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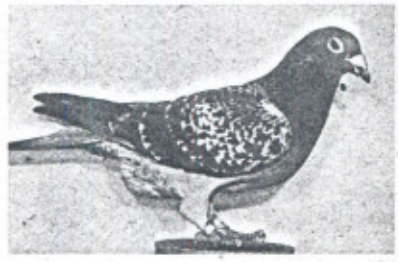
War Heroes For Sale

What's a nation to do with its old warrior pigeons? Just turn 'em out to molt? Make pies of 'em? Let 'em sell apples? Put 'em on relief? Oh, no! Not in the good old U. S. A. That's not for the birds. The thousand Army Signal Corps pigeons left at Fort Monmouth, some of them heroes of the last war and all of them grounded by electronics, will be put up for public sale to loving owners. Already, however, fifteen (each of whom has flown at least a score of combat messages) are going to zoos. Here are a few. No mail or phone orders, please.

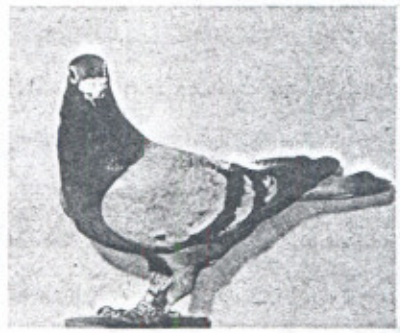
GI JOE—On Oct. 18, 1943, this blue check splash cock homer (above) saved the lives of a thousand British soldiers when he flew 20 miles in 20 minutes to call off an Allied bombing of an Italian village that they had just taken. Joe is now close to 14 years old.

YANK—This hero (above) flew word of the fall of Gafsa in Tunisia and also carried an urgent message to Gen. Patton. At 17, he is the oldest World War II bird.

CAESAR—In addition to delivering 44 combat messages in North Africa, this bird (right) flew across the Mediterranean to reach his Army loft in Tunisia.



APEX—Hatched in Burma in '44, Apex (left) flew for the O.S.S. in the China-Burma-India Theatre. When an O.S.S. agent parachuted behind Japanese lines, the bird dived with him, flying more than 20 combat messages in his time. The Army ranks him a great soldier.



LADY KAREN—This girl pigeon (right), born at San Prisco, Italy, and now 13, carried 31 combat missives in that country. It was, the Army says, her unusual grace and poise that won for her the title "Lady." Often pigeons were the sole means of communication.

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