

Melvin Norgard and his Carrie Havig

In 164th Since 15, Bostrom

Of Fargo Is Pacific Veteran

With the Americal Infantry Division, Somewhere in the Southwest Pacific—PFC. Gordon L. Bos-



trom of Fargo is called "one of the old men" of this veteran combat infantry regiment, although he is only 19 years old and still one of the youngest men in his outfit, the 164th North Dakota infantry.

He was amused when shown a **Bostrom** news report of a recent war department decision to send 19-year-old soldiers overseas as replacements, because, as an overseas veteran with 33 months' service to his credit, he is eligible for return to the United States under the current rotation policy.

G. T. Nordhogen, 910 Twelfth st N, and his sister, Mrs. Josephine Jones, 1111 Ninth av N, leave today for Montevideo, Minn., to attend the funeral of their nephew, Tryge Nordhogen, son of A. C. Nordhogen, pioneer blacksmith of Stanley, N. D., now of Montevideo. **G. T. Nordhogen's son, Paul**, will accompany them.

While congress was debating the reduction of the minimum draft age from 21 to 18 late in 1942, PFC. Bostrom, at 17 was deep in the historic battle of Guadalcanal, for which his regiment was awarded the Presidential Unit Citation as part of the First marine division, reinforced, and won widespread acclaim as the first army unit to tangle with the Axis in an offensive action.

WAS MORTARMAN

As a mortarman on Guadalcanal, he turned in an excellent performance among his older buddies, who quickly forgot their previous conviction that they would "have to watch out for him."

He participated in the entire Bougainville campaign as an operator in his regimental radio section, an assignment he is filling at the present time.

On Dec. 10, he observed the fourth anniversary of his enlistment in the National Guard and served four years of active army duty on Feb. 10. Bostrom was 15 years old when he became an army private, at that time the youngest man in his organization and one of the youngest men in the armed forces.

He said he looked much older than his actual age when he enlisted in the National Guard in 1940, giving an older age. He didn't tell his parents about it until after he was sworn in.

OVERSEAS AT 16

His mother objected for a long time, he said, but his father gave him an understanding nod, so Gordon remained in the National Guard after a little insisting of his own. After mobilization of his unit, he went with them to Camp Claiborne, La., for maneuvers in 1941 and then overseas early in 1942 at the age of 16.

He could have been released from the army before going overseas, but he volunteered to go along with his regiment. Army records of the battle-tested Guadalcanal and Bougainville veteran were adjusted when he reached the age of 18, qualifying him as "a full-fledged soldier."

The patriotic spirit and quest for adventure seem to run in the family, Gordon said in explaining his reasons for enlisting after his freshman year in high school and showing a letter from home which told about his younger brother, Clifford, who recently joined the North Dakota State guard.

ENOUGH ADVENTURE

Pfc. Bostrom, who holds the Combat Infantryman Badge and the Good Conduct Medal, as well as the Unit Citation, expects to resume the high school education he abandoned when he felt his country needed him, "when this thing is over." He thinks he has had enough "adventure" for one young life.

Residents of Turtle Lake, Wis., for eight years before moving to North Dakota, his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Melvin Norgard now live at 1220 Broadway in Fargo.

(During the week the Americal division invaded the Philippine island of Capul in the San Bernardino straits just off Luzon's southern tip.)