

GI's Blind Mascot Waits Operation

Baltimore — (NC) — He's just a little fellow, only 8, and thousands of miles from his home and loved ones in Italy, but measured in terms of faith and courage he's a veritable giant. His name is Gianfranco Giuliano Cabbia and he's a patient at Johns Hopkins Hospital here.

He already has undergone one operation, performed in an effort to restore sight of his right eye — he is totally blind in the left eye — and is gaining strength daily in preparation for another operation.

Dr. Alan C. Woods of the Wilmer Eye Institute at the hospital says that while the boy's case is not hopeless, it is "not promising." The boy lost his left eye and was all but blinded in the right eye when he was kicked by a German cavalryman's horse on September 18, 1944, in his home town of Feltre, Italy.

At first it was feared the lad would die, but the townsfolk joined in prayers for his recovery. Then came the liberation of Italy and Gianfranco became the pet of GIs who occupied the town.

A keen performer with the accordion, Gianfranco played his way into the hearts of "Joos" of the 31st (Red Bull) Division. They bought him a new accordion and sent him to outstanding Italian eye specialists for examination. Doctors considered his case virtually hopeless.

Then came the 88th (Blue Devil) Division. The lad met up with Pfc. Howard W. Gorgas, who had done some work as a youth director before the war and the two became steadfast friends. The suggestion was made that something might be done to restore his sight and the GI's raised \$3,500 to send him to the U. S. Brig. Gen. James C. Fry, of the "Blue Devils," promoted the campaign for funds.

Audiences With Pope
Private Gorgas was selected to bring him to this country and bring him home after everything had been done that could be done. When the Johns Hopkins Hospital authorities learned of the case, they offered to accept the boy without charge.

"The most cherished memories that boy has," Private Gorgas said, "are his two audiences with His Holiness Pope Pius XII."

"Father Adams, the ship's chaplain," Private Gorgas continued, was surprised at the boy's knowledge of religion and prayer during the crossing. Gianfranco was the best student of his age group in religion at school. Here in Baltimore, Father Louis J. Lull, rector of St. Leo's Church, gave him Holy Communion on the day of his operation. Father Lull and Father Angelo Case, assistant pastor, visit him and they have become fast friends."

The boy is the son of Mario Giuseppe Cabbia, a foreman in an aluminum factory, and his mother, Antonia, before her marriage, was a cook for a wealthy family. He has a brother, Sandro, 4. The Cabbias, an Italian middle class family, Private Gorgas said, have raised their children as devout Catholics and have done everything possible for their welfare.

Hero of Empire State Disaster Decorated

New York — (NC) — Coast Guardsman Donald Molony, 17-year-old Catholic from Detroit, who emerged as one of the heroes in the Empire State Building tragedy last August, has been awarded the Commendation Ribbon by the Coast Guard for "heroic conduct."

After witnessing an Army bomber strike the building, young Molony had rushed to a drugstore, obtained a first-aid kit and gave medical aid to the victims. Crawling through a hole blasted into an elevator shaft in the sub-basement the youth administered first aid to a badly-burned elevator operator. Later he climbed the stairs to the 79th floor where he found three injured persons whom he carried to safety a few floors below.



Meet a brave little lad, staunch in his Catholic faith—Gianfranco Giuliano Cabbia, age 8, of Feltre, Italy, now a patient at Johns Hopkins Hospital, Baltimore, thanks to the G. I.'s who raised a fund to send him there to be operated on by a famous eye surgeon. He is pictured with his American custodian, Pfc. Howard W. Gorgas, of the 88th Division and Franklin L. Gowen, Assistant to Myron G. Taylor, personal representative of the President of the United States at the Vatican.

Bill Asks \$500,000 For School Lunches

A measure providing \$500,000 for milk and lunches in the non-public grade and high schools of New York State, has been introduced into the State Legislature.

Presented in the Senate by Senator Desmond, the measure has been referred to the Committee on Finance. In addition to the \$500,000 for non-public school children, the bill provides for a \$2,000,000 grant to public school pupils.

If the bill is enacted into law, it will become effective April 1, 1946. The State Education Department will administer the funds for public schools while distribution of funds to Catholic and other non-public schools will be in charge of the State Welfare Commissioners.

The bill provides that: "All schools receiving payments under this act shall offer meals to children in attendance without distinction or segregation of any sort between paying and nonpaying children. All payments made under this act shall be used only in extending the school lunch program, in providing free lunches to needy children, in reducing the price of meals to paying children or improving the quality of the meals."

Under the program, amounts will be allocated to the various schools on the basis of the daily average attendance.

Shelters Opened for War Orphans in Rome

Rome — (RNS) — In response to appeals by Pope Pius XII, Home parish priests are planning to open two new shelters for homeless and war-orphaned children. One will be located in a former cinema building near Quadrado, just outside the city, and will be conducted by the Salesian Fathers.

The second home will be established in a villa formerly occupied by Count Nicolo Piccolomini, Italian Air Force pilot, who was killed in the war. These accommodations will be used principally for shoe shine boys from the poorest quarters of Rome.

In addition, the local clergy have arranged to open dormitories and restaurants in the center of the city for children who cannot be given shelter in either of the two new homes.

V. Conside Due Honor Maryknoll — (NC) — The Very Rev. John J. Conside, M.

St. Maryknoll Vicar General, is due to return in February after an eight month tour of all Maryknoll missions in Latin America.

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