

WAR CORRESPONDENT

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overland to meet the Japs at Kokoda and Isurava. While waiting, he saw the disastrous Japanese raid of August 19 when many Allied transport planes were destroyed on the ground, and the forces out in the hills were threatened with starvation.

"Twenty-seven Japanese heavy bombers caught us entirely by surprise and played absolute hell with the field," he said. "That was a primary reason for the rapid defeat of our advance forces by the Japanese. Our preparations were delayed more than a week."

Meanwhile Parer got back from the wilds, and the two again linked up for the second Owen Stanley crossing. This time a third man, Chester Wilmot of the Australian Broadcasting Commission, joined them. The three were privileged to be the only correspondents to see the first big land battle of the war in the South West Pacific.

"We lost at Isurava," White declares, "because the troops we employed had been in New Guinea only a few weeks and were exhausted by forced marching through incredibly appalling mountain jungles. The country beat our men—not the Japs."

"Beat the Country First"

"Our people must learn to beat the country first, and consider the Japs second. We made every mistake that could be made. Men went down in droves with malaria and infected sores—with scrub itch and pneumonia and dysentery and tinia. For every man the enemy got New Guinea got ten."

"The few weeks I spent with the army of the Owen Stanleys was the grimmest and most terrifying adventure of my life. I don't want another like it, thanks."

When the Australian force was broken and had to retire, White and Wilmot made a dash back to Moresby with the first account of what had actually happened, running the gauntlet of Jap infiltration patrols. White was suffering from malignant malaria and pneumonia and was invalided south. Parer, though malarial himself, again stayed behind to complete his films. Native carriers were needed for the wounded, and for a week more Parer wandered among the disorganised remnants of the Australian force getting the shots which made that newsreel classic "Road to Kokoda."

"Famous Fathers"

THE famous father featured in the programme *Famous Fathers* from 12B next Wednesday (January 27) will be Harry Langdon, a star of silent motion pictures. Langdon was interviewed in his dressing-room before starting a vaudeville tour. He will tell of his life as one of the top-ranking comedians of Hollywood in silent days, and some of these incidents will be dramatised with Langdon playing the actual roles that he took in real life.

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