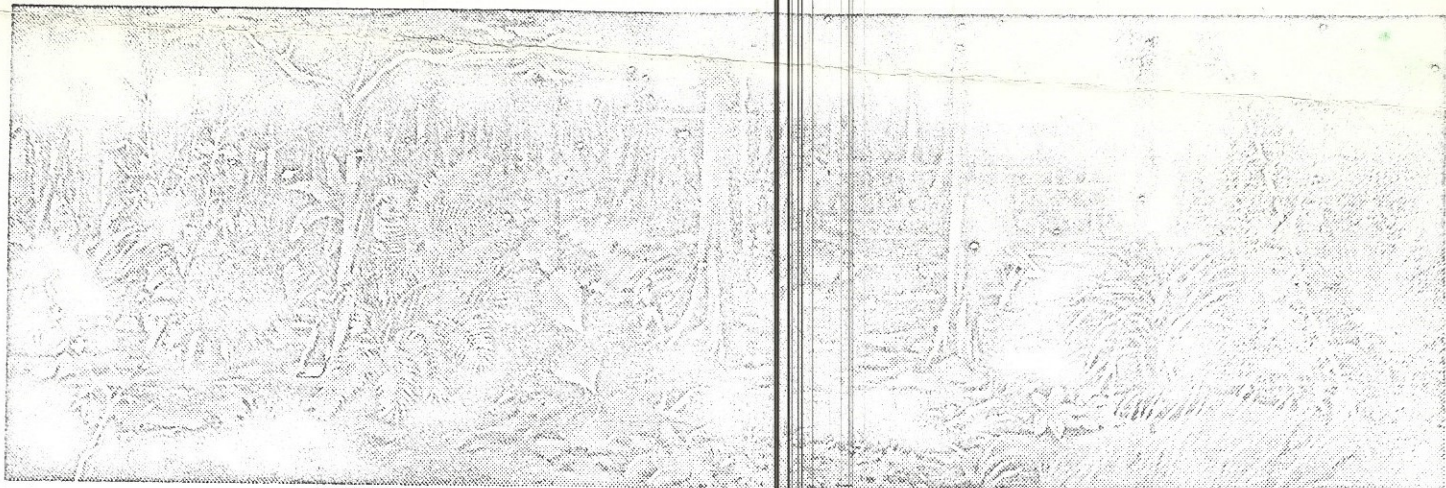


Artist Paul V. Lantz Goes To War



"JUNGLE WARFARE" . . . an oil painting by Pvt. Paul V. Lantz, showing the U. S. Marines battling the jungle as well as the Japs in the Solomons. The painting will be hung in one of the Day Rooms of the 21st Training Group at Jefferson Barracks, which has been furnished by the Delphian Council of St. Louis.

BY JUNE R. GERAGHTY

PVT. PAUL VALENTINE LANTZ, soldier and nationally known painter and illustrator, has gone to war armed with his brushes and oils. He hopes to see action wherever he is sent.

Before departing from Jefferson Barracks (he enlisted a year ago in New York) last week, Lantz left a memento of his two-month stay with the men of the 21st Training Group—an outstanding mural four by 12 feet of a battle scene of Guadalcanal which will hang in the training group's day room when it is dedicated next Wednesday by Delphian Council of St. Louis.

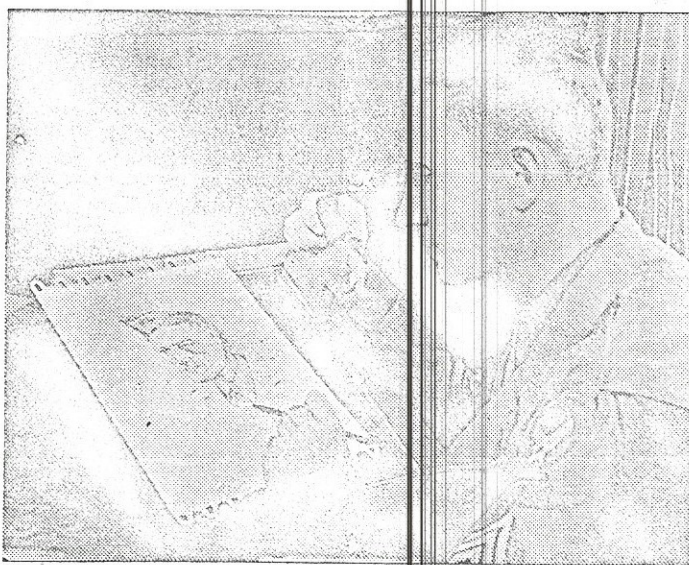
"Jungle Warfare" he called it. One glance, and you realize it's as powerful as its name implies, and is authentic from a military standpoint as well as from an artistic view. Lantz knows jungles, having traveled through them, and has read a great deal about jungle warfare.

The dynamic painting, which was started February 24 and completed two weeks later, just before the artist received his orders, shows how the American soldiers advance cautiously through the green, mysterious jungle, overhung with masses of vegetation, swamps and jungle trees. Figures of soldiers are not discernible at first. There's the beauty of wild flowers, intermingling with a touch of realism, acrid smoke of battle, which hangs heavy in the hot humid air. In the foreground, coiled about a huge liana is the figure of a giant serpent, and just below, a nest of Jap snipers, and the figure of a Jap sniper falling from his lair in the tree.

THE ARTIST was assigned to do the painting by Maj. Roger N. Emmertz, 21st Training Group commanding officer. The Delphian Council, of which Mrs. Frank B. Oswald is president, furnished the materials.

Lantz has gone now, but his comrades like to remember him as the quiet unassuming man of 35, medium height, the wiry type with a tapering face. Piercing eyes set above high cheek bones show a light of keen understanding. The army "G. I.'d" his flowing sandy haircut, but his mustache remains trim and neat.

NEWS will get around at an army post faster than a jeep. So when Paul Lantz started his



SERGT. ALBERT PARELLA, art editor of the "Skywriter," a chatty news publication put out by the training group, adding the finishing touches to his sketch of Pvt. Lantz, who was a member of the squadron before he left Saturday. (Star-Times Photos.)

mural in Day Room 601, soldiers in the squad made it a point to go in and out of the room just to look on. It was an appreciative audience. Even the tough senior drill instructor, who came to criticize, remained to encourage and add a few words of praise. He objected to the position of the snake coiled around the tree. Said the drill instructor, "You'd never find a snake where there's that much noise."

A buck private asked, "Where are the birds?"

To both, the artist replied: "A snake never runs from noise and birds take flight early in the game."

Lantz went over the picture four times before the coloring and shadowing suited him.

He never appeared important nor intellectual. Even too bashful to show his scrap books containing sketches and illustrations to First Lieut. Marie Gregorio, he left them on the officer's desk and said he'd call for them later. It was then that Staff Sgt. Albert Parella called Lieut. Gregorio's attention to the sketches, saying, "Here's the man we're looking for." Lieut. Gregorio is responsible for the "Skywriter," the chatty paper which contains "news and views of the Fightin' 21st" and Sergt. Parella is the art editor.

Lantz's paintings appeal to his own nature. He's interested only in the future, the past is in the background. As one New York critic said, "He belongs to that rare group called individuals who have, through their indi-

vidualities, dominated through time the less animated members of art society."

IN HIS AMBITION to get overseas, Lantz shares the eagerness of his fellows in the armed forces. "I believe that an artist can obtain a more comprehensive record of the war than can a camera man," is his own way of explaining his position.

"Painting has not the mechanical restrictions of the camera, and is not so reliant upon the coincidence of being in the right place at the right time with all the gadgets set to take the picture. An artist can carry a scene in his mind until the opportunity occurs to put it down on paper or canvas. This is not possible with the camera. The artist in war should be compared with the war correspondent. However, his record is visual rather than literary. Painting is another medium for the future greater understanding of humanity or mankind."

Lantz, although he was born in Stromberg, Neb., likes to think of New Mexico as his home. He's going back to New Mexico to buy a ranch after the war and "paint like mad" for his 6-year-old son, Christopher, who at present is in a private school at Paulian, N. Y.

Lantz won the right to be called an artist the hard way. At the age of 10 he received his first lessons in art from a man who painted and made violins. At 17 he was riding a freight train to New York City to enroll in the

Art Students League, financing himself through school by doing K. P. duty in a nearby restaurant. In his quest for further knowledge, the artist worked his way to England as a stoker on a liner and upon his return to this country took up illustrating and tried his hand at movie posters. Like others, he was caught in the stock market crash of '29 and had to start over again. This time he headed west again to Santa Fe, the happy hunting ground for artists, where he remained to paint the landscapes of the Rio Grande valley, "its simple foregrounds and complicated skies."

PRIOR to his enlistment last year the painter received much recognition for his work. His "Taxco, Dry Season", a lyrical landscape painted in 1939 from the front door of his home in Taxco, Mexico, is the property of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. Another, "Gramercy Park," is owned by the New York Historical Society.

He had quite an experience while doing "Man With A Guitar", in 1939 while in Santa Fe. The subject was murdered by a jealous husband in the shack which he shared with Lantz. His body was found lying under the unfinished painting of himself . . . a bullet had pierced the canvas. The painting was completed and exhibited at the New York World's Fair.

Several of Lantz's colorful murals can be seen in his beloved southwestern section of the country. In the La Fonda Hotel in Santa Fe, in the Los Poblanos estate of Albert Simms; in the post office at Clovis, N. M., and in the halls of the University of New Mexico several of them hang. Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., is the owner of one of Lantz's oils, "Street Scene in Taxco."

Lantz is equally well known for his illustrations in children's books. He illustrated Walter D. Edmond's "The Matchlock Gun," which was awarded the Newberry prize for the best children's book of 1941 at the American Library Association convention, also Ann Nolan Clark's "Navajo Bluebird."

PASTELS, illustrations, oils, are forgotten for the time being—while Pvt. Lantz, the soldier, is engaged in the more important job of putting on canvas his vivid impressions of World War II . . . but Paul V. Lantz, the artist and illustrator, will take up where he left off last year. There's to be an exhibit in Washington and he hopes that "Jungle Warfare" will be on display in a prominent place.