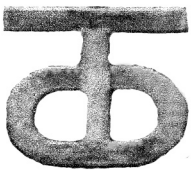
Story of a Citizen Soldier



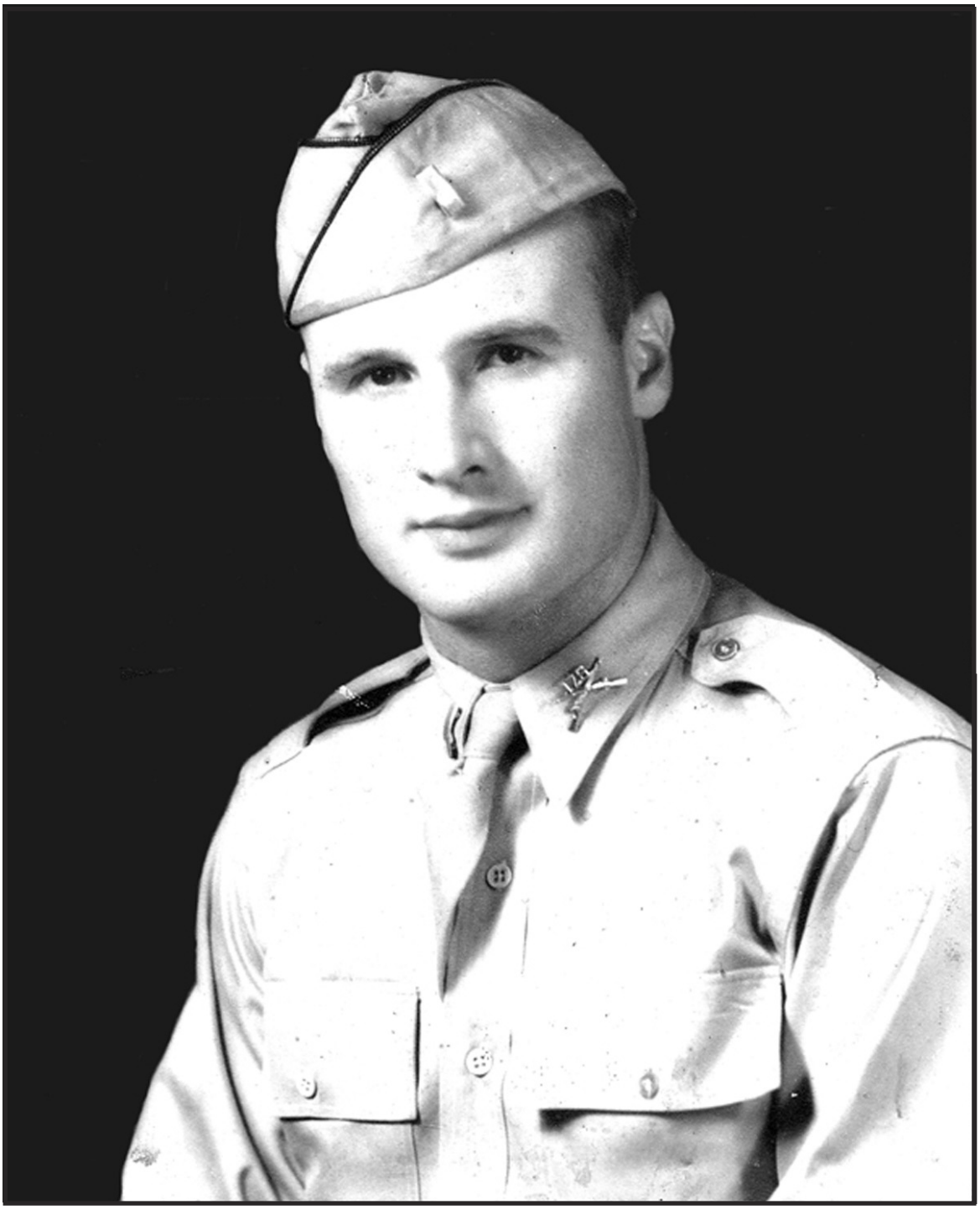
In the U. S. Infantry
May 24, 1940 to December 29, 1945

by
Charles B. Bryan, Sr.

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By Charles B. Bryan

Second Edition
2004



First Lieutenant Charles B. Bryan, Sr.

Photo taken at Fort Benning, Spring 1944. On 1 May, I was promoted to Captain and on 6 June shipped overseas in a replacement draft. On landing in France, I became the commander of Company L, Third Battalion, 358th Regiment, 90th Division.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank everyone who has contributed to this book, especially to my wife, Amelia, who has suffered through three years of composition and a final year of editing and rewriting.

My brother-in-law, Marvin Veronee, edited and typeset the book. He also helped select facts that needed footnotes and contributed some of the information in the footnotes.

My grandaughter, Julia Bryan, designed the cover for the second edition and contributed two sketches. She used the shoulder patch of the 90th Division and the Combat Infantryman's Badge as the focus of the design.

The Shoulder Patch of the 90th Division

The 90th Division was formed during World War I. Most of its men came from Texas and Oklahoma and the T O in the design of the patch reflects the origin of the division. After Pearl Harbor and the declaration of war by Germany, the 90th Division was activated on 26 March 1942. The Division's nickname of Tough (H)Ombres also recalls its Texas/Oklahoma origin. During WWII, Divisions were no longer recruited from any one state. Instead, a recruit or draftee might be assigned to any division as the needs of the Army dictated. Men in my company and battalion came from all over the country. Our Armed Forces in World War II truly were a national force. The shoulder patch on the cover was scanned from a patch on a uniform I wore in action.

1 January, 2004
Charles B. Bryan, Sr.
Johns Island, SC

The text in the second edition is virtually identical with the first. My grandson, William Bryan, scanned all the maps and photographs in the second eddition to improve their quality. Additional photographs from the National Archives illustrate some of the action of the 90th Division. These photos are identified by the abbreviation NA. The captions to the small photos of the infantryman's weapons and equipment were written by Marvin Veronee.

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INTRODUCTION

Several of my children have suggested that I write of my experiences during World War II. I have been postponing it until I had the time. I finally realized that I will never have more time than I have now, so I had better get started. I want my grandchildren and their children to know what I did, and if I don't tell them, no one else will.

I am not modest by nature, so if you suspect that I am bragging, you are exactly right. I was told by higher authority that I was a good company commander, but better than that I received praise, after the war, from some of the men who served under me. I think I held the record in the regiment, for length of time as a combat rifle company commander. I also commanded the famed Third Battalion for the last three months of the war: February 18, 1945 to May 7, 1945, (an easier period)) and for three months occupation duty. The Third Battalion earned its fame taking Hill 122, *Foret de Monte Castre*, Normandy, France, under the command of Lt. Col. Jacob W. Bealke, Jr. The Battalion was awarded the Presidential Unit Citation for this action. Under my command the battalion lived up to its reputation. We were the first troops to get all the way across Germany. We maintained momentum and *esprit de corps* even after the war was over.

To survive in combat, you had to have faith in God, in yourself, and in your outffit. A sense of humor, a strong stomach, and the ability to sleep in any position are also essential. My wife and parents prayed for me. I also did my share, but I don't know if my connections were as good as their's. I do know the hand of God reached down and protected this little sinner time and again during my ten months of combat. Two things that helped save me were: I joined the company right after the battle for Hill 122, and I had a staff job during the worst winter months. I did have a good many close calls which I will relate in the following pages.

Combat is very similar to football. The two opposing forces try to take advantage of each other's weaknesses. The offense tries to go through, over, or around the defense, whichever is the least expensive. Our mission was to destroy the German War Machine and liberate Europe. It was unfortunate that so many people, civilian and military, were part of the German War Machine. Every branch of the service and the homefront played an important part on our team.

The infantry is known as the "Queen of Battle." they go in and deliver the final blow. Bill Mauldin said: *the infantry is the group in the army which gives more and gets less than anyone else.* They also suffer more casualties than any other branch. We were rewarded by the expressions on the faces of the liberated people. The unit histories tell the story in a very concise and impersonal manner. I will endeavor to relate the incidents not mentioned in any of the histories in a way that I wouldn't mind telling my grandchildren.

I know that a number of L Company and Third Battalion members will have a different version of what took place in some of the actions related here. Sometimes these were different right after the action, much less after all these years. I was very fortunate to have the following histories for reference.

Mission Accomplished: The Story of the Campaigns of the VII Corps, United States Army in the War against Germany, 1944-1945.

A History of the 90th Division in World War II. 6 June 1944 to 9 May 1945. Brief History of the 358th Infantry

Combat History, 344th Field Artillery Battalion

Battle History of the Third Battalion, 358th Infantry. Pilzen, Czechoslovakia.1945



The Patches of the 90th Division

1

R.O.T.C. AT CLEMSON COLLEGE

September 1936 to June 1940

Clemson College was a military school. We lived in military barracks. The three old barracks had three students in each room. The room had two large windows and a heavy oak table with three chairs between the windows. The room held one double bunk, upper and lower, and one single bunk. On the wall opposite the windows was a set of shelves, with the gun rack next to the door into the hall.

Each student had a section of the shelves where his clothes were folded in a prescribed manner. Coats and pants were hung on a rack. The footlockers were placed at the end of the bunks with articles laid out in a military order. The rooms were inspected every day by the Officer of the Day (a senior) to see that the beds were properly made and the room clean.

In your freshman year, you were a private; sophomore year, corporal or private; junior year, sergeant or private; senior year, officer or private. On Saturday morning, there was a big inspection. Each company lined up on the parade ground. If the weather was bad, they used the company hall. Rifles, uniforms, and shoes were checked. The rooms were checked for dust by officers with white gloves and the bed had to be made according to military regulations.

Reveille was at 6:00 a.m. except Sunday. They called the company roll and had calisthenics. Breakfast was at 7:00 a.m. The company lined up and marched into the dining hall to assigned tables. Classes started at 8:00 a.m. We lined up again for dinner. At 6:00 p.m., we had a Retreat Parade with the Band and the lowering of the flag on Bowman Field. The whole corps was there. Then we marched into the dining hall for dinner.

The dining hall was on the basement floor of Number 1 Barracks. It could accommodate approximately 2, 000 students. Each table sat eight, with a senior at the head of the table.

The kitchen was located in the middle of the long dining hall. The seating arrangement of the companies was rotated each month so everyone would be close to the kitchen at least once during the year. The food was served in eight portions. A student waiter tended three tables and he ate early.

If the waiter sat at our table, we would throw fingers to see who would get his portion of meat and his dessert. At the count of three, everyone at the table would throw out one hand with one to five fingers extended. The total number was added and the count started with the head of the table and went clockwise. The winner was the one that the count ended on.

The Corps marched into the dining room and each man stood behind his chair. When everyone was in,the order was given. Each man sat at attention while announcements were given over the speaker. Grace was then said and the amen ignited 2,000 cadets to earnest action..

The head of the table dumped the meat onto a freshman's plate and held the meat platter up. The waiter took the three meat platters to be refilled in the kitchen. He raced but couldn't run. All the waiters would have qualified for the Olympic's walking race. We had plenty of wholesome food and we usually ate all of it. The men who complained usually ate the most. Clemson had a dairy so we had plenty of milk and the best ice cream in the state. I don't know how it started but most everyone poured syrup on his pie.

The last formation for everyone, except seniors, was long roll at 8:00 p.m. The First Sergeant made his announcements. After this, all underclassmen stayed in their rooms except to go to the bathroom. Everything was quiet for studying. Lights out and Taps was played at 11:00 p.m. One bugler played outside the Guardroom in the First Barracks. When his notes faded out, another bugler played Taps at the quadrangle at the New Barracks. We always opened our window to hear Taps no matter how cold it might be. They were not very strict about the lights being out as long as you were quiet.

At the end of the Junior year, the R.O.T.C.[1] students (98% of the class) went to a six weeks encampment at Fort McClellan, Alabama. It was hot and we practiced what we had studied for the past three years. The Army issued us uniforms. They had two sizes--too small and too large. We were paid 350 a day: three meals and 50 cents. We also received eight cents a mile for travel to and from camp.

At Clemson, we studied military science and tactics twice-a-week. This topic was covered mainly in the American Civil War, especially the tactics of the Southern generals. The Army stationed one Lt.. Colonel, four Majors, one Captain, and three Sergeants at Clemson to teach and supervise the program. They commissioned 300 to 350 Infantry Second Lieutenants a year. This system produced a lot of good officers when they were needed in WW II.

During our freshman year, we gave service to the upperclassmen. Then we received service for three years. Freshmen were called "Rat" or "New boy." A Rat was assigned to an upperclassmen's room, which contained two or three students. His job was to keep the room clean and straight. For the Saturday inspection everyone had to pitch in.

The Rat took care of the upperclassmen's laundry and mail. Each company was assigned a day to deliver and collect its laundry. The delivery was made at Reveille, and the collection was two days later in the afternoon. The Rat picked up the mail each morning and mailed it on his way to class.

The first thing that happened to a Rat was to lose all of his hair. I will never forget the sight of 800 bald heads when the class first assembled. The bald head and the same uniform made everyone equal.

Three Rats were assigned Hall Duty each weekday from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. in the afternoon and 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. in the evening. All the Rats in the company took turns at this duty, which was to run errands for the upperclassmen.

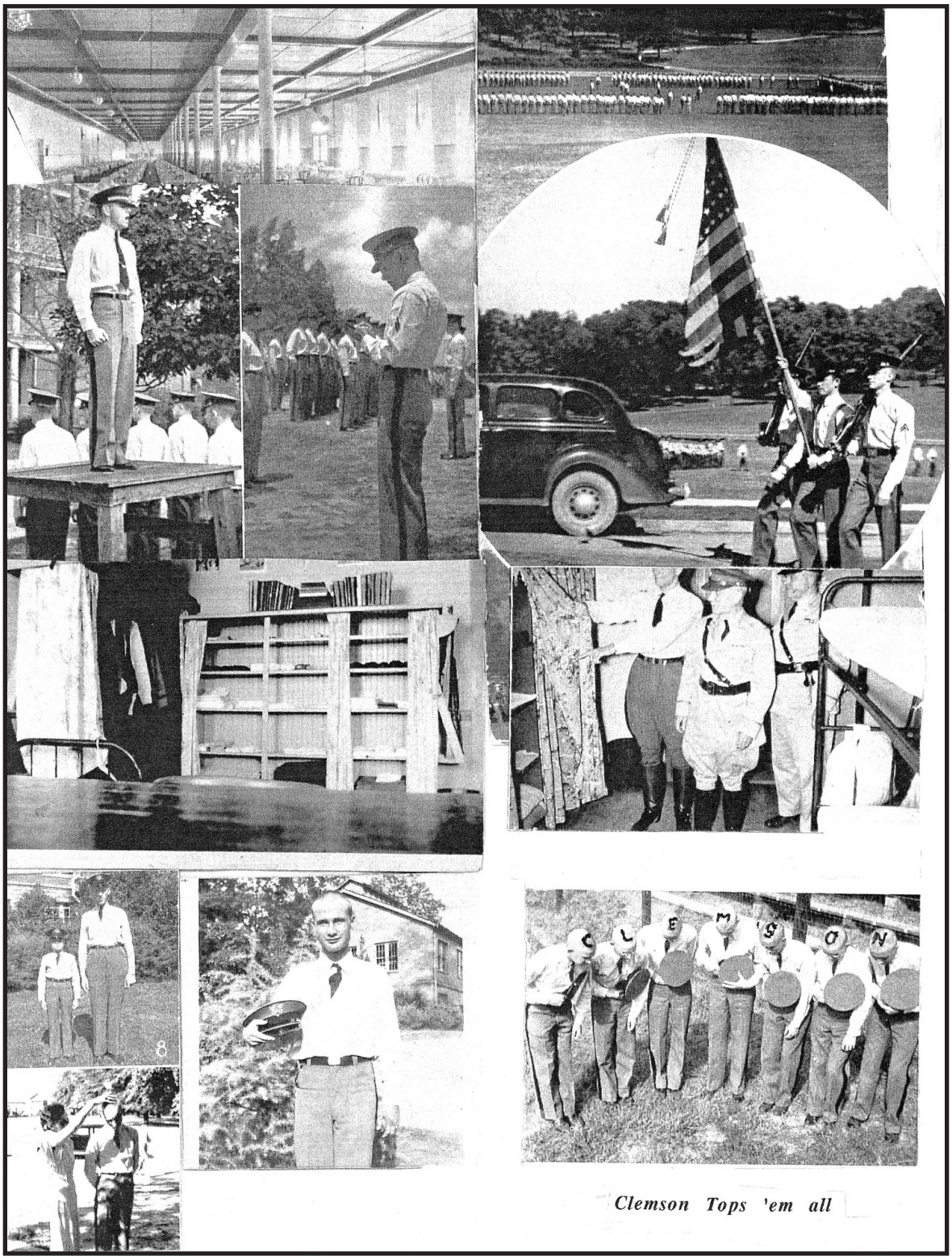
The tradition was that the hair had to be long enough to part by Thanksgiving or it would be cut again. I don't think that this ever happened. At Reveille on Thanksgiving morning, an inspection was made and everyone passed with the help of a variety of ingredients, including syrup, to make the part stay in place. Syrup was available in the mess hall.

FOOTNOTE

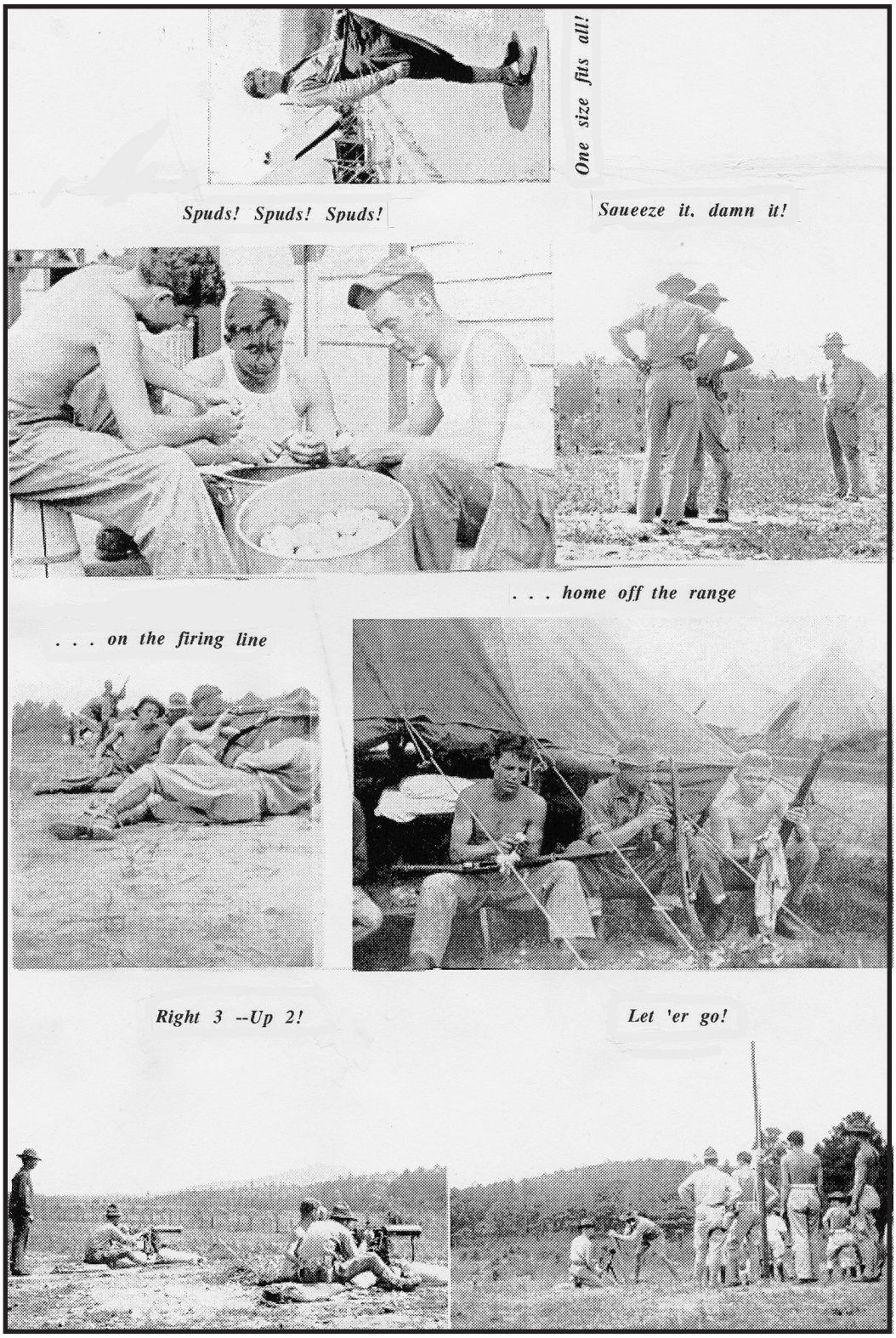
[1]The Reserve Officer's Training Corps authorized by the National Defense Act of 1916.



The Seal of the Clemson College Alumni Association



From *Taps,* The Clemson College Yearbook, 1936.
My Freshman Year at College



R.O.T.C. Summer Camp at Fort McClellan, Alabama
From *Taps*, the Clemson College Yearbook

2

FIRST JOB

CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS

June 1940 to March 1942

MY FIRST JOB

I graduated from Clemson A. & M. College in 1940 with a B.S. Degree in Civil Engineering. I had four years of R. O. T. C. (Reserve Officers Training Corps). I was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the Infantry Reserve on the 25th of May, 1940.

My first job was with the Water Department of Charleston, South Carolina as Assistant Engineer in charge of repairs. I had to be at work before 8:00 a.m. to assign jobs to the three repair crews, but then I became part of the office staff that didn't get off until 6:00 p.m. I worked nine hours a day Monday through Friday and five hours on Saturday for $100.00 per month.

TOUR OF DUTY WITH THE C.C.C.

At the end of the year, I was given a $10.00 per month raise. Uncle Sam offered Reserve Officers $125.00 per month plus room and board to run C.C.C. Camps for the Army. The Civilian Conservation Corps was responsible for the men 40 hours a week, the Army the rest of the time. I decided to take this job which would prepare me for the job with the regular Army, which seemed pretty certain in the near future.

My first assignment was a camp on Ramrod Key, Florida. The fresh water for the camp came from an underground river on another Key about 10 miles away. We had to haul it in a small tank truck 24 hours a day to supply the 150 people with drinking and cooking water. We washed in salt water.

One night about 0300,[1] the driver woke me and said the truck had turned over. The correct procedure was to call the garage in Homestead after 0800 to come and tow the truck to their garage over 100 miles away. I woke up ten men, borrowed a C.C.C. truck, drained the water out of the truck and pulled it back up. We towed it to Key West about 25 miles away. When the owner of the garage there woke up, we were sitting on his back steps, hats in hand. I turned on all the Irish charm that I could muster and he agreed to fix it after he had his coffee. His wife gave us all coffee. He knew where he could borrow the necessary parts from a similar truck. I asked him to send me five copies of the bill and if the Army would not pay it, I would.

The driver rolled into camp with the first load of water about 1400. I sent four copies of the bill with a letter of explanation to headquarters in Charleston, South Carolina, and the Army paid it.

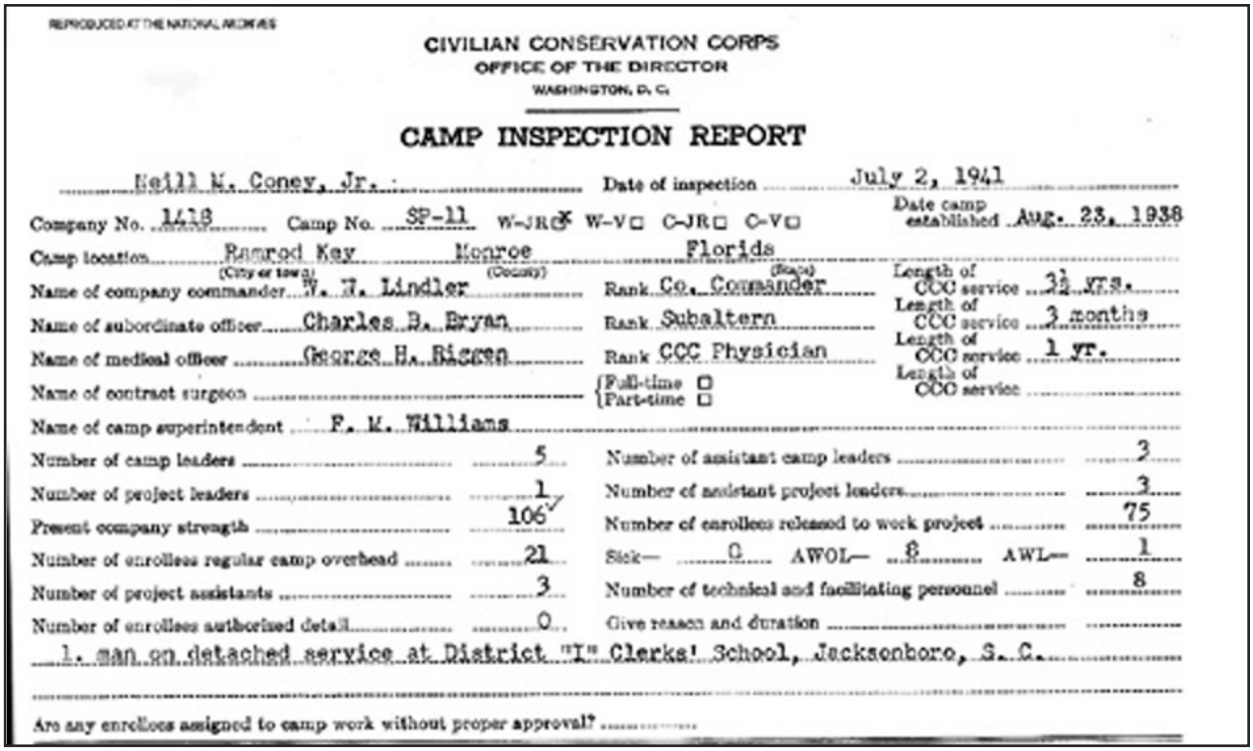
I received orders to attend a Mess Officer's Training School in Alabama for two weeks. I requested several extra days off, so I could get married to Amelia Veronee. Amelia and I were married in St. John's Episcopal Church on Johns Island on July 9, 1941. The training session usually ended at noon so we had a honeymoon in the afternoon in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Alabama. We stayed in a stone cabin on the side of the mountain.

Amelia and I were looking forward to spending the winter on the Florida Keys. Instead, I was transferred to Fort Jackson, Columbia, South Carolina, and they had one of the coldest winters on record.

During an inspection at Fort Jackson, the inspecting officer asked if I was the Bryan from Ramrod Key. I answered, "Yes Sir." He said, "If you ever pull another stunt like that again (fixing the truck in a private garage), I'll court-martial you." I answered, "Yes Sir." I think I would rather face a court-martial than 150 thirsty people on a Florida summer day.

FOOTNOTE

[1]24-hour time is used throughout the rest of this book.



REPRODUCED AT THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
WASHINGTON, D. C.

CAMP INSPECTION REPORT

Neill M. Coney, Jr. — Date of inspection July 2, 1941

Company No. 1418 — Camp No. SP-11 — W-JR☒ W-V☐ C-JR☐ C-V☐ — Date camp established Aug. 23, 1938

Camp location: Ramrod Key (City or town) Monroe (County) Florida (State)

Name of company commander W. H. Lindler — Rank Co. Commander — Length of CCC service 3½ yrs.

Name of subordinate officer Charles B. Bryan — Rank Subaltern — Length of CCC service 3 months

Name of medical officer George H. Bigger — Rank CCC Physician — Length of CCC service 1 yr.

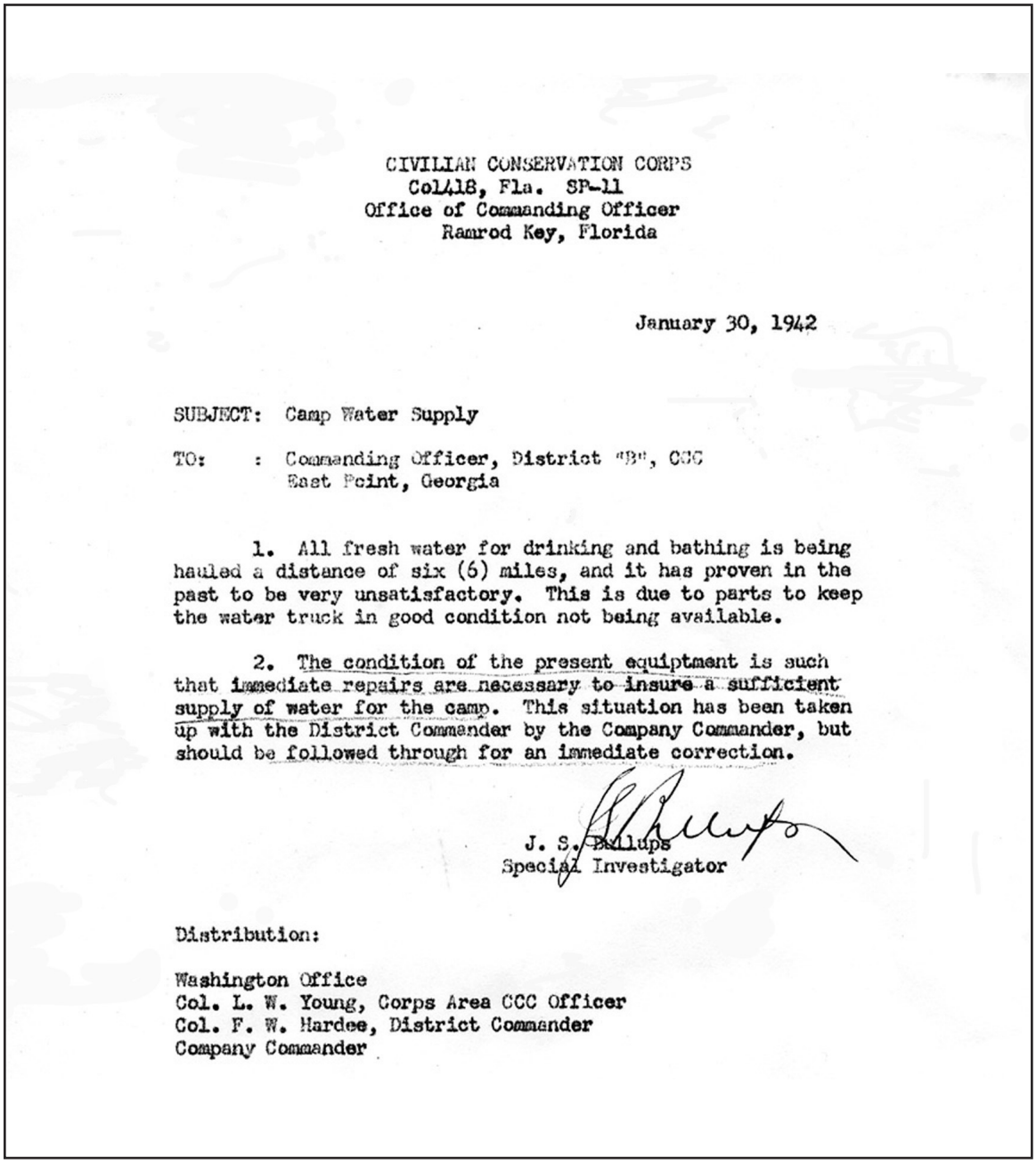
Name of contract surgeon — {Full-time ☐ Part-time ☐} — Length of CCC service

Name of camp superintendent F. M. Williams

Number of camp leaders	5	Number of assistant camp leaders	3
Number of project leaders	1	Number of assistant project leaders	3
Present company strength	106	Number of enrollees released to work project	75
Number of enrollees regular camp overhead	21	Sick— 0 AWOL— 8 AWL—	1
Number of project assistants	3	Number of technical and facilitating personnel	8
Number of enrollees authorized detail	0	Give reason and duration	

1 man on detached service at District "I" Clerks' School, Jacksonboro, S. C.

Are any enrollees assigned to camp work without proper approval?



CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS
Col418, Fla. SP-11
Office of Commanding Officer
Ramrod Key, Florida

January 30, 1942

SUBJECT: Camp Water Supply

TO: : Commanding Officer, District "B", CCC
East Point, Georgia

1. All fresh water for drinking and bathing is being hauled a distance of six (6) miles, and it has proven in the past to be very unsatisfactory. This is due to parts to keep the water truck in good condition not being available.

2. The condition of the present equiptment is such that immediate repairs are necessary to insure a sufficient supply of water for the camp. This situation has been taken up with the District Commander by the Company Commander, but should be followed through for an immediate correction.

J. S. Phillips
Special Investigator

Distribution:

Washington Office
Col. L. W. Young, Corps Area CCC Officer
Col. F. W. Hardee, District Commander
Company Commander

C.C.C. Camp Reports-Ramrod Key - July 1941

The first report shows my name as Subaltern of Camp 1418. The letter from the commanding officer in January 1941 shows that the water problem was a continuing one, which resulted in the water shortage in the middle of the scorching summer heat of the Florida Keys.

3

THE REAL ARMY

March 1942 to November 1943

SECOND BATTALION, 176TH INFANTRY

After Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941, the government closed out about half of the C.C.C. Camps because many officers and men were being called into active duty in the Army. On March 5th, 1942, I was ordered to report to Camp Croft, Spartanburg, South Carolina with the rank of 2nd Lieutenant. After a two-week refresher course, I was assigned to the 176th Infantry in Washington, D.C. For a couple of hours I thought I had to go to the state of Washington. The 176th Infantry was George Washington's old regiment. It was a National Guard unit from Richmond, Virginia. A good many officers from the 176th were assigned to positions in the Capital, so Reserve Officers were brought in to fill the vacancies. The Reserve Officers did the work and the National Guard Officers got the promotions (viewpoint of a Reserve Officer).

The Army drafted men from large corporations to fill special jobs in Washington, and they were commissioned Majors and Colonels. One day I had to go into an Army building on business. I talked to the receptionist; then I noticed a Major staring at me, so I turned around (First Lieutenants and Captains are all right, but you have to watch out for those Majors). I glanced back at him and



War Department - Officer's Identification Card . No. 44655.

I carried this card on me from date of issuance until the end of the war.

he was still staring. I straightened my tie and tucked in my shirt. I shined my belt buckle with my shirt sleeve. I glanced around again: he was getting up, he was coming toward me. I turned around at attention. He came up to me and said, "Are you a Second Lieutenant?" I answered, "Yes sir." He then said, "You are the first one I ever saw."

Later on we had to teach these officers military basics: military courtesy, saluting, and marching. Some had two left feet. It was amusing to see and hear a Corporal teaching a Colonel how to salute and march.

Guard Duty - Washington, D.C.

We guarded the numerous highways, the single railroad bridge into the city, the telephone exchange buildings, the airport, the Capitol, and the Senate and House buildings. The buildings in the city were the worst stations. We slept in the basement and guarded the outside. It was hot in summer and cold in winter and the glare from the sun on the white buildings was rough on the eyes.

We furnished an Honor Guard for the President and other dignitaries. I was selected as the leader of this platoon (men taken from all companies) because of my size and big mouth. My voice could be heard above the normal noise at the airport and on the streets. I had to buy a long overcoat ($75.00) which I only used twice. The enlisted men were issued twice the amount of clothing. The officers had to buy theirs.

On April 19, 1942, Charles B. Bryan, Jr. was born: 8 lb. 3 oz. The next day everyone in the company was smoking my cigars. It was another day before I could get leave to go to Charleston to see him. The Army didn't think the father's presence was necessary. Neither did the maternity nurses in the hospital.

I was able to take Amelia and Buddy to Aunt Julie's[1] on the 6th day of my leave, just before returning to Washington. Amelia was not supposed to walk up steps, so I had to carry her up two flights of stairs to the bedroom. They stayed with Aunt Julie for three weeks, then three weeks with my mother, before going to her former home where Brother[2] and Auntie[3] lived.

We had six officers in each company: one or two attending schools, another on special duty somewhere, so whoever was left in the company had to do guard duty and carry on a training program. There was no time left for the 36-hour pass we were supposed to get each week. On June 22, 1942, I was promoted to the rank of First Lieutenant. But I wasn't having any luck in finding an apartment for Amelia and Bud.

When Buddy was six months old, Amelia contacted her cousin Hatty Perkins in Washington and she invited Amelia to come and stay with her until she could find an apartment. Amelia didn't have any luck in finding an apartment, so she moved in with a friend from Orangeburg, South Carolina, Miriam Bennett, wife of Lt. Bennett of the 176th, who lived in a newer section of Washington.

Amelia went around to the various housing projects. There were a lot of them, and they were building a lot more. Everyone had several hundred on their waiting lists. One day the receptionist, who was from South Carolina, noticed Amelia's Winthrop College ring. That led to a lot more conversation and they learned that she knew several of Amelia's Winthrop friends. Two days later she called Amelia and said that she could have an apartment. We went to Sears Roebuck as soon as I could get off, bought furniture, and moved in. Officers still had the problem of not being able to get off very often. I could phone several times a day and night. Buddy was six months old. When he was awake he was very entertaining, but he slept a lot so Amelia was very lonely.

I was on guard duty on the Potomac River bridges. We were living in tents on Haynes Point. Lt. Noel[4] told us we had to get out of there because the whole area would be flooded in about two hours. The river looked so peaceful, I couldn't believe it. It had been raining in the mountains, and swollen streams were flowing into the Potomac. We rolled up the sides of the tents and put rocks on the wooden floors so they wouldn't float off.

We moved back to our barracks at Fort Meyer, but still guarded all the bridges. Haynes Point was flooded by two feet of water. All the men not on guard duty had to haul and stack sand bags around government buildings to keep the water out.

I was assigned to the Regimental NCO[5] School for two weeks as an instructor. I taught map reading and several other subjects. We had classes all day and one session at night. I was able to spend the rest of the night at the apartment two out of three nights. There were three instructors and one was on duty each night.

When the Pentagon Building was about one-third complete, the military units started to move in, and we did most of the moving. The Pentagon Building has five sides and is five stories high. There are no steps, only ramps and elevators to each floor. They used small vehicles like golf carts to carry supplies and equipment up and down the ramps. Each floor is painted a different color. The circumference of this building is one mile (5,280 feet).

My next move was special duty at the Pentagon. I was assigned to the Provost Marshal's office as his assistant, in charge of guarding the outside (24 hours) and patrolling the inside at night (12 hours). The officers and men under me were from the 176th. The civilian police gradually took over the outside guard duties (entrances and unfinished ends of halls). The offices that we had to check were large rooms with long rows of desks. Each desk had several filing cabinets behind it. The patrol had to check any cabinet that was marked "Restricted." If it was unlocked, I had to call the officer responsible to come in and check if anything was missing.

You can imagine the answers I got when I had to call someone at 0200 and tell him that his file was unlocked. First, he would sleepily tell me to lock it. I would have to tell him I couldn't do that. He would get rough. Since he outranked me I would reply very politely, in a very deep voice: "Sir, I don't give a damn what you do, but I have to report it." An hour later he would come in, with a rain coat over his pajamas. He had cooled off and wanted to make sure that I reported him for properly coming in to check and everything was in order.

I would visit the message center at least once during the night. Messages from all the battle zones were coming in on ticker tape. Sometimes the messages were a little different from what was in the newspaper the next day.

There were always rumors about what, where, and when concerning our next move. They increased when we started checking equipment, clothing, and medical records. The men assigned to the Pentagon were replaced by older men permanently transferred and we returned to our companies.

An officer in the Pentagon heard that we were leaving and asked me if he could take over our lease on the apartment. I said okay if he would buy the furniture. I quoted the same price that we paid for it. He gave me a check on the spot sight unseen.

Regimental Maneuvers

We thought we were going to North Africa (invaded by an Anglo-American force led by Eisenhower on November 8, 1942), but ended up at A.P. Hill Military Reservation near Bowling-Green, Virginia. Each battalion was assigned a field and issued pyramid tents (square tent for six men), two to each squad. Each company formed a neat row with the company street in front. Company headquarter's tent on one end and the latrine 200 feet from the last tent on the other end. The kitchen and supply tents formed another street 90^{o} from the company street. The officer's tents were behind the kitchen. The battalion had five companies.[6]

Saturday afternoon the men were given leave to go to Fredricksburg by truck convoy. Lt. Booker was single and always wanted to go so the married officers usually let him take their turns. He had a bad habit of waking everyone in his tent when he returned (one drink too many). We thought we would play a joke on him. We moved his cot out of the tent and hid it. We rolled a jeep into its place. We heard the convoy returning, the men unloading and going down their street to their tents.

It started to quiet down, then we heard Booker coming. We had laced up the entrance to his tent (an added obstacle). We heard him fumbling with the rope in the dark and cussing to himself. He finally gave up, pulled the side of the tent up, and crawled in. He bumped into the jeep, slapped the hood, then crawled in. Everything was quiet. We all felt let down. It was pretty cold in the tent, with half an inch of snow on the ground. We could hear him breathing heavily. We were about to give up, turn over, and go to sleep, when he woke with a roar. "Where is my bedroll? The payroll is in the bedroll!" He had been paymaster that afternoon and he had the money for the men who were absent (on leave or in hospital). We all got up and helped him move the jeep out and his bed back in. Next week he was a little quieter, but not much.

Our next move was by train. All of the vehicles went out in one convoy. The men would travel by train. As the company executive officer, I wasn't responsible for a platoon, so I was put in charge of the kitchens and extra baggage. One half of the battalion traveled on one train. I had two freight cars in the middle of the train, one for the kitchen and one for the baggage.

After I got in the supplies, fastened down the stoves and loaded the baggage so we could walk through the car, I didn't have anything to do. The Red Cross ladies gave us magazines at the railroad station. I made myself comfortable in the baggage car, with the side door partly open so I could see the scenery. Magazines, coffee, and sandwiches -- I had a very pleasant trip.

Amelia had a ride with Mary Brown, the wife of Lt. Brown, as far as Cheraw, South Carolina. Then she caught the bus to Charleston. Buddy was upset about the changes in his schedule, so he gave her a hard time. In the car, she had to hold him in her lap, and he was very restless. On the bus, he cried for a good many miles. They arrived at Aunt Julie's house at 0200 unannounced, but Aunt Julie greeted them, dressed in a long nightgown with her hair down to her waist, and gave them a hearty welcome.

We had a low priority on the railroad tracks so we would travel for several hours, pull onto a side track and watch the high priority trains streak by. We thought we were going to a staging area prior to going overseas. It really was a hurry up and wait trip. We traveled all day and most of the night, over 600 miles, before unloading in an open field. We made camp with pup tents and went to sleep. About 0800, we were awakened by a newsboy selling papers. He told us we were in Fort Benning, Georgia. We bought all his papers so we could get back to sleep.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Miss Julia Schirmer of 104 Bull Street in Charleston, SC, Amelia's aunt.

[2]Alvin R, Veronee, Jr., Amelia's oldest brother.

[3]Miss Irene Veronee, Amelia's aunt.

[4]First Lieutenant in the 176th Infantry.

[5]Non Commissioned Officers, corporals and sergeants.

[6]Three infantry companies, a weapons company, and headquarters company.



Badge of the 176th Infantry

4

INFANTRY SCHOOL

November 1943 - May 1944

FORT BENNING, GEORGIA

Trucks hauled us to the Sand Hill[1] Area where we were housed in pyramid tents with wooden floors for several weeks before moving to the Brick Barracks on the Main Post. The Regiment that we replaced went to North Africa.

We were demonstration troops and assistant instructors in the Infantry School for training infantry officers. You really learn your subject when you take part in the instruction. I was given command of a company and told to reorganize and straighten it out. During the Depression, men were given promotions for need rather than for ability. The National Guard Officers were neighbors and relations of the men. I made some changes that improved the efficiency of the company. Morale and *esprit de corps* also improved.

I was rewarded by being sent to the Battalion Commander Course at the Infantry School at Fort Benning (there was a last minute vacancy). I was the only 1st Lt. in the class, mostly Majors and Lt. Colonels. Being just two years out of college, I did pretty well. A National Guard 1st Lt. was given command of the company and promoted to Captain. Going to this school was a great help later on when I became the CO of the Third Battalion, 358th Infantry.

All the units at Fort Benning had to furnish personnel for guard duty. I had to be Officer of the Guard twice while I was there. The personnel on each guard came from three different units. There were three guard mount ceremonies so there was plenty of room for SNAFUs.[2]

One day, I was Officer of the Guard and everything had gone off as planned. I was relieved and started to relax. The phone rang, the corporal answered it, he held it off his ear, and rolled his eyes up. I relieved him and said, “Lt. Bryan, Officer of the Guard.” Lt. Colonel Will, on the other end, got his second wind and lit into me. It seemed that he had checked post 52 and it was unmanned. The Fort, the Army, the whole country was going to hell! At the first pause I said, “I’ll straighten it out right away, sir.”

I had to check the map to learn that post 52 was located in the warehouse section and was guarded by Quartermaster troops. The jeep driver who was permanently assigned to this duty knew exactly where the post was, and we drove over. We stopped and observed the post from a distance. The guard was walking his post. I went up to him and asked him his general orders and his special orders.[3] He knew both. I asked him if he came on duty at 2000.

Yes Sir.

Colonel Will checked this post at 2012 and no one was here.

I know all about that.

Well, tell me about it.

I recognized the Colonel's car so I hid under the steps.

I put on a stern expression and said, "Don't ever do that again." I had to leave quickly before I burst out laughing. When the driver and I recovered we went to the Quartermaster's guard house and told the Sergeant to tell each shift when they went on duty not to ever leave their post for any reason until they were properly relieved. That was in their general orders.

I was able to rent an apartment in the housing project reserved for junior officers. Families with children were given priority. I went home to Johns Island and brought the family and the car to Fort Benning, near Columbus, Georgia. The apartment had two rooms downstairs, kitchen and dining together, and living room; upstairs two bedrooms and a bathroom. There were four apartments in each building. Each apartment had at least one small child, so the project was full of small kids. The yard outside your door was their playground, so you couldn't leave anything outside. The Fort provided bus service (a large cavalry horse trailer with wooden benches) to the apartments.

Lt. Miller in my company wanted to get married but couldn't find a place to live. Amelia told him that they could use one of our bedrooms while Betty looked for an apartment. They stayed with us for several weeks before finding a place to live. Lt. Miller joined the 8th Infantry Division overseas. He was wounded on his first attack. He recovered several months later and was killed on his second attack. Betty and their child visited Amelia later during the war.

On a river crossing demonstration, several boats turned over and two men drowned. After that anyone who couldn't swim was excused from duty and had to take swimming lessons. I think some pretty good swimmers put in for lessons just to cool off in the pool. We also gave driving lessons at the same time.

I was given command of another company and had to make some changes. The First Sergeant went off to Officer's Candidate School. I promoted a Sergeant who was a N.Y. State Patrolman in civilian life. He was a ball of fire. We had the best company in short order. His wife was a live-in-maid for a Colonel's family. This was the only way the Sergeant could find a place for her to live.

The First Sergeant was always in the office when I arrived in the morning and usually still working when I left at night. One day the Colonel's wife called me on the phone and gave me a hard time about working the Sergeant so hard that he couldn't spend any time with his wife. I think this is the only time in my four years in the Army that I had to order a Sergeant to stop working and go home to his wife. I had to keep checking on him.

CAMP LIFE

I would like to tell you some of the things we did that were not exactly regulation. We were having a lot of night exercises at this time. The men were hungry when we came in about 2200 or 2300. Coffee and sandwiches or cake sure would be good. The Mess Sergeant and the First Sergeant solved the problem. They got some extra coffee and flour, but sugar was very scarce and rationed. The Mess Sergeant made friends with the Mess Sergeant at a WAC Company and he traded her some salad making material for sugar.

We had a man in the company who had worked in a bakery in civilian life. The First Sergeant kept him off other details, and he baked doughnuts for the night exercises. There wasn't room in the kitchen during the day for another cook so he had to work at night. The Battalion Duty Officer usually turned up when we served the coffee and doughnuts, but he didn't ask any questions.

We had a pretty good softball team, but the pitcher needed more time to practice. The First Sergeant kept him and the catcher off other duties so they could practice. When we had a game, I had all the officers and men fall in and march to the playing field. They could leave anytime but most of them stayed. The other companies had only voluntary attendance which was usually small. It helped our team to have a large crowd backing them.

Church Call was every Sunday morning about 1000. The men going to church appeared, the duty Sergeant checked them for proper uniform, and they went to church. I made a few changes here. The entire company fell out. The men going to church in proper uniform marched off with several officers to church. The rest of the company in work clothes cleaned up our area. Every Sunday, the group going to church got bigger.

There were a lot of trouble spots in town (Columbus, GA) and the men seemed to end up broke or with the MP (Military Police). We had a large room in our basement not being used, so we set up a recreation room. We made ping-pong tables, large round card tables, and rented several pool tables. We financed this with coin operated amusement machines. We received half of the take. We had a sergeant in charge each night.

We opened the room after supper and closed it at 2300. The sergeant kept any outside card sharks from coming in and taking our money. The limit of the stakes was low. No alcohol was allowed. The post had a beer garden for the enlisted men and an Officer's Club. The USO[4] put on dances for the men. At Fort Benning and most Army posts, when the USO put on a dance there were 20 or 30 girls and over 200 men.

Washington was a different story. They had large temporary dormitories for secretaries. When we had a dance, we would invite all who wanted to attend to be out front at 1900. Sometimes more girls (60 or 70) showed up than we could transport in trucks.

The Regiment had football, basketball, and baseball teams. These men came from all the companies and were put on special duty at Regimental Headquarters Company. My company had

several men on the football team. Most were college or professional players. Our quarterback was Bob Waterfield whose wife was Jane Russell, the movie actress. When we went overseas, Bob Waterfield was excused because of a bad knee. He played professional ball[5] for years after the war.

This good life, eight or ten hours of work a day, only one night duty a week, and three hot meals a day soon came to an end. We moved to vacant buildings in the Paratrooper School[6] area. Officers and men were transferred to replacement pools in preparation for the Normandy invasion. On May 1, 1944, my overdue promotion to Captain was confirmed.

A rifle company has six officers and 170 men. As men and officers were sent out into the replacement pools, one officer and 15 key enlisted men were kept to form a cadre. Around this nucleus, the company would build back to full strength with draftees and officers from the Infantry School.

I received orders to report to Fort Meade, Maryland on May 24, 1944, which gave me a week's leave to move. I had built a trailer while we were at Fort Benning. We sold all our furniture except Buddy's things and the sewing machine. We loaded up the trailer and headed for Johns Island.

FOOTNOTES

[1]The Sand Hills of Georgia, South Carolina, and North Carolina are poor land ideal for military reservations. Three of the largest in the U. S. are Fort Benning near Columbus, GA; Fort Jackson near Columbia, SC; and Fort Bragg near Fayetteville, NC.

[2]Situation Normal All Fouled Up.

[3]General orders were the orders that all sentries had to follow. Special orders were orders specific to the post. The guard had violated one of the most important of general orders: not to leave his post without being relieved.

[4]The USO, United Service Organization, provided all kinds of social activities for the American Armed Services during World War II. Many famous entertainers put on shows for American servicemen all over the world.

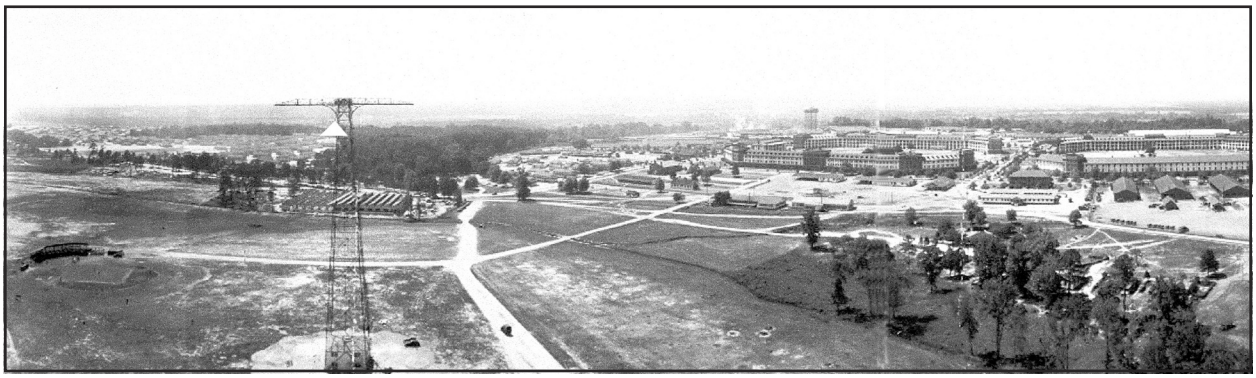
[5]For the Cleveland Rams, later the Los Angeles Rams.

[6]Fort Benning was the training base for the Army's Airborne Divisions (the 82nd and the 101st).





US Army Infantry School, Fort Benning Georgia



Fort Benning, Georgia. 1941.
The 82nd and 101st Airborne trained here.The parachute tower is left center.

5

EUROPEAN THEATER OF OPERATIONS

May - June 1944

OVERSEAS ORDERS

On May 23, 1944, Daddy, Mama[1] and Amelia took me to the railroad station. My orders read to report to Fort Meade, Maryland on the 24th, but we knew that this was the first leg of my journey to the E. T. O. (European Theater of Operations). We had been separated a good many months in our thirty-four months of marriage, but we both knew that this would be for a long time. We all put up a good front, and there were no tears. I was confident that Melia could take care of herself and Amelia - Keith[2] when the time came and of course Buddy (Charles Jr.). She also had Alvin (Bubber), and Auntie, for support. I also had confidence in myself. I was 25 years old, with a four year R.O.T.C. training and two years experience as platoon and company commander. I had more to fight for and more to fight with than the average.

The train was so crowded that about one-fourth of the men were standing or sitting on arms of seats. The club and dining cars were also full. A Cuban woman who could only speak Spanish passed out while we were crossing North Carolina. The conductor revived her but couldn't understand what the problem was. He located an interpreter and learned that she hadn't eaten all day. It was past midnight, so he brought some food from the dining car and she perked up. She was a sailor's wife traveling from Key West to Washington, D. C.

On the 25th, I took Lt. Miller and Lt. Meyer on a tour of Washington. On the night of the 27th, we left by train for Camp Miles Standish just outside Boston, MA. It didn't take long to process everyone, then we had to wait for orders. There was a good library so we did a lot of reading and sleeping.

We were granted a 24-hour pass, so most of us went to Boston by train. Four of us checked into the Statler Hotel, and the lady in charge told us to eat at the Fox and Hounds and to tell the headwaiter that she had sent us. When we got to the Fox and Hounds, there was a long line. We waited for a while, then decided to try the lady's suggestion, so one of us went up to the headwaiter and told him. He got us a table right away. The table was for six, so we invited two ladies who were in line next to us to eat with us.

They were mother and daughter, and the mother knew more about Charleston than I. She visited there every year. The ladies told us where the best shows and night spots were located. Everywhere we went there was a long line, but we just told the person at the door that the lady from

the Statler Hotel had sent us, and we were given seats right away. I think our uniforms also helped. We had to catch the train at 0600 so we didn't go back to the hotel, but rode in a buggy pulled by a horse named Danny, back to the railroad station, singing all the way.

ATLANTIC CROSSING

On the 4th of June, we went by train to Boston Harbor and boarded the *U.S.S. Wakefield*.[3] We sailed on the 5th with 5,000 troops aboard, but only about 4,000 bunks to sleep in. Some of the men had to take turns sleeping. They only served two meals a day because it was noon before breakfast was finished. Dinner started about 1500. We had good weather for six of the seven days at sea, but that one day and night was rough on a ship so crowded. I slept on the top bunk just under the deck of the ship. When the ship rolled, a garbage can on deck would move about six inches and make a terrible noise.



The U.S.S. Wakefield, Amphibious Maneuvers, 1941
George C. Marshall Research Library, Lexington ,Virginia

We had to wear life belts at all times. They were about six inches wide and had two small bottles of compressed carbon dioxide gas to inflate the belt. All you had to do to inflate it was to push the bottle in. If you bumped into someone or something while moving about the ship, the belt blew up and you had a six-inch tube around your waist. There were several big poker games going on all the time. A person would stay in until he was exhausted or broke, then someone would take his place. The games lasted for the whole trip.

We didn't know anything about the date of D-Day except that it would be pretty soon. We heard on the 7th that the Allies had landed and were moving inland. I was informed at each Replacement Center that they didn't need Captains, only Lieutenants. When I reached my final destination, there were no Captains left in the line companies.

We lost one day because enemy subs were reported along our route. We arrived at Liverpool on th12th, and the ship had to weave its way through the sunken ships while going up river to the docks. A hospital ship was unloading wounded right next to us. We expected to see men on stretchers, but we were surprised at the number of patients in straight jackets. The sight of these men suffering from shell shock or battle exhaustion wasn't too good for our morale. The English dockworkers wore long overcoats and neckties while working.

ENGLAND

We went by train to our first camp in England. It was a tent camp on the grounds of a manor house just outside of a coal mining town. We were restricted to the camp area, but some of the men and officers sneaked into town anyway. They came back with wild tales of evading the M.P.'s. When the M.P. would come in the front doors of the pubs, they would slip out the back and the natives would lean out the upstairs windows and signal when to run or hide. Some even took the soldiers into their homes. The M. P.s[4] didn't try too hard to catch anyone.

I was in charge of a company of 300 men and 10 officers. Fifty of the enlisted men were taken out of military prisons so they could redeem themselves. Some went "over the hill[5]" every night so I don't think more than half ended up in combat but some of these men served their country well. On June 26th, I received my first mail in England. Here is my first letter home from England.

Letter Home

July 6, 1944

Dear Melia:

Well, honey, I was temporarily promoted to a Battalion Commander yesterday. We were supposed to have a parade for the Fourth but had to call it off, so we had it on the fifth. We had two battalions made up of the replacement companies, and I commanded one of the battalions. Its the easiest job in the parade so I think I'll put in my application for Lt. Colonel. The parade went off very good, but its not much fun to parade if there is no one to watch you.

Enclosed is a money order for $100.00. I don't need it, so I'll send it home. I'll probably do that each month unless I can get to town to buy a souvenir or to have a good time. Even then I won't need it all because there is nothing to buy.

Boy, the news certainly looks good. The Air Arm[6] really has been giving someone Hell for the past few days. It certainly looks good to see the planes come over. I can't see how the Germans can last much longer. I hope not anyway. Give my love to all.

Always,

Charlie

We moved twice, ending up in a regular British camp not far from Southampton. There we were housed in brick barracks with a dining hall, parade grounds, etc. On the 5th of July, we had a parade to celebrate the Fourth (which had been rained out.). I had to act as Battalion Commander. We had several air raids here. I slept through the first one, but the First Sergeant got the company out of the barracks and into the trenches. In England, we used hay stuffed into a mattress cover to sleep on.

When we had an afternoon off, Lt. Heliner and I borrowed bicycles from the camp cadre and went sight-seeing. We stopped to watch a group of men who were cup-green-bowling. One of the Englishmen invited us to play with them. After the game we went to his house for tea and crumpets. Later, while cycling down the street, we ran into a Clemson man who took us to a dance. We enjoyed meeting the natives and visiting in their homes.

EMBARKATION FOR FRANCE

On the 9th of July, we were preparing to move out to the docks to board an English Channel steamer for France when the personnel running the camp realized that we had not been paid. An officer rushed off to the Finance Department, and when we were leaving for the boat, he presented me a cardboard box with the payroll in French francs for the company. On the docks the English Red Cross ladies served us coffee and doughnuts. The coffee was served in china mugs. They had a big job cleaning up all those cups.

The crossing was rough and I became slightly seasick, probably the sea and the worry about Normandy. We waded ashore on Utah Beach. I had the tallest man in the company carry the payroll so it wouldn't get wet. The beach was full of shell holes and you could go over your head if you stepped into one.

We were not allowed to stop until we were several miles from the beach because of the danger of enemy planes. Lanes were marked with white tape through the mine fields. This area was still full of wrecked equipment. Corpses in mattress covers were stacked in neat piles waiting to be hauled out. The Replacement Center was a big field with a couple of tents under the trees. One was the office and one the kitchen. I was very glad to pay the men and turn them over to the Replacement Center. While waiting for orders the men caught and milked some stray cows. We were all carrying D Bars (hard chocolate bars) as an emergency ration. We boiled the milk in our canteen cups and cut thin slices off the D-Bar to make hot chocolate.



FOOTNOTES

[1]Richard and Estelle Bryan.

[2]Keith was not born until late October.

[3]The *USS Wakefield* was built in 1932 and used as a passenger liner before the war. She burned at sea in 1942. After recommissioning in April 1944, the *Wakefield* made thirteen round trips from Boston or New York carrying troops to Liverpool or the Mersey, one of which was our trip leaving on 5 June. She could transport up to 7,000 passengers at a speed of 18 knots. The enlisted troops slept in compartments on pipe berths, a pipe frame with laced canvas. These bunks were about 20 inches apart and in tiers six or seven high. Nearly every GI who traveled the North Atlantic convoy route remembers the trip as misery, especially in bad weather when men got seasick.

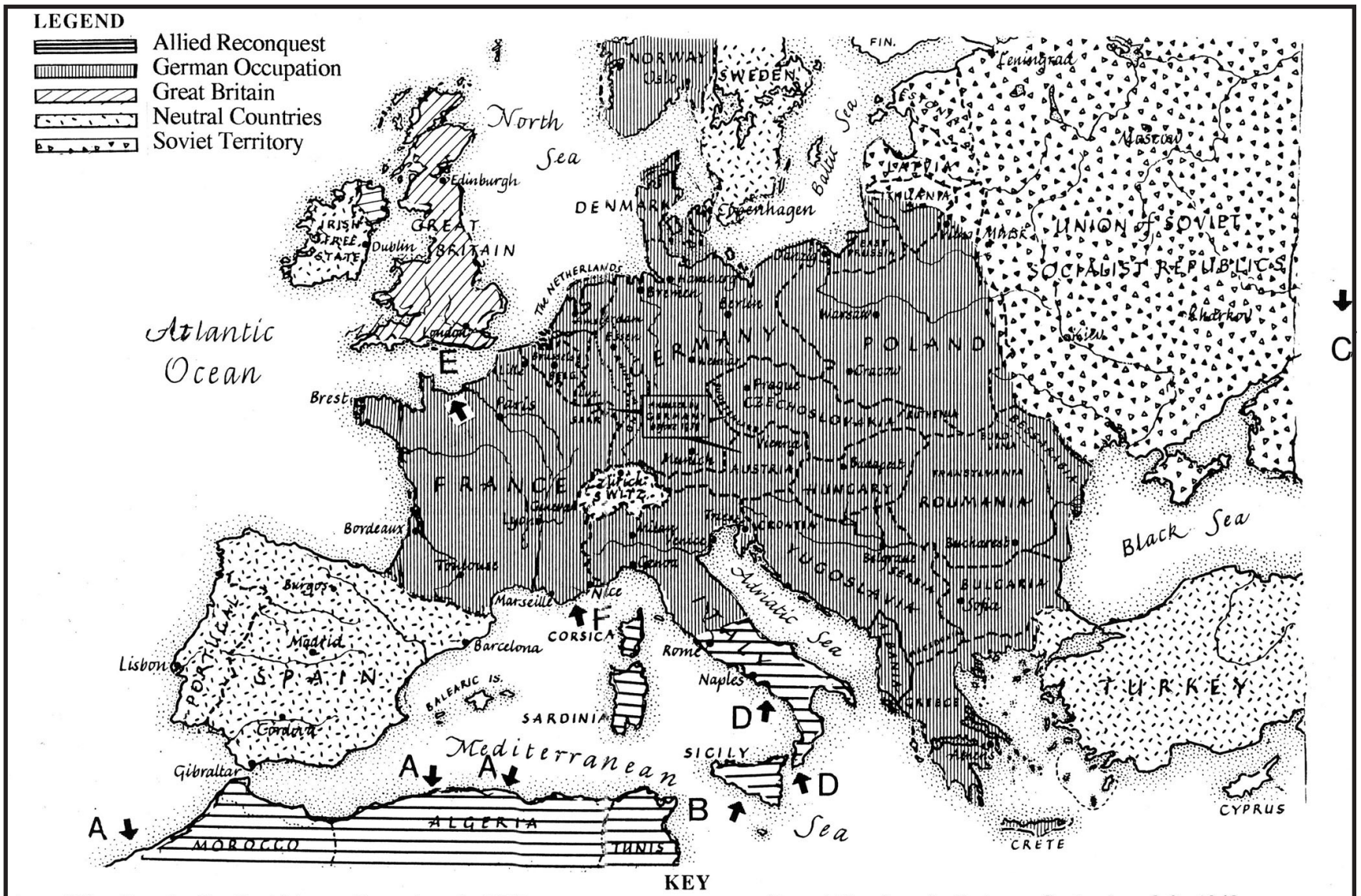
[4]M.P.'s were the military police.

[5]A soldier's term which meant going AWOL (Absent With Out Leave. A majority of men declared AWOL returned to their unit. After a certain time, AWOL was changed to Deserter.

[6]The Army Air Corps. The Air Force as a separate service was not created until after World War II.



The Remington M1903A3, usually called the Springfield. Although the Garand replaced this weapon during World War II, there was a shortage of rifles when the war began. The Springfield was an excellent weapon and was effective in the first half of the war. It was highly praised by regulars who were trained in its use. Each platoon carried one Springfield. Rifle. From the collection of Patrick Loveless. Photo by Tim Worrell.



KEY

A = Allies Invade North Africa - November 8, 1942
B = Allies Invade Sicily - July 10, 1943
C = German Army Surrenders at Stalingrad - February 2, 1943
D = Allies Invade Italy - September 2-9, 1943
E = D Day - June 6, 1944
F = Allies Invade S. France - August 15, 1944

Europe in 1944

6

NORMANDY

July - August 1944

COMBAT ASSIGNMENT

I was assigned to the 90th Division[1] on the 14th of July (Bastille Day[2] in France). The first person I met was Lt. Smith from the 176th Infantry days. He shared with us his experiences as a rifle platoon leader and temporary company commander. He was picked to orient us because he had done so well. I never did see him again or learn what happened to him. The next day I went to the 358th Infantry Regiment. Lt. Donahue welcomed us with a brief history of the Regiment. I was assigned to the 3rd Battalion and put in command of L Company.

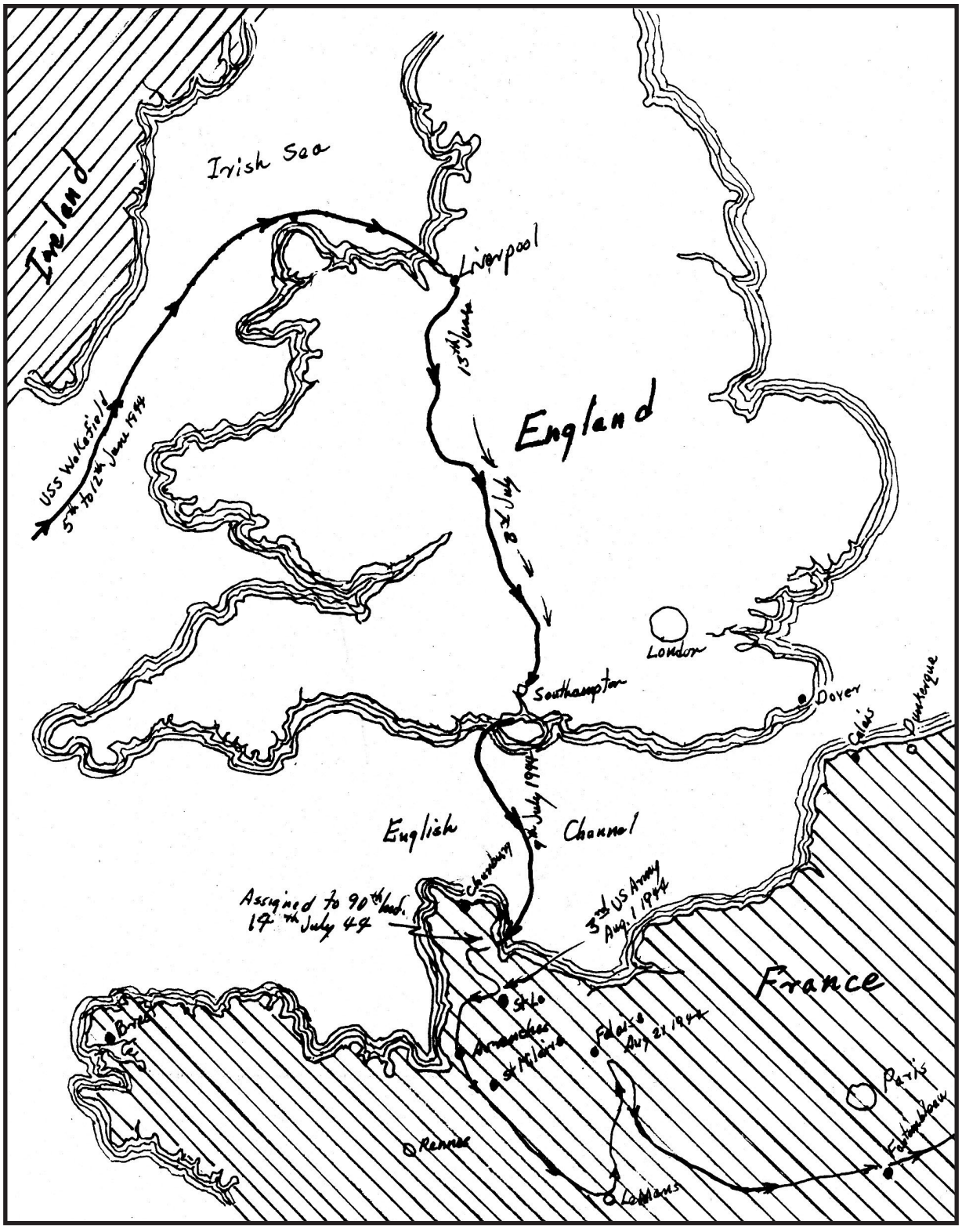
The 3rd Battalion had been put in reserve in the vicinity of La Valaisserie after taking Hill 122 in the *Foret de Mont Castre*. The Battalion only had four officers and 126 men left in the three rifle companies, but L Company had no officers and only 27 enlisted men. Staff Sergeant Burke was acting CO All of these men had dark circles around their bloodshot eyes. Their skin had a sallow look and they moved around like zombies.

Replacements came in until we had six officers and 170 men. We organized the company, making all the old men sergeants. They all worked out well except one. Our first assignment was a defensive position on the Seves River in front of the "Island." The French called it the Island of White Witches. This was a very good way to be introduced to combat.

BAPTISM OF FIRE

We relieved the 1st Battalion after dark and suffered our first casualties before daylight. Lt. Ringler[3] received a direct hit on his foxhole. When someone was wounded the stretcher bearers would stop by the company CP[4] on their way to the Aid Station. First Sergeant Burke would always kneel down and talk to the wounded in a very compassionate way. It was a long time before I learned that Sergeant Burke was asking where the wounded man's foxhole was located so Burke could go there to get the wounded man's coffee and cigarettes out of his remaining rations.

I remember the odors in this area. The rich black earth had a very distinctive odor, and we were very close to it in our foxholes. All the farms had large wooden barrels of cider in their barns and most had been pierced by artillery shells. The cider, mixed with the rich earth gave off a very strong odor. Around the Company Command Post we collected the equipment of the wounded, and it was covered with dried blood. Dead cows were very prevalent. The odor of death, both human and animal, was everywhere.



Replacement Route
Boston to England to Normandy
June-July 1944

On the left boundary of our area there was a wagon road (two deep narrow ruts) through the field and going through the hedgerow on across the marsh to the river. A major from the division or Corps Headquarters walked down this road and went through the hedgerow (that was our front line) into no man's land.[5] The men who saw him jumped into their foxholes expecting some type of fire from the enemy.

A machine gun fired several bursts at the major, but luckily he was not hit. He ran back through the hedgerow, white as a sheet and mad as hell. He asked why no one had told him about the machine gun. The Sergeant answered, "You didn't ask anyone, Sir." When he was leaving on shaky legs, a private piped up, "Thank you for locating that machine gun. We have been trying to find it all morning, Sir." The major should have checked in the Company CP before coming into the company area.

During this period we were shelled by the Germans whenever a target presented itself, or a tank or truck came into our area. Several times, someone back at Division would decide that we needed the tanks on the front line with us. When the tanks arrived one always managed to run over the telephone lines laid on the ground. It would not only cut the lines, but wind up half a mile of wire around the tank tracks. When the Germans heard the tanks, they would shoot at them with 88s,[6] artillery, and mortars. We usually had several casualties before we were able to order them out of the area.

We had several casualties from tree bursts. That's when the artillery shell hits a tree and explodes. The fragments not only go up and out 360^{o} but in a downward direction. Men were hit while lying down in their foxholes. We had to put tops on the foxholes if they were near a tree. The problem was to find material for the tops. We used limbs, boards, and sheet metal and then covered the top with six inches of dirt. Sergeant Cox[7] and I were working on our foxhole. I remembered seeing some boards in a field on my last trip to Battalion Headquarters. When we went through the opening in the hedgerow to the field, Sergeant Cox dove for cover on the ground. I followed suit without any questions.

An 88 shell passed where we had been moments before. The Germans expended three shells on us. As each exploded, we hugged the ground harder and flattened out even more. Usually, the Germans didn't use more than one shell on such a small target, but we didn't feel flattered by the three shells. We used a different route back to our foxhole. I asked Sergeant Cox how he knew to hit the ground. An 88 shell travels faster than sound (1125 ft. per second), so he couldn't have heard the cannon shoot. He couldn't explain it, but something told him to hit the ground. This happened several times during the War and it saved both of our lives.

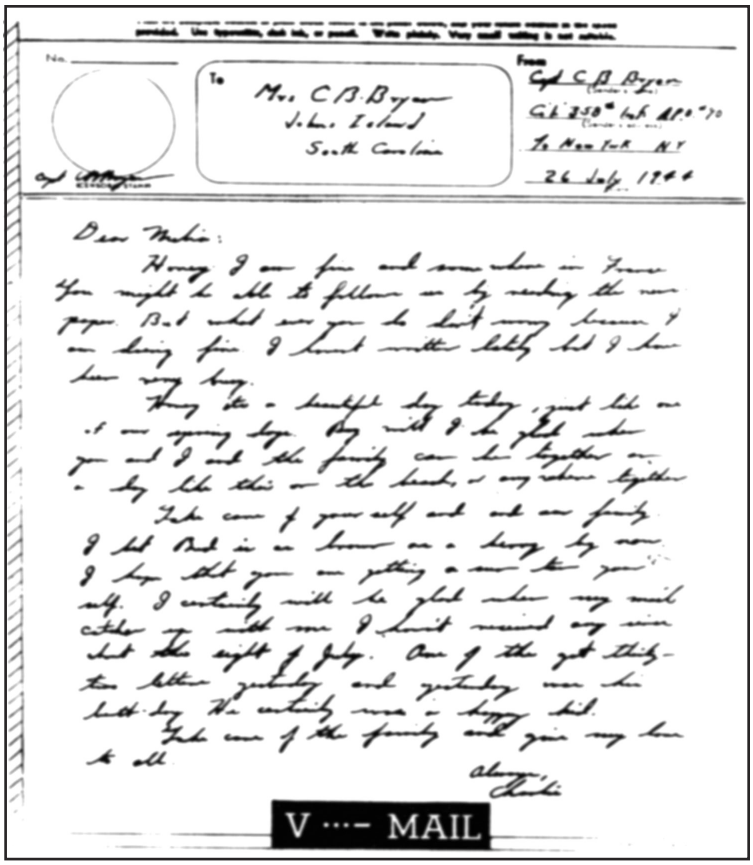
After five months in the field, Sergeant Cox had to go to the hospital to have a cyst removed. It was caused by the big radio that he carried on his back. Several radios were hit while on his back. When he returned to the unit in January, he stayed at Battalion Headquarters as a switchboard operator.

Someone with good intentions would decide that the front lines should have hot chow. The kitchens would move up as close as possible, and we would send back a few men at a time for hot

chow.[8] The Germans always spotted the movements and shelled us. The tanks and hot food were forced on us several times before we convinced Division that we were better off without them.

The Regiment attacked the Island of White Witches on the 25th of July. The 1st and 2nd Battalions attacked through the 3rd. They laid down a good artillery barrage, but the troops were so slow in moving off that they halted the attack. On the second attempt, they didn't do much better. Both Americans and Germans suffered heavy casualties when our troops crossed the marsh and river. They took part of the Island but needed more men and supplies to continue. Chaplains Stohler and Esser arranged a three-hour truce with the Germans for evacuation of wounded. The American and German medics and litter bearers almost bumped into each other as they worked.

During the night, the Germans brought up reinforcements, counterattacked, and captured the American force on the Island. The 357th and 359th Regiments attacked the next day to encircle the Island, but the Germans pulled out before the trap was closed. This was the last battle for the 358th in the Normandy hedgerow country. I had a ringside seat and learned a lot from the mistakes of the 1st and 2nd battalions.


V ···– MAIL

First V-Mail Letter Home from Normandy

V-Mail Letters were the best way for our troops to write home or for their families to write to men overseas. Forms were available on the home front and were issued to troops overseas. The letters were photographed and sent to the Army Post Office (APO) for delivery. You had to write very small to get much news into the small space.

To: Mrs. C. B. Bryan
Johns Island
South Carolina

From: CPT. C. B. Bryan
Co. "L" 358th Inf.APO 90th
% New York, NY

26 July 1944

Dear Melia:

Honey, I am fine and somewhere in France. You might be able to follow us by reading the news paper. But what ever you do don't worry because I am doing fine.l I haven't written lately but I have been very busy.

Honey, its a beautiful day today, just ike on of our spring days;; But I will be glad when you and I and the family can be together on a day like this on the beach or anywhere together.

Take care of yourself and our family.I bet Bud is as brown as a berry by now. I hope that you are getting a sun tan yourself. I certainly wil be glad when my mail catches up with me. I haven't received any since the eighth of July. One of the [men] got things- two letters yesterday on his birthday. He certainly was a happy guy.

Take care of the family and give my love to all.

Always,

Charlie.

Transcription of V-Mail Letter Home

Dear Melia: *29 July, 1945*

Well, Honey, how are you today? I haven't heard from you since the tenth of June, but you know how I am, so I am assuming that you and Bud are fine. I know that Bud is, because you are taking care of him, but don't forget to take care of yourself. Be sure and get the best doctor's care, Honey, and don't work too hard.

I certainly do feel good right now. I had a good night's sleep and I took a bath today and a shave, and changed underclothes, and put on a clean shirt. I think washing my head was the best though. That certainly was good. I did all that washing in my helmet. There's a lot of ands in there, but just don't tell Mrs. Bell Hills,[9] and I think it will be all right. I also opened up my baggage and looked at your's and Bud's pictures.

Don't forget to send me some pictures of you and Bud. They will catch up with me some day and I certainly will enjoy them.

We are having some real nice weather now. Just like home in the Spring time. I only wish that I was there instead of here, but I'll be back soon. That's our biggest pastime, talking about what we are going to do after the War is over.

We have a big time talking. It doesn't take much to amuse us and we really have some characters. One of the runners[10] just got a letter from home, and he very dryly commented that his best girl just got married again. I wish I could remember all the sayings and circumstances that they were said in. We have a lot of things that are funny now come up, but they wouldn't be later on.

The news certainly is good, but I guess that you get the news before we do, although we get it everyday and some first hand.

I hope that the allotment check is going to the bank every month. I will probably send home most of my check this month. I don't care very much if I get paid or not, we can't spend it and its just something else to carry. I had just as soon go several months without it and then send it all home at once. Uncle Sam gives us everything that we need so we don't need any money.

Take care of yourself and give my love to Bud and Daddy and Mama.

Always,

Charlie

V-Mail Letter Home

FOOTNOTES

[1]The 90th Division landed on Utah Beach on 8 June 1944. It suffered very heavy casualties in the drive to cut across the Cotentin Peninsula and isolate Cherbourg, a channel port the allies badly needed.

[2]Commemorates the storming of the Bastille in 1789. A French "Fourth of July."

[3]Lt. Ringler had just joined the company the day before.

[4]Command Post.

[6]No man's land is a term from World War I. It was the area between two lines of trenches between the German and Allied forces.

[6]The 88 mm. gun was much used by the Germans for an anti-aircraft weapon, as the main armament for their large tanks, and as an anti-personnel weapon in ground operations. It was probably superior, for its purpose, to any gun the allies possessed. The gun was called an 88 because the shell fired was 88 mm. or about 3.5 inches in diameter.

[7]Sergeant Cox was my communications sergeant.

[8]Chow, or food, was a word much used by G.I.'s. To chow down was to eat. A chow hound was the man always first in line for food. In combat zones, hot chow was always a special occasion.

[19]My High School English teacher.

[10]Company runners carry orders from Company Headquarters to the platoon.



St. Lo after it Was Taken by Allied Forces.
Sketch by Julia Bryan

7

WITH THE THIRD ARMY

August 1944

On the first of August, 1944, the 90th Division was transferred from the First Army to the Third Army[1] under General Patton. When the Americans took St. Lo[2] we were close enough to see the planes. Wave after wave of bombers with the fighters higher up protecting them from the German fighters. The bombers put out aluminum foil to throw off the radar on the anti-aircraft guns. The aluminum foil was drifting down into our area.

One of the men wondered, *How do they get the foil out of the planes.*

Another man said*, You don't know how they get the foil out?*

First man said, *No, and you don't either.*

Second man said, *Yes, I do.*

First man asked, *Well, how do they?*

Second man said, *They have a reclassified Major[3] in the back of each plane with a sack of foil. He reaches in and pulls some foil out and dumps it over the side saying, 'She loves me,' repeat process and says, She loves me not,' repeat process saying, 'She loves me, she loves me not.'*

BREAK OUT

We moved out at 2300 that night in trucks. We were the infantry part of Task Force Clark.[4] We went West of St. Lo., which was bright enough from fires to read a road map, then to Coutances, and Avranches, and detrucked in Isigny. We moved on foot in approach march formation and took the town of St. Hilaire Du Harcouet. We were all set for the night when orders came down to take another town 15 kilometers away. On this stretch we ran into a car (or should I say two Germans in a car ran into us). We were on each side of the road, and when the car came through, we shot from both sides. How we didn't shoot each other I'll never know. When the car stopped, both Germans were dead. Our Battalion Surgeon stopped to check and found they were carrying a suitcase full of French francs. We shared this money with the rest of the Regiment and used it to buy extra food all the way across France.

The Germans wanted to know just where the Third Army was, so they sent a large patrol to find out. The patrol was a battalion strength of infantry and tanks. The orders were sent by radio. The Americans picked up the message and the 90th Division was ordered to entrap the patrol. The 3rd Battalion was in reserve except L Company which was ordered to set up road blocks to catch any Germans trying to get out after dark.

I had about five miles to cover so was given an extra platoon of infantry and a platoon of heavy machine guns. We had an MG[5] and an infantry squad covering each escape route. The Germans used the roads as a guide, walking parallel to the road in the fields or woods. We anticipated this and had the area on each side of the road covered. We were very busy all night long. Sergeant White[6] was in charge of a road block. I heard the shooting and went to check on it. When I got there the shooting was over, and Sergeant White had gone out into the field to bring in a wounded German. I warned him of the danger of doing that at night. He spoke German and felt sorry for the wounded.

Several weeks later he went out at night to rescue a German who was calling for a medic. When he got there the German shot at him but missed. Sergeant White went berserk and emptied his rifle into the German. We never knew if the German was wounded and out of his head or if he was faking and trying to trap some one to come out so he could shoot him. The men in the platoon told me that Sergeant White would not take any prisoners after that. I talked to him. He seemed normal, but in Germany he shot a civilian who came into our lines with a white flag. I had to send him back to the hospital.

Up to now, we had come into contact with very few Frenchmen, but we learned that France was full of Frenchmen. They lined the side of the streets waving, cheering, and laughing, tears rolling down their cheeks. Most had gifts of flowers, fruit, or wine. Every town, no matter how small, had a mayor who was prepared to welcome us with a speech. Some were dressed in cutaway coats and striped trousers. They couldn't understand why we couldn't stop and celebrate with them.

I warned the men not to drink too much, but I lost three men the first day. They caught up about midnight, so I made each one dig a six by six by six foot hole with their trench shovel. When it was complete they had to fill it up. By this time, we were ready to move out. The punishment[7] had a sobering effect on everyone.

The Germans defended this small town so we attacked across the field, spread out in two waves. Two assault platoons were in the first wave, and the reserve and heavy weapons were in the second wave. We shelled the town and lifted the artillery when the first wave got within danger of our shelling. The first wave went through the town to the other end and set up a defense in case the Germans counterattacked. The reserve platoon checked out the cellars for hideaways. The MG section joined in the defense and the mortars and Company CP set up on the back end of town as a collection point for prisoners and wounded.

I went with the assault platoons, and after it was all over and the defense organized, I went back to the Company CP to report to Battalion on the phone. After reporting, I asked Sergeant Burke where Lt. Carraway[8] was. He said that he had gone out in the orchard to relieve himself.

In a situation like this, we used the cat method for sanitary reasons. Each man dug his own hole and covered it up. When I looked in the orchard, I saw Lt. Carraway, but I also saw an old French woman coming down the road by the orchard. She was coming to see if the town was safe for the people to come back.

There was a hedge around the orchard, but an opening was right beside Lt. Carraway. When the French woman reached the opening, she spied Carraway and rushed to greet the liberator. She seemed oblivious of his situation and grabbed him in a bear hug before he could pull his pants up. She had his arms locked to his side. She was laughing and crying and thanking him for liberating the town. His face got redder and redder. The mortar section and HQ personnel really enjoyed the show.

The next day we were marching through a French town, and I stood on the edge of the road to check the men as they came by. A little boy came out of a house and stood on the top step. He raised his hand in salute and said, *Heil, Hitler.* A long arm reached out and yanked him inside. We all laughed. Before I left that spot, he came out again, gave a salute and said, *Vive les Americains!* The men cheered and gave him gum and D Bars.[10]

Letter Home *4 August, 1994*

Dear Melia:

I had a very funny experience the other day. We advanced through several towns, and the French people did not have time to leave. Usually, they got out ahead of the fighting but this time they didn't have time, in fact, some of the Germans didn't either. You probably read about the advance in the paper. Well, here's what happened. We were passing through these towns, moving up in trucks. I was riding in a jeep and had fallen asleep when a Frenchman threw several bunches of flowers at us. They hit me on the top of the head. I woke up with a start, ready for anything. We passed through several towns and the people came out with flowers, cider, whisky, coffee, and several other French drinks, also fresh eggs.

They shook hands with each one of us. My poor right hand was sore. It was a wonderful sight to see people so happy. We gave them chocolate bars and cigarettes in exchange. They were all talking and gesturing at the same time. It really was a wonderful sight. This was the first time that we had seen any Frenchmen in large numbers. I have a boy in the company who speaks French very well so I got a lot of information from them.

Later on we had to ask them not to give the men anymore to drink and not to make so much noise when we came by. They rang the church bells, which gave away our positions. They all wanted to help and are helping every way they can. I really feel sorry for them. Well, that's enough of the War for the present.

They are now running our Division in the papers and magazines. Be sure and read "Diary for Dorothy" in the Saturday Evening Post. *It's about the Division. This Sergeant told the story and the reporter wrote it as a diary to his wife. Most of it happened before I joined it (the battalion).I hope that you can read this because I am writing it in the dark.Give my love to all.*

Always,

Charlie

On the fifth of August, we had a long hot approach march of 25 miles The lead company in the column furnishes a point platoon and scouts out front. They send out two scouts on each side every hour to protect the flanks of the column. The column on the road moves faster than the flank scouts moving across the country, so when they see the end of the column, they come back on the road. When the column stops to rest, the scouts rejoin their company at the head of the column.

The next day we went 17 miles, but it was broken by a swim in the Mayenne River. One company outposted while the rest of the battalion took a much needed bath. Girls from a village lined the opposite bank. Some of the men swam across to talk with them. The third day we went 20 miles. The next move was by truck to Le Mans. We were getting organized for the night when a Frenchman came up all excited. My interpreter said he had two Germans in his barn. I called the 2nd platoon and we double-timed about a mile to the barn. The old man was pleased and excited about the whole affair. We circled the barn and told the Germans to come out with their hands up.

The Frenchman was explaining something to the interpreter who had a distressed expression on his face. Both were talking and waving hands. I had to go over and stop everything to find out what was going on. The interpreter told me that the Frenchman said the Germans had left yesterday. The men picked it up and passed it around the barn, each man adding with four letter words his condemnation as he passed it on. Good thing that I was there because someone might have hit the poor Frenchman. I felt like hitting him myself. We formed up on the road and walked back to our area.

We were watching the tanks of the 6th Armored Division go by when one stopped in front of the Company CP .A Second Lt. jumped off and reported that he was Lt. Sanders reporting from the hospital. All traffic except the 6th Armored was blocked from using the highway so Lt. Sanders hitched a ride on a tank. After a few words he said that he would go down and take over the 2nd platoon. He had had a good bit to drink so I told him to go into the C P and get some sleep. I would call him at midnight to stand watch on the phone and radio. We would talk about the platoon tomorrow.

MAIL CALL

Our mail caught up with us here, the first time since arriving in France. Mail! Everyone loves to receive letters, especially when one is separated from the family. But it can create problems in combat. We had both extremes in the company. Some men wrote home and some wrote everyone they knew. If parents or spouses didn't hear from their soldiers for a long time, they would ask the Red Cross to investigate. The Red Cross representative would come up or phone. If the culprit was still with us, I would call him into the CP and have him write home. I would censor it immediately and send it off. The Red Cross would also report back to the Red Cross in the States.

The other extreme was a whole lot worse as far as the officers were concerned. All mail had to be censored and stamped. Sometimes, we only had one or two officers in the company to do the job. Very often I had to call in several Sergeants to censor the mail, and I would sign and stamp it.

If we hadn't done that, we wouldn't have been able to send it off before we jumped off again. This procedure wasn't exactly proper, but there's an old saying the mail must go through, and I know that the folks at home were anxious about their men.

I tried to write everyday when we were resting, so by reading my letters, you would think that I jumped from rest area to rest area. You couldn't say too much in letters. I censored a letter written by one of the men in the company that covers this subject very well and copied the poem he wrote.

Poem written by one of my men, August, 1944.

I will try to write a little poem because you like them so well,
I have a lot of things to say, but am not allowed to tell.
So I'll break it down into fewer words and get it through that way.
If you can read between the lines, you can tell what I have to say.
The Jerries are not any fighters at all, but we're not having fun,
They pulled out and left us a few days ago.
They must have moved almighty fast or we are moving slow.
But I hope they keep on going while they are moving fast.
I haven't seen so many but I hope I've seen my last.
Some of the boys don't seem to mind they go for this old stuff,
But I've found out it's not for me, I've already had enough.
Well, I had better stop this before I say too much,
I may have said enough already to get us all in dutch.
So If you don't understand this I'll explain it all someday.
When this old war is over and I'm back to stay.

On the 10th, the 90th was ordered to move north to relieve the 5th Armored Division and form a defense line to keep the German 7th Army from escaping a pocket the Allies were forming. We took Alencon on the 12th and then reverted to Division reserve. We moved around the Division area whenever they expected we might be needed, rushing up to protect Corps Headquarters. On the night of the 18th we moved to the right flank of the Division. Our mission was to take the high ground northeast of Chambois; L Company facing north into the pocket and K Company facing south to keep any reinforcements from coming in. We had a peaceful night and everyone was in good shape. Most of us had picked up pieces of parachute silk in the hedgerow country. You could fold up a piece the size of a blanket and put it into your coat pocket. At night we would roll up in the silk. It was pretty warm.

FOOTNOTES

[1]The 90th Division served in the Third Army under Patton for the rest of the war.

[2]St. Lo was a key position in the German attempt to bottle up the invasion forces. It was virtually destroyed during the effort to break out through the German perimeter. With its capture on 18 July 1944, the Third Army could rapidly advance to the west and south and set up the destruction of German forces at Falaise in August.

[3]A reclassified officer is one who is found not qualified for an assignment and is then "reclassified" and reassigned. A major might be transferred to the Battalion as the Executive Officer (Second in Command). After a trial period, higher authority might then decide that he was not qualified for the job as Battalion Commander. He was reclassified and transferred to a more suitable position.

[4]The Division was divided into combat teams. Combat team Weaver consisted of most of the tanks in the Division and of a motorized Regiment. It was commanded by General Weaver, the Division Executive Officer. Their mission was to hit the enemy where he was most vulnerable. They could move quickly over the Division area. Combat Team Clark, commanded by Colonel Clark consisted mostly of the 358th Infantry. Its mission was to take out any positions bypassed by Weaver. This action was very effective because the enemy only had limited resources at this time.

[5]MG + Machine Gun

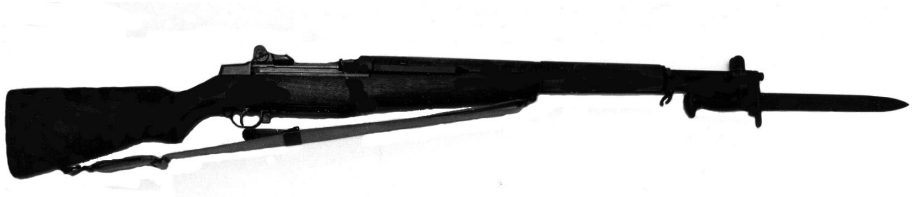
[6]Sergeant White was an Infantry Squad Leader in L Company.

[7]In the States, men committing minor infractions were often assigned to K.P. or to digging latrines. Serious infractions required a court martial. In combat, we didn't have time to convene a court martial. Besides we didn't want to lose a fighting man.

[8]Lt Carraway was L Company Executive Officer.

[9]HQ =Headquarters.

[10]D Bars were large slabs of chocolate issued to the troops in addition to K Rations. The chocoate looked spoiled, covered with white powder and rock hard. The bars kept forever and took a lot of gnawing to eat. Kids in France had little chance to get candy and they were happy to get the D Bars.



The M-1 Garand Rifle

The "rifle" of World War II. Over four million M-1s were produced during the war. Before 1943, the rifle was in short supply. The Springfield M1903A3 was widely used,. Rifle from the weapon collection of Patrick Loveless. Photograph by TimWorrell.

8

THE FALAISE GAP

August 1944

Before I tell my part in the action at the Falaise Gap here is what the 90th Division History has to say about the engagement.[1]

That night [16 August 1944], the 90th was released from the XV Corps and passed to the control of a Provisional Corps whose function it was to reduce the Falaise Pocket. The mission of the 90th was to attack north, seize the Village of Ommeel and the high ground northeast of Chambois. Since the main road by which the German 7th Army sought escape ran directly through Chambois, the control of that town was vital to the Americans as well as to the enemy.

Never in history had artillery enjoyed such a field day. Observers, enjoying for the first time the luxury of perfect observation on numberless targets, radioed fire missions to their heart's content. Desperately, the trapped Germans beat themselves against the sides of the wall that engulfed them, hopelessly, they plunged into the immobile Infantry lines that hemmed them in. And all the while the artillery loaded and fired, loaded and fired, pausing only to allow the tubes to cool.

In the meantime, the Infantry was by no means idle. Against do or die resistance the doughboys[2] advanced toward Chambois, closing the bottleneck, strangling the escape route with an iron noose. One after another the objectives fell. Prisoners poured into the 90th's cages. Equipment, guns, vehicles beyond number littered the floor of the valley. And still the artillery, eleven battalions, lashed the valley with high explosives, time[3] and white phosphorous fire. Mercilessly, they raked the valley, inflicting casualties, disrupting counterattacks, pouring a hail of steel into the milling remnants of the invincible conquerors of Europe.

The 90th had begun the action merely in a supporting role, but before the smoke had cleared the Division had become the motivating force in closing the vital gap. It had withstood the fiercest assaults of which crack German units were capable and had hurled them back. In a period of four days, it had taken more than 13,000 prisoners, killed or wounded an estimated 8,000 of the enemy, but itself suffered less than 600 casualties. More than 300 tanks, 250 self-propelled guns, 164 artillery pieces, 3270 vehicles, and a variety of other types of equipment and weapons were destroyed.

So ended the greatest Allied triumph on the soil of France, the most complete and humiliating defeat ever suffered by the German armed forces. But the 90th was not content to rest on its laurels. By this time, the men of the T.O.[4] knew they were "hot" and so did the Germans who were soon to face them--the brawling 90th--spoiling for a fight.



Here is the Story as Told in the Regimental History.[5]

The Rim of the Bowl

It resembled a bowl with the troops in position around the rim. This was the picture on the 20th of August, 1944--when all hell broke loose! The bowl became a valley of death. The Germans caught helplessly in the trap, ran around crazily, in tanks and on horseback, on every conceivable means of transportation, attempting to escape from the iron jaws. From vantage points along the rim of the bowl, voluminous fire from TDs[6], tank machine guns, and rifles continuously sprayed the valley. Cub airplanes from Regiment's supporting artillery kept their hawk-eyed vigilance on the melee below--hence the classic remark by one pilot, irritated by the delay in firing, 'Quit computin' and start shootin!'

Now and then, a temporary truce was called to allow great numbers of beaten Krauts to surrender. One N.C.O. alone accounted for 800. Droves upon droves were handed along roads to Prisoner of War Camps in the rear.

The Third Battalion at the end of the trap, bore the brunt of several German attempts to break through an escape route north of Chambois. A fierce battle raged, but though outnumbered by far, the Battalion stood its ground.

The Battalion History Continues the Story[7]

The attack jumped off at 0800, 19 August 1944 with K and L Companies in the assault. The initial objective, a hill just south of the east road out of Chambois, was taken only after Company K had knocked out one Mark IV tank and two half tracks.

At 1300 the Battalion resumed the attacks and moved towards its final objective--the high ground NE of Chambois. In crossing the east road, Company L ran into two half tracks which took off towards town. Company K knocked out a radio car, a command car, and one tank at the same time. After each company had left one platoon to block the east road, they continued on to occupy the final objective. Here they ran into scattered groups of Germans on their way to the only remaining road out of the Falaise pocket--a northeast road out from Chambois.

As the two companies reached the NE road, they set up road blocks and waited. Company L very soon thereafter knocked out two trucks, killing 20 Germans and taking 31 prisoners. Then two tanks attacked Company L and drove them back one hedgerow. Captain Bryan called for more men, ammunition, and bazooka rounds from Lt. Col. Bealke at the OP[8] immediately behind him. He also had his artillery observer put fire on the Germans attempting to flee Chambois by the NE road. . . . . It was in this action that Pfc. Caldwell and Pfc. Giebelsteen, both from Company K, knocked out four tanks with five rounds of bazooka fire.

During the day (19th) about 320 Germans were captured, over 100 killed and 11 tanks, 8 self-propelled guns as well as numerous other vehicles destroyed. The attached platoon of tank destroyers arrived at the end of the battle, but managed, nevertheless to knock out one tank.

On the 20th, the Battalion was attacked almost incessantly by German units trying to escape from the pocket. One group consisting of several truckloads of troops, two tanks, and an undetermined number of half tracks attempted to penetrate our lines at 0930. They almost reached the door of the Battalion

CP before they were detected. Then the CP swung into action bringing out its 50 caliber MGs and bazooka teams. Following a furious fight, over 250 prisoners were taken, including a large number of English speaking Germans. It was here that the 50's really proved their effectiveness, for the number of dead Krauts considerably outnumbered those captured. One half-track, however, did succeed in getting through and captured four jeeps, ten medical personnel, and two A&P[9]men before it was knocked out by the 2nd French Armored Division.

In all, the Battalion on this day took 530 prisoners, knocked out four tanks, two half tracks, and an undetermined number of miscellaneous vehicles. That same afternoon, an officer from the Reconnaissance Regiment of the Polish Armored Division came to the CP and requested us to relieve them of some 750 prisoners which they held. They had been cut off from their supply lines by Germans trying to escape and were almost out of food and ammunition. So this Battalion evacuated their 750 prisoners, including the Major General commanding the German 49th Infantry Division.

On the 21st, the Battalion took 83 more prisoners, bringing the total for the three days to 933. In addition, the Battalion during the same period knocked out 15 tanks and approximately 90 assorted half tracks, trucks, and other vehicles.

Elements of the 50th British Infantry Division relieved the Battalion on the 22nd and the companies then moved to reserve area near Surdon, France.

THE FALAISE GAP -- MY VERSION

The fight that started on the 19th of August was the last phase of closing the Falaise Gap or the Valley of Death for the German 7th Army. We moved out at daylight. K and L Companies had to criss-cross each other to get into the right position. There was a lot of kidding and insulting before we cleared each other. Right after we left K Company, we spotted a tank behind a hedgerow. We had a bazooka team sneak up on it and blast it in the rear. It was a big let down when we found out that the tank was dead, knocked out the day before by planes. We did a good job on the tank but were glad that K Company hadn't witnessed it.

We next ran into some horse drawn vehicles just leaving a field where they had camped during the night. When they saw us, they whipped the horses to a full gallop. We ran after them, whooping and shooting like a bunch of Indians chasing a wagon train. We shot one horse on each vehicle to stop them. The men hated to shoot the horses. We turned the live ones loose but they would not leave their dead partners. A German half track opened up with a machine gun as it was leaving. He got away, and luckily none of my men were injured.

Roadblock

We arrived at the area for the first road block. The 1st platoon and heavy machine guns would man it. The 3rd platoon and light machine guns[10] would man the second. The 2nd platoon in reserve was located between the two. The 1st platoon put out outposts and started setting up the MGs and other positions. I had started across the highway with the 3rd platoon when the outpost signaled enemy coming. We dove for cover. A motorcycle came around the corner and everyone

opened up on him. It was a miracle we didn't shoot each other. I gave orders for only the 1st platoon to shoot, the rest to take cover when a vehicle came by. Three trucks and another motorcycle came through before we completed the crossing

Lt. Carraway was in charge of the first roadblock. Lt. Sanders commanded the 2nd platoon in reserve. I went with the 3rd platoon to the second roadblock. Sergeant Pinelli, the 3rd platoon leader, and I left two squads and the artillery observer in an old sunken wagon road. They had a good field of fire on the highway. We put machine guns and another squad around the bend covering the highway. Sergeant Pinelli and I were scouting the area when two trucks came up and stopped to investigate a knocked out truck. We hid in a hedgerow until all the Germans, who were ordnance personnel, were out of the trucks. We jumped into the middle of the road and hollered, "Hande Hoch!" (Hands up). Well, the Germans didn't freeze, but jumped into the ditch on each side of the road, Sergeant Pinelli and I went into the ditches on each side, shooting. After we had shot down four or five, they jumped out with their hands up. We herded them into a field, lined them up, and disarmed them. We had 33 prisoners, and about half of them were carrying pistols.

I heard the terrifying sound of a Mark IV tank. I stepped through the hedgerow and saw not one tank, but a column of tanks with infantry on each side marching down the road. I said, "Sergeant, let's get the hell out of here." I unloaded all the pistols I had taken from the German in a ditch and ran back to the sunken road. The prisoners didn't move until we were out of sight. The artillery observer was from a 155[11] outfit attached to our artillery. I was surprised that he wasn't shooting at all these targets. This was his first mission in combat and he was terrified and paralyzed. They couldn't get the radio going. I didn't have time to straighten him out. I had to get artillery by calling our Battalion on the radio and have them relay my request by phone to the Fire Direction Center of the artillery. This was slower than talking directly to the FDC, and we lost time fooling with the radio for the 155 outfit. I sent word for the MGs to pull back, but the lead tank knocked them out first. We lost one man and the MG but managed to save the ammunition. This was used as rifle ammo later.

All hell broke loose. We fired into the side of the German column of infantry, trucks, and tanks. They fired back. The tanks fired 88 mm. cannon and MGs at us. The Germans were caught in the open. We had good protection in the sunken road, but limbs and trees were falling down on us. After we got the artillery going, trucks loaded with ammo and fuel were blowing up and burning. The road was completely blocked, so the tanks and half tracks that were not disabled cut across country. The artillery observation plane spotted most of them.

I kept going back to the 155 artillery observer hoping he might get the radio going, but he never did. In the midst of all this, a German medic pulled the Red Cross flag off a knocked out ambulance and walked toward our lines. The men kept on shooting but left a lane for him to walk through and we stopped the artillery in this area. He said he had our sergeant, who was wounded, at the machine gun and several German wounded, and he didn't have any medicine.

Our medic and four men volunteered to go back with him and bring them in. They made several trips, and we ended up with a large group of wounded Germans. The two medics, German and American, were very busy. We only had the one casualty, but he later died of his wounds. We

only had about 30 men, but I had to pull one out of the line to guard the wounded Germans. There were a good many walking wounded. There were also a good many who were seriously wounded and some shell shock cases.

Artillery Barrage

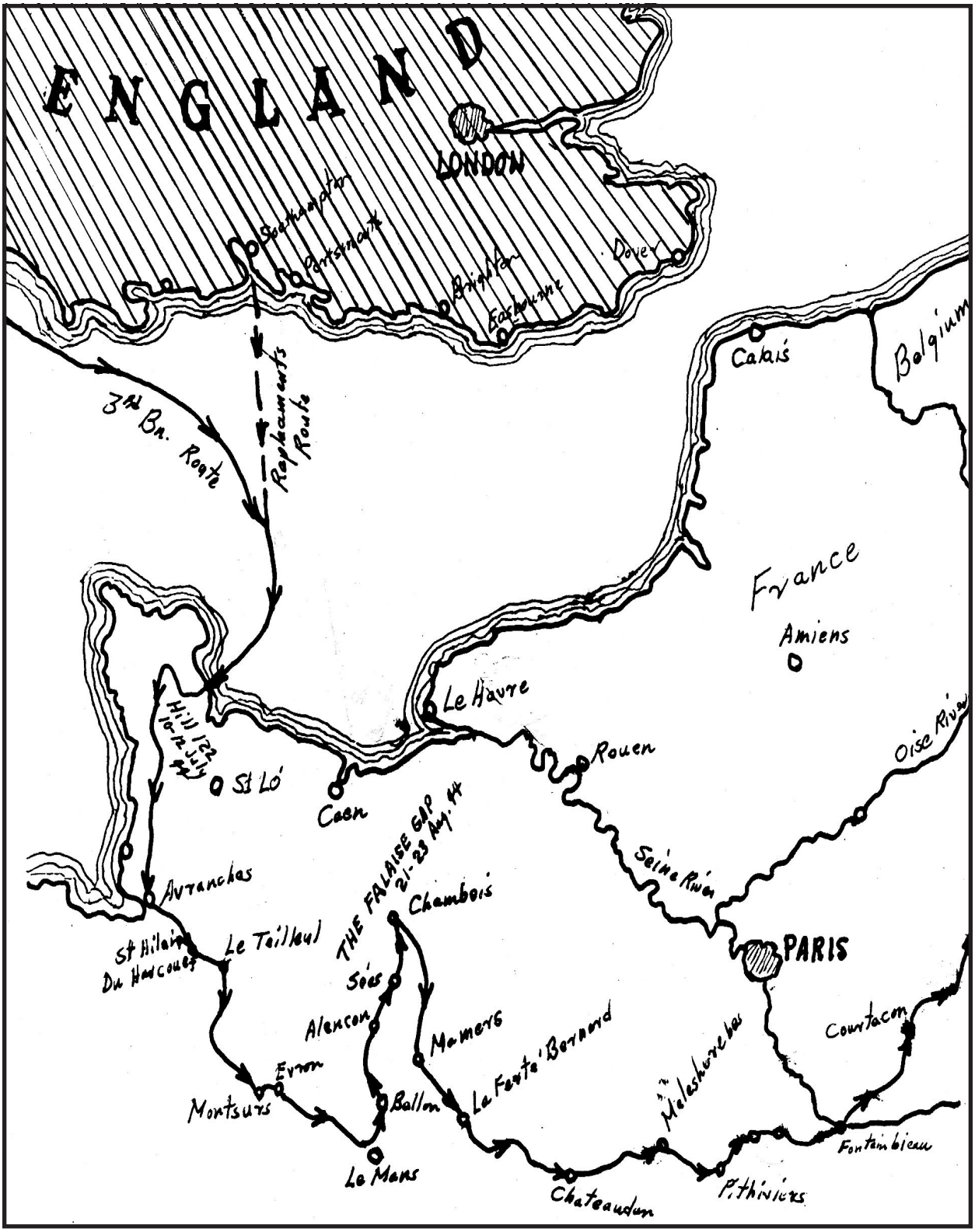
It's hard to describe what happens to a person caught in a very heavy artillery barrage. Pieces of shrapnel from tiny slivers to large hunks of five or six inches, all red hot, fly out in all directions. The noise and concussion are terrible. I have seen shell shock cases who developed uncontrollable shakes. They would shake all over. They couldn't focus their eyes. Some men were paralyzed but had not a scratch on them. I saw my first case on the second day of combat in front of the island.

Sometimes a thin piece of shrapnel would go straight up into the air and gravity would pull it down, 32 ft. per second. It would flutter and make a weird noise. One day in the hedgerow country, we were receiving some artillery when the man in the foxhole next to me called for the medics. I crawled over to help. He was lying face down, and a thin sliver about the size of a half dollar had landed flat on his seat. It had burned through his pants and was burning his hide. I reached down and flipped it off of him. We kidded him about being branded and having to stand up for the duration.

A tank or half track could have wiped us out at any time if they had turned down the sunken road, but they were so concerned in escaping that they crossed the road and kept going. The trees that fell across the sunken road helped to discourage a German tank from coming down the road and blowing us out. We got five tanks with bazookas. We even got two tanks with one shot. One tank was towing another, so we knocked the track off the lead tank, and they surrendered without firing a shot. We learned later that the tank was so full of loot taken from French homes that they couldn't manipulate the guns.

I needed the reserve platoon but couldn't raise Lt. Sanders on the radio. I sent a runner, but he couldn't find him or the platoon. Lt. Carraway with the first platoon was doing all right. Most of the traffic on their road consisted of supply trucks and horse-drawn vehicles. They were able to knock them out as they came through. We were short of ammo and needed more men. I asked battalion to send us both. They sent me a platoon from I Company. The platoon leader was a lieutenant who was first assigned to L Company. Several experienced officers came back from the hospital so we had a surplus of lieutenants. Battalion told me to transfer one of my lieutenants to I Company which was short of officers.

I wasn't impressed at all with the green lieutenant, so I sent him over to I Company, and he was the leader of the platoon I Company sent to help us. He saw the German prisoners and the wounded behind our lines so he had his platoon get down and start crawling to get into position to shoot at them. Before he could start shooting, Lt. Sanders came up and straightened them out Luckily for us. Lt. Sanders did this several times during the war. He saved Colonel Bealke during the fight for Hill 122. He had moved his platoon to the wrong hill here and something was always happening to his radio, but it is hard to fuss at a man after he saves your life.



Battle Route of the Third Battalion, 358th Infantry

From England - Hill 122 - The Falaise Gap - The Seine Crossing. June - August 1944

Our artillery sent Lt. Buchanan up. He was one of the best observers in the regiment. He took a great load off my shoulders. Battalion sent up a jeep trailer load of ammo. So, now I had three rifle platoons and an artillery observer, and we needed everyone. The Germans kept coming for the next three days and two nights.

Capturing a Sniper

There was a farmhouse and barns in front of our left side. We checked it out at daylight on the second day and collected a good many prisoners. Later that day one of our men was wounded and we were sure that the fire came from the farm. We checked it out again but found nothing. Late in the afternoon another man was wounded, so we checked it out again but didn't find anything. On the third morning a man in Sergeant Berry's squad was hit.

Sergeant Berry figured it must be coming from the haystack in the farmyard. He checked the haystack and brought the sniper in. He was a scared little fellow and his skin had a chalk-like color. It was customary not to take snipers prisoner, so I asked Sergeant Berry what happened. Sergeant Berry said, "When I pulled the hay back and exposed his head, I put the BAR[12] on the end of his nose and pulled the trigger. The rifle misfired so I figured the Lord meant for him to live, so I brought him in."

Later that day, a half track came barrelling across country, went through our lines and almost made it, but someone got the driver. The half track was loaded with telephones and wire. That afternoon I kept hearing a ringing noise. On investigating I found that every foxhole had a telephone in it.

Battalion reorganized the defense, with all three rifle companies facing into the pocket. We were all very busy. Battalion Headquarters even got into the fight.

The Polish Armored Division Arrives

On the third day a couple of strange tanks came in from the northeast. We shot a round of artillery in front of them; they wheeled around and took off. Then a patrol came out on foot with a white flag. They turned out to be Polish Armored fighting with the British. The tanks then came back in. They asked us to take 650 prisoners off their hands. They also needed supplies since they were far ahead of their supply sources. We drank a toast to celebrate the link-up of British and American forces. The Germans had gone into a wooded valley to escape our artillery, and when the Polish tanks found them they started shooting and running over them with the tanks. A British staff officer stopped the killing and they brought the prisoners to us. I had Lt. Sanders take the German General and his aide in our jeep. The rest were taken in 2 1/2 ton trucks.

Another Polish tank force contacted another 90th Battalion and brought in a few prisoners They were expecting a large number and questioned the Poles. They said that they shot the prisoners, but ran out of ammunition so they brought the remainder in. Sherman said war was hell.

The Germans had waited too long to start their withdrawal from Normandy. I imagine that Hitler wouldn't allow them to leave before. The British were on the northeast and east side. The Americans were on the north, west, and south side. The 3rd Battalion plugged the hole at the bottom of the funnel where the Germans were headed. The only way we accomplished it was the unlimited artillery available. The Germans were caught in a natural basin and we were on the rim. The Germans were told that the road was clear, and they came marching out in parade fashion. Then the sky fell in. We had eleven battalions of artillery[13] for support and used every gun to the fullest. They had to alternate firing the guns so they could cool off.

Relief

On the 22nd of August, the 50th British Infantry Division relieved us. We were very glad to leave because of the smell. So many dead horses and men. We went to a reserve area near Surdon, France. We had enough German trucks for everyone to ride. I had a motorcycle and side-car for Sergeant Cox and me. Sergeant Cox was the communication sergeant so he and I always went together. We also had lots of captured food and drink to add to our own rations.

The next morning an officer from Regiment came up with a two months payroll. Right away several big poker games started. About this time the Chaplain came in and said he wanted to have a church service for the company. I felt this was the wrong time for him to show up. The men had been drinking all morning and had started gambling. I told Sergeant Burke to pass the word around and find a spot for the service.

When I finished with the paymaster, I looked around and all the men had gone to the service. There was only one cook and a helper in the kitchen tent preparing dinner. I went to the service which was held in an open field. I double checked to see if everyone was there. The heavy drinkers were in the front row. The poker players and crap shooters were all there. The men took off their helmets because they were attending church. Most of them used the helmet to sit on. When I realized that everyone was there, I was never more proud of my company.

The company was spread out in an apple orchard. My CP was in a two-room house on the edge of the orchard. One room was filled with large wooden barrels of cider; the other had a table and chairs and a small organ. Corporal Gobbles, the mail orderly, came up with a week's supply of mail. Corporal Gobbles was also an accomplished organist. In civilian life he played the organ in a large movie theater.

When he finished the mail, he started to play. He played all afternoon and way into the night. When I went to sleep, he was still playing and Sergeant Cox was trying to sing. The mortar section and Headquarters personnel sat on the floor, drinking cider out of their canteen cups. Sergeant Cox was a fine communications sergeant, but a singer he was not. The men were giving him a lot of unwarranted encouragement. Luckily, I had a German pup tent to sleep in. I later sent this tent home for my sones.

Ernie Pyle[14] said, *The Germans fight for glory, the British for their homes, and the Americans fight for souvenirs.*

FEATURE PAGE

358TH WHOOPS IT UP!

U. S. BRIEFS

WASHINGTON! Rep. Harners has announced that mimeographed copies of President Roosevelt's speeches will be distributed to soldiers overseas. He added that in all fairness, copies of speeches made by G.-O.P. presidential nominee Thomas Dewey should be make available to GI's, too...After the war, according to Rep. Carl Hanahan, of the House Aviation Committee, America will become flying conscious and a two weeks trip to the far corners of the world will not be impossible... OKLAHOMA. In a speech at Oklahoma City, Sen. Elmer Charles said that when Japan is invaded, one of the world's largest armadas will move in on Tokyo. ...HOLLYWOOD! A $50,000 donation for the beautifying of the city's parks has been made by Wm. S. Hart erstwhile two gun film star of a generation ago. DETROIT The thief who stole Sgt John Cobb's car from a downtown street was embarrassed no end to find that Pfc Mary Baker was asleep in the back seat. His embarrassment became acute when he turned on the radio and discovered that she had been reported kidnaped. CLEVELAND It is estimated that there will be 5,000,000 jobless persons in the United States after the defeat of Germany. Essential industries will be the hardest hit. GEORGIA Quadruplet boys have been born in Atlanta. Both mother and babies are reported doing well...DALLAS Texas has sent all new representatives to Congress except two veterans who have been reelected...CHICAGO The Wrigley Co is turning over its gum output to the armed forces.

SIX RECEIVE SILVER STARS

Two officers and four enlisted men of the 90th Division have been awarded the Silver Star for gallantry in action in northern France.

The six are: Capt Harold H. Miller, of New York Capt Anthony A. Febbraro, of Pa.; S/Sgt James C. Little, of Nebraska; S/Sgt Carl L. Hoffman, of Virginia; Sgt Alvin G. Gillig of Texas; and Pfc Patrick L. Palacio, of California.

During a recent action Palacio crawled under enemy machine gun and pistol fire over open ground to a position where he could observe the enemy action. Biding his time, he killed six Germans and wounded three more.

Capt Miller in another action saw a mortar halftrack smoking and burning. Realizing the danger to friendly troops in the vicinity from the explosions of ammunition on the truck Capt Miller ran to the vehicle and began to smother the fire with sand, and got the fire under control.

CO. "L" RIDES ROUGH SHOD OVER HEINIES

Orders to capture and set up a road block on two highways leading into a large town recently resulted in a busy and exciting 48 hours fo the riflemen of Co L 358th Infantry.

Advanced units of the company had hardly reached the highways when an M IV came rumbling up the road. A well placed bazooka round fired by Pvt R. Carpenter gave him a two for one ratio. The tank was towing another tank and the crews of both eventually surrendered.

The 2nd Platoon K.O.'d 2 trucks and a M IV tank pulled up behind them. An officer ordered the stalled trucks to move. Lt Sanders yelled to "give up". The Nazi refused. The platoon went into action and the Germans were minus another tank.

The third platoon was busy too...A total of 31 prisoners was taken but before they could be sent to the rear, tw Gorman tanks counterattacked. Three guards: S/Sgt Dziurawice, Pfc Woods and Pfc Marazalek, directed the Krauts to the rear.

Pfc Vaccaro spotted a German officer sneaking through brush late in the afternoon, crept up behind him armed with a P38 and ordered the officer to surrender. Later Vaccaro discovered that his gun was not loaded. The clip was missing.

The Sniper
90th Division News Sheet, August 1944

Letter Home

14 August 1944

Dear Melia:

Well how is my sweetheart tonight. I am mailing a package tomorrow containing the following articles: a Nazi flag; a knife, fork and spoon combination set; a compass taken out of a tank that one of my boys knocked out with a bazooka; a belt and buckle; some English, French, and German coins. I'll send some more later on. I have quite a collection. My boys really look out for me. They found out that I like souvenirs, and you should have seen the things they gave me. One boy brought in two of the most beautiful saddle horses you ever saw. I never did get to ride them because we had to turn them loose because the fight got sort of hot after that. They found out that I wanted some wire cutters and they gave me fifteen pair. Another one gave me a fine map case taken from an officer.

Honey, I feel right good because I am doing a good job. I hope I don't sound like I am bragging but all the men like me and they show it in various ways. Their former commander didn't do very much for them and they appreciate me because I work for them. Well so much for all the back slapping.

We have been living like Kings for the past two days. We all took a shave, bath, and we had steak every night for supper. The rain has stopped and the countryside is beautiful. We had a picture show last night, but I didn't have time to see it and yesterday the Red Cross paid us a visit. Three girls in a club mobile gave out doughnuts and coffee and played records on a radio.

Today to make things complete I received three letters and your first package with the can opener, flints, and candy. We are going to have hot cakes in the morning for breakfast.

The compass will be very good for our boat when we get it. I also have a little metal folding chair which I am going to carry with me. The Germans have some of the most handy little personal gadgets.

Keep writing, honey. I write every chance that I have but don't worry if you don't hear from me. You will hear if I am hurt so, no news is good news. Take care of yourself and God bless both of you.

Always,

Charlie

HEADQUARTERS 90TH INFANTRY DIVISION
APO 90, U. S. Army

29 September 1944

SUBJECT: Award of Silver Star.

TO : Capt Charles B. Bryan, 0390490, Inf, * * * Infantry.

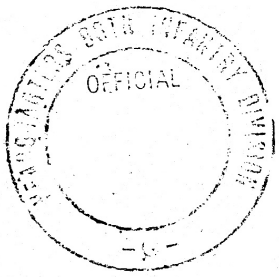
1. Under the provisions of AR 600-45, the Silver Star is awarded to the following named officer for gallantry in action:

Capt Charles B. Bryan, 0390490, Inf, * * * Infantry.

* * * E X T R A C T * * *

This officer, while serving with the Army of the United States, distinguished himself by gallantry in action which reflects the highest credit upon himself and the armed forces of the United States. Entered service from South Carolina.

By command of the DIVISION COMMANDER:



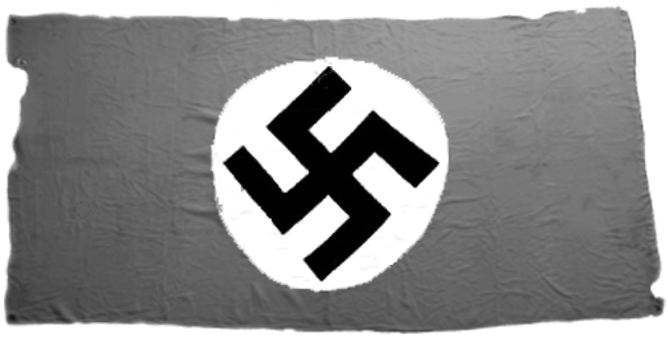
Award of the Silver Star

After the Battle

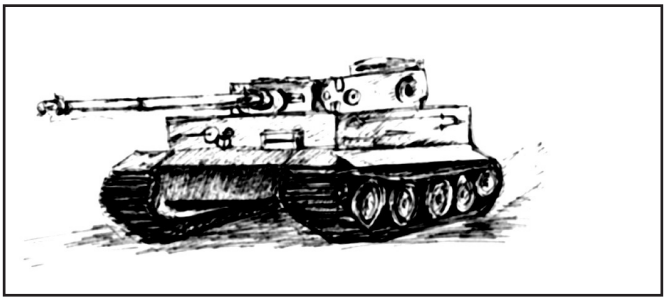
The 3rd Battalion History lists 933 prisoners taken, 15 tanks, and 40 vehicles knocked out. I think we knocked out more than forty. No estimate of Germans killed was listed. I estimate at least 1,000 in our area. The 90th Division History listed the following for the entire division: 13,000 prisoners, 8,000 killed and wounded, 300 tanks, 250 self-propelled guns, 164 artillery pieces, and 3,270 assorted vehicles. I was recommended for the Distinguished Service Cross for this action, but higher authority reduced it to the Silver Star. They stated that the 3rd Battalion had received more that their share of DSC's. Colonel Bealke blew his top and said, "It's a hell of a mess when they start to ration valor." [14]

The 3rd Battalion had received more decorations than the other battalions and the credit should go to Captain Jaffray, the Battalion Adjutant. All the battalions should have received more decorations than they did. A good many acts of heroism were never written up and reported to the proper authorities for medals. Captain Jaffray made a point to find out any heroic acts in the 3rd Battalion and to write them up while the witnesses were still around.

One day in the hedgerow country, Colonel Bealke had the company commanders meet him on a road behind the assault companies. While we were there some artillery came in. We all dove into the ditch. When I looked up Jaffray was sitting in the ditch writing furiously, oblivious to the shelling. I asked him, *What in hell are you doing?* He answered that he was writing up a citation for the previous days action. Lt. Heliner was wounded here.



I sent this banner home after the Battle at the Falaise Gap. I can't remember where we got it, but my son says I told him it came off a German tank. Perhaps like the Tiger tank in the sketch below.



German Tiger Tank
Sketch by Julia Bryan



The Falaise Gap - August 1944
German Equipment, Men, and Horses Litter the Single Road

FOOTNOTES

[1]*A History of the 90th Division in World War II*. Chapter V. "The Valley of Death", pp. 22-24.

[2]Another term from World War I. Infantrymen were called doughboys. Sometimes dogfaces.

[3]Artillery shells with time fuses set to explode after a pre-set time. The time could be set for the shell to explode in the air over troops. White phosphorous shells burned fiercely on exploding and could not be extinguished by water. During the war, buckets of sand to use on "fire bombs" were kept in public buildings and most homes in England.

[4]The 90th Division was a Texas-Oklahoma division. Its shoulder patch was a stylized T O.

[5]*A Brief History of the 358th Infantry*. Pages 25 and 26.

[6]TD = Tank Destroyer

[7]*Battle History of the Third Battalion 358th Infantry*. Pilzen, Czechoslovakia, 1945. Pages 29-31.

[8]Observation Post. Artillery spotters always tried to find a vantage point from which they could observe and direct the fire of their guns.

[9]Ammunition & Pioneer Platoon (men trained like engineers).

[10]The heavy machine guns were .30 caliber water cooled. The .30 caliber light machine guns were air cooled.

[11]The 155 mm. gun was the largest field artillery weapon, that sent observers with the Infantry. There were bigger guns, but they fired at targets in the far rear enemy areas.

[12]The Browing Automatic Rifle, 30 caliber. The B.A. R. had a very high rate of fire, but was much lighter to carry than a machine gun. Each squad had one B.A.R, or three to a platoon.

[13]Each battery had four guns, three batteries to a Battalion or twelve guns. Most were 105's, but some were 155's. Eleven Battalions would be 132 guns.

[14]Ernie Pyle was the best known newspaper correspondent of the war. He was noted for traveling with and reporting the life and achievements of the fighting man on the front. As the war was winding down in Europe, he left for the Pacific. He was killed on Ie Shima during the Okinawa operation on 18 April 1945 about three and a half months before V-J Day.

[15]Colonel Bealke commanded the 3rd Battalion from its landing on Utah Beach until he was wounded during the Moselle crossing. When he returned, he became CO of the Regiment and was promoted to full colonel.



The M-1 .30 Caliber Carbine

This carbine was manufactured in greater numbers in the United States than any other smal arms weapon during World War II**.** The carbine was light and handy, yet powerful. Infantry officers were issued this weapon rather than a pistol. From the collection of Patrick Loveless. Photograph by Tim Worrell.

9

RACE ACROSS FRANCE

August - September 1944

The rumor factory was working overtime now, and all had something to say about the war-ending soon. The good news from the Russian front made the rumors plausible, but most of the men here would not be around when the war ended in May.



Way of the Liberation[1]
Photo Taken Summer 1971

After a good rest and a visit from the Red Cross Clubmobile, we loaded up in trucks and headed south through Sees, Mamers, then east through Pithiviers and Malasherbes and stopped for a break in the Foret de Fontainbleu. We were just 25 miles south of Paris, but that didn't help much. At 1830 we loaded up again, crossed the Seine River at Montereau, and relieved a battalion of the 10th Infantry, 5th Division.

We had traveled 225 miles with no enemy action and very little evidence of the war along this route. We had expected the Germans to set up a defense on the Seine River, but the Allies didn't give them any time for more than a token defense. The 5th Division crossed the Seine at night and the next morning found themselves mixed in with the Germans trying to set up a defense. After the Falaise Gap, we had to turn in all of our captured German vehicles. The Air Corps would shoot at anything that wasn't Allied and we didn't have the gas to operate them.

We kept going in an easterly direction, sometimes riding, some-times walking. Very often we ran out of maps. We were given the name of the next town and the general direction. I would try to ask directions from the French by putting a French accent on my Low Country English and using my hands.

After a great deal of confusion, a small boy would usually come to the rescue and say in perfect school book English, "Commandant, just where do you wish to go?" Even if he spoke English or you had an interpreter your problem was not over. The French very often used time instead

of miles or kilometers. You would ask how far to the next town and they would answer by saying its 30 minutes away. Then you had to find out if he traveled by bike or walked.

One night three Germans walked into one of our road blocks. Things had been so easy lately that the sergeant was slack and he paid with his life. He stepped in front of the Germans and said, *Hande Hoch*.[2] One of the Germans was carrying a machine pistol in the ready position. He just pulled the trigger and sprayed the sergeant and also hit a man sleeping nearby. The Germans ran on down the road.

We brought the wounded man into the company CP which was located in a large Catholic school. We put him on a table and Corporal Williams[3] opened his shirt to look at the wound. He had been wounded in the stomach. When Williams opened the shirt, the man's intestines flew out. Williams grabbed them in mid air. I rushed up to help him. They had come out of the small bullet hole. I held the intestines while Williams collected all the sulfa powder in the CP. Williams was sprinkling sulfa powder while I stuffed them in.

Several times we had to stop the operation for one of us to throw up in the corner. The odor was terrible. We got it all back in before the medical jeep came for him. I had known the man at Fort Benning, Georgia. We carried on a conversation during the whole operation. I often wondered how he made out; neither Williams nor I had washed our hands in several days.

We walked into the town of Donnemarie en Montise about 1800 and prepared to stay for the night. I and L companies would outpost the outer perimeter of the town. The rest of the battalion was spread out in the center. L Company CP was in a room on the ground floor of a school. The Catholic Sisters gave us a fruit drink that was cold and delicious. I took the jeep and checked the outpost and cut back through the center of town on my way back to the CP. The entire populace was in the streets with bottles of cognac and wine.

They collected all the girls who had consorted with the Germans. They were stripped to the waist and shorn of all their locks. The girls were placed on wagons in the town square. The politicians stood on wagons and made speeches. Then there was a parade through the town. Larsen, the company jeep driver, and I were sitting in the jeep watching the performance, when a girl started kissing Larsen. I turned around and the ugliest woman in all of France was headed for me, so I said, "Larsen, let's get the hell out of here."

The Race Continues

When we went back to the CP. I sent out a three man patrol to check on the outposts. The patrol was taken from the mortar section. It would take about two hours for the patrol to make a round trip. Then a new patrol would start out. We had a phone to each platoon headquarters, and the patrol checked on the outpost in between. We had a very quiet night. The patrol woke me up to report and I would send out another one. I slept in a chair with a phone against each ear, one to the platoons and one to Battalion Headquarters. We moved out at daylight and everyone except me seemed to be tired. We walked all day, and that night when the runners from Battalion Headquarters brought the orders, maps, etc. one of our regular runners was replaced by a battalion guard.

Not until then did I learn that the French had held a dance in the town square for most of the night. It seems that I was the only one from the company who did not attend. The patrol would report in and then go to the dance.

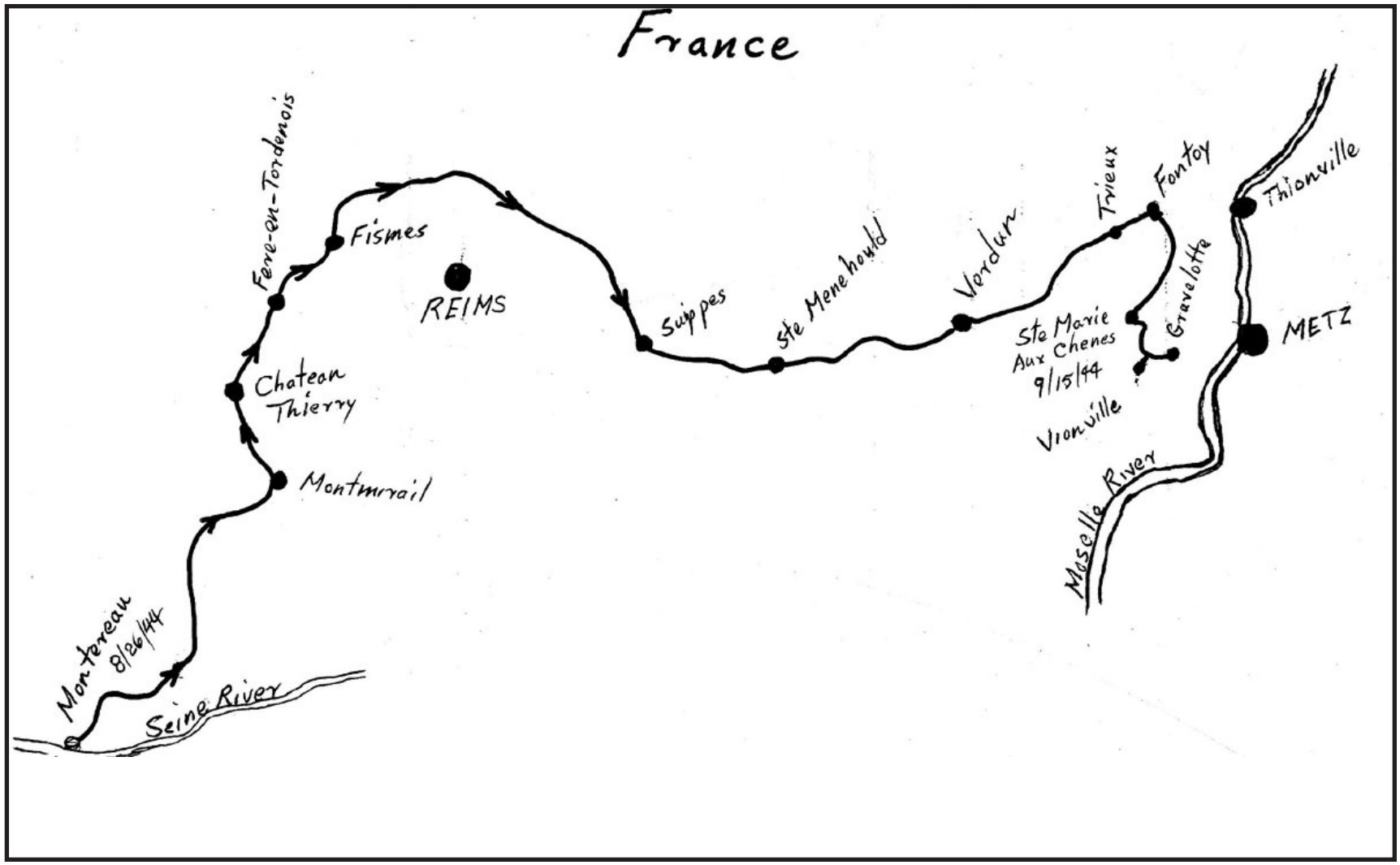
The missing runner had gotten drunk and disappeared. It seems that he always did that when he got drunk. He was quite a character. He was just big enough to get into the Army, and his feet were so small that the supply section did not carry his shoe size in stock. He had an extra pair of boots on the kitchen truck. I asked him how he happened to get into the army since he was a farmer and 40 years old. He said he went to town one Saturday night, got drunk and a girl called him a 4F.[4] When he sobered up, he was in the army. Back in the hedgerow country we had a German sniper behind our lines. He shot at anyone going between the battalion and front line companies. He had wounded a medic. This small runner hid in a hedgerow and spotted him when he fired. He shot him out of the tree.

Our orders were to take this town and set up a defense for the night, but the small force of Germans left decided to surrender without a fight. They had discarded their weapons, packed their personal belongings, and were waiting in the town square. We had to check all the buildings for hideaways with weapons. The job was finished by noon, so Battalion ordered us to take the next town. Some of the men, thinking that we would be in the first town for some time, caught and picked a chicken. They just had a fire started when orders came down to move out. I stopped on the side of the road to see how everyone was doing. Two men came with a big pot on a long stick. I asked them what they had in the pot. They opened the top and there was the little chicken with pin feathers bobbing around in the greasy water. In the second town we picked up a few stragglers who were glad to give up. By the time the two men got a fire going, orders came in to move on to the next town. I know that chicken tasted good after having been cooked in three towns.

I had noticed that one of the ammo bearers in the mortar section had difficulty keeping up. One day the sergeant section leader was carrying his ammo and prodding him so he wouldn't drop out. Another man was carrying his rifle. I talked to the sergeant and learned that the man had a drinking problem going back to training days in the States. I told the sergeant to let him drop out the next time. Everyone had to carry his own load. We lost him two days later and he was listed as missing. Several months later, I had to go back to the Division rear CP. The MP directing traffic looked familiar, so I asked Larsen (my driver) if he knew who he was. He said he was the missing ammo bearer from the mortar section. I never did know if he completely straightened out.

GERMAN RESISTANCE STIFFENS

On the 6th of September, we were the advance guard for the Battalion. It was a long tiring day, but we didn't encounter any enemy. The next morning we were all ready to go except K Company. I Company would be the advance guard, then K Company, and L Company in reserve. I was looking forward to an easy day of moving behind the two other companies. We could hear K Company trying to get everyone out when a runner came down from Battalion and said for L Company to move out second behind I company. K Company would catch up with the Battalion later.



Battle Route of the 3rd Battalion, 358th Infantry
From the Seine to the Moselle, 26 August to 15 September 1944

We arrived at a crossroads about noon. Someone spotted some Germans way down the road leading to the left. The 57s (anti-tank guns) were set up to guard the crossroads. They took a shot at an individual at maximum range. They hit him on the first shot and also knocked out an MG nest. A patrol went out and verified this. The column had moved on, but now they were in trouble.

A machine gun fired into the side of the column, wounding several members of the 2nd platoon of L Company and pinning down the rest. I couldn't raise Lt. Sanders on the radio so I went up and got pinned down myself. The Regiment wanted the 3rd Battalion to by-pass these Germans and take Fontoy. The 2nd Battalion would take care of these Germans later. The 3rd Battalion moved out with I Company as advance guard, K Company next, and we would be in reserve when we could break off from the enemy.

There was a ridge on our right that we could crawl behind for protection from the machine gun, but there were Germans in the woods ahead who could shoot at us when we exposed ourselves. Pfc. Weeks, a runner who had been with me since I had been in L Company, was wounded in his foot. I sent him back as soon as he was hit by having everyone fire at the enemy in the woods ahead of us. Under this cover, he crawled back, then got up and ran like a deer. I wanted him to get out to the aid jeep behind the hill before his foot got stiff.

Lt. Sanders called me on the small radio. I told him to tell the 1st platoon to go into the woods ahead of us and get the sniper. Even if they couldn't find him, he wouldn't shoot at us while they were there. The platoon got one sniper. We had several badly wounded men to bring out. We improvised litters with two rifles and two field jackets. When we got back to the aid jeep the Medical Sergeant was very indignant and wanted to know why they were not brought back before. I told him: "for the same reason you couldn't come and get them." Lt. Byrd was wounded here as he and Weeks were sitting in the medical jeep sharing a bottle of cognac. Weeks was Byrd's runner when he commanded L Company on Hill 122. Byrd came back to L Company when he recovered. This was the second time he was wounded.

After we all got out, I had the artillery lay down a heavy barrage where we suspected the enemy was located. We caught up with the Battalion about dark. They had just cleared Tucquenieux, a large mining town. Then they ran into a strong enemy position so they dug in for the night. K Company was on the left, I Company on the right, with L Company in the town in reserve. Several men were wounded by snipers in the town.

We had our CP in a house that housed three Polish couples. They were in the cellar and we were in the front room. About every hour they would all come up, walk across us (we were sleeping on the floor), to go to the bathroom on the front porch. A shell hit the porch during the night, so, after that, they went out back. At last we could get some sleep! One of my men had a huge pair of field glasses that he had been carrying since the Normandy beaches. He went up to the top floor to look out with the glasses. On the road not far from this house was one of our 57 mm. guns. They had one man watching the houses for snipers, so when he saw the glasses appear in the window, he shot at them. He hit the glasses, and the soldier almost killed himself coming down the stairs.

While I and K Companies were fighting on the south side of town, the Germans sent a patrol of about 20 men around the east side, probably to come in from the north. We spotted them and collected about ten men behind a wall. When they got within range, we opened up. They all hit the ground except one, who ran up this ploughed hill for about 1000 yards with everyone shooting at him. They started to cheer his heroic effort. When he reached the top of the hill, a round of artillery came down right on top of him. The men shooting were disappointed that his gallant run ended like that. An artillery observer working with I Company was in position to see the valley. When he heard the shots and saw the Kraut running up the hill, he called for artillery on top of the hill. We sent men out to bring in the wounded and found one who didn't have a scratch.

Division halted all forward progress because a German Brigade from the 106th Panzer Division had gotten into our rear area. These were the people we had run into at the crossroads. Division CP and Artillery Headquarters were in the middle of the fight. Cannon company and various artillery and anti-aircraft units fired point blank at the Germans. General Weaver, the Division Executive Officer, coordinated the defense. They went on the offensive when two infantry battalions arrived. One company of the 712th tanks was close by so they too joined the attack. By the end of the second day, the brigade had been annihilated. This incident was an indication that the enemy was preparing to make a stand and fight again. The front line troops were amused at the plight of the rear echelon troops. They, however, had given a good account of themselves.

At the 90th Division convention in 1955, a Division staff officer told me this story. It seems that he was in a cellar looking out of a window. A dead German lay in the street just outside of the window. The German had a Luger[5] on his belt. A tank, however, was firing down the street. The officer could see the tracers going by. While he was looking for something to reach out and pull the corpse closer, an infantry GI[6] came up a side street and also saw the pistol. He crawled under the fire, took the pistol, smiled at the officer, and crawled back. He knew that the tank couldn't depress his machine gun any lower.

Unoccupied Towns and Booby Traps

The next town was Trieux. It was unoccupied, but the Germans had left it heavily mined and booby trapped.[7] One of my men opened a door on the second floor of a house that was booby-trapped. The explosion blew the whole wall out and left him unhurt with the door knob in his hand. He went down the stairs with a stream of choice oaths. He was covered with white plaster. I was standing across the street and was peppered with wall fragments.

L Company led the attack that afternoon and reached the edge of Fontoy just before dark. We had a platoon on each side of the road. The road made a long curve so the troops on the inside of the curve reached the edge of town before the platoon on the other side of the road. A German tank came down the road on the left, perpendicular to ours. They spotted us and started shooting. We ducked into a draw where they couldn't hurt us. I took two men, Sergeant Berry and another man, with me to the rim of the draw. We had to get the tank before the other platoon came up.

I was searching the area with my field glasses when I saw a German step out of a machine gun nest under a bridge. We shot the poor fellow as he was relieving his kidneys. I then called for artillery fire on the tank and the machine gun. We knocked out the machine gun and the tank took off. I sent a patrol into the town and they learned from the French that the Germans were in the town square expecting us to come down the main street.

When the 3rd platoon came up we crossed the open ground at dusk and got into the building around the square with the help of French guides. We shot down on the Germans from the second floor. They were glad to put their hands up and surrender. The next day all three companies cleared out the town by noon. These German troops had been stationed in Norway and had seen very little combat.

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The next objective was the industrial town of Algrange. The Germans figured that we would come down the road in the valley, so they dug in on the high ground on each side of the town. A motorized or armored outfit would have stuck to the road. The Germans would have let us in and then clobbered us with artillery and mortars, but we came in from the side. I and K Companies took the high ground on one side of the town, then dashed through and to the high ground on the other side. L Company cleared the town and set up a defense at each end of the town on the valley road. This was accomplished before full dark. From the high ground we had observation to the Moselle River and the city of Thionville.

APPROACH TO THE MOSELLE

We had the Company CP in a Frenchman's home that was full of gadgets. He had a flashlight that was powered by a generator. It worked by squeezing a lever with your hand. It was small enough to fit in the palm of your hand. He also had a small toy car that would run to the edge of the table and stop, back up, and take off in another direction. I didn't have time to figure out how it worked.

The 1st and 2nd Battalions took Thionville. The 3rd Battalion was in reserve, but L Company was ordered to block the enemy from escaping south on this side of the Moselle. It was pouring rain. I had two platoons dug in on a ridge covering the escape route. The rest of the company was in some sheds behind us. I left Sergeants Burke and Cox in the sheds, but took the platoon runners with me up on the ridge. There was a lot of grumbling, especially after they were not needed. We all had a very miserable night but no enemy action. The Germans who escaped went across the river. When the water comes up over your boots, it is very uncomfortable, but when it rises up to your seat, it chills you all over.

On Division Reserve

On the 15th of September, we moved to Ste. Marie Aux Chenes and were placed on Division reserve for eleven days. We had hot chow, movies, baths, training, and inspections. One morn-

ing I went up to Battalion CP and the guard there told me to watch this old Frenchman coming down the street. He carried a bag with shoulder straps. When he got to the crossroad, he pulled out a horn and blew it several times. Doors opened up and down the streets; goats and sheep stepped out into the street, looked both ways, and assembled in the center around the old man. When he had collected all of them, he let them out to pasture on a hillside.

I had L Company's CP in two rooms at the home of an old couple. This was a mining town near the German[8] border, and some Germans had been working in the mines for a long time. The man was a retired mining engineer. He had been a member of the Kaiser's body guard during World War I. His wife spoke only German, but his daughter and son-in-law spoke French, German, and English. We played cards at night in four languages, counting my Island Geechee.

On the 27th of September, L Company relieved F Company, 359th Infantry on a defensive position in the town of Gravelotte. One company of the 3rd Battalion was in Vionville training and sending out patrols. Regiment established a rest center at St. Marie aux Chenes. The first night there was a movie, the second night a dance with a live band and girls. The first company to attend enjoyed the dance so much that they pulled out their pistols and shot into the air. The French girls screamed and took off. The owners of the building complained about the holes in the roof. When we went to the dance on the 19th of October, no one was allowed to carry his pistol.

In 1971, I was in the French town of Gravelotte, standing in front of the house I had used as L Company CP in 1944. (See the photos on page 64.) A young lady came out and invited me to come in and meet her father the owner. He was the present mayor of Gravelotte and was polite, but rather formal. He considered me just another American tourist, but when I said that he had made a big improvement by combining the two front rooms, his face lit up and he said,: *O! la! la!, Daughter, bring the cognac.* We then took a tour of the whole house.

The mayor as a boy lived in this town during the War. The Germans made all the French leave and moved German farmers into the town and brought in Russian and Polish laborers. That is why all the civilians left when we appeared and why the cellars were well stocked with food.

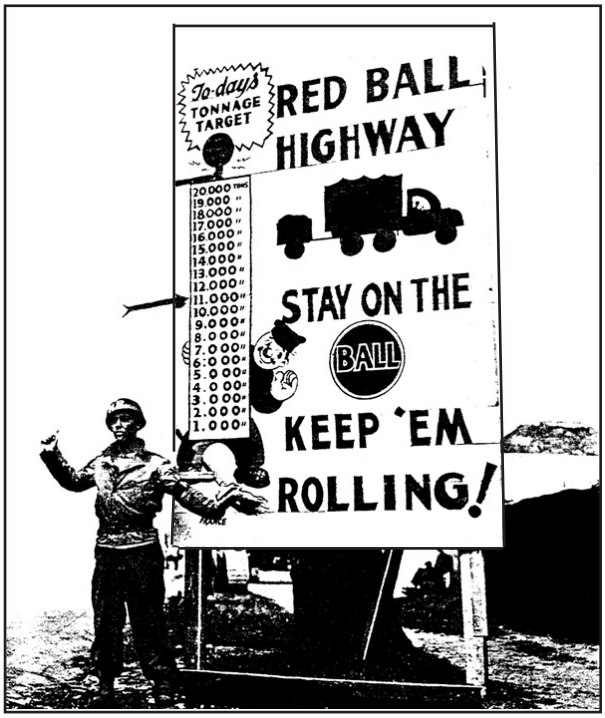
We ate dinner on the 21st and marched out in high style. Most of the populace turned out to wave goodbye. We walked fifty minutes and rested ten, then forty five and rested fifteen, then forty and rested twenty minutes. Two trucks came by going to Vionville. I stopped them and loaded all the men that they could safely carry. We slowly walked on, but only about half-way, before everyone was able to hitch a ride to Vionville. I rode on the last truck, and when I walked into Battalion Headquarters, Captain Burns[9] said he was trying to locate some trucks to send for us. I thanked him but said we were all back.

All our supplies were still coming over Utah and Omaha beaches. A good portion of the gas coming in was used by the trucks to deliver the gasoline and other supplies to the front lines.

THE RED BALL EXPRESS

The quartermaster organized the Red Ball express. The route of the trucks was marked by a red ball about 18 inches in diameter painted on signs, walls, and buildings. One route going in and another one returning from the front. The trucks traveled individually, not in convoys. A smaller target for enemy planes. Stationed along the routes were kitchens for food and tents for the drivers to sleep if necessary. Repair trucks patrolled the route to take care of emergencies. They were very efficient, but the length of the route was growing every day and more Armored Divisions were being committed.

A tank gets one mile on a gallon of gas. We had captured a lot of vehicles, but were not allowed to keep them because of the gas they would use. The Army Air Corps would also shoot up any vehicles not American.



MP on the Red Ball Highway[10]
The Thermometer on the Sign Reads in Tons!

The artillery had a long haul to bring up all the shells that we were requesting. One of the officers who manned the Fire Direction Center (F.D.C.) at night used to complain when we would call for artillery on a truck or tank that we couldn't see but could hear. He would state how many miles they had to haul the ammo, and we couldn't expect them to keep a screen of steel between us and the enemy.

Then one day our artillery liaison officer became sick and this officer was sent up as a temporary replacement. The Battalion Headquarters was located in a dug-out that the Germans had built. The only trouble was that the entrance faced the Germans. To get to the entrance you came under fire from the Germans. We stationed a guard to warn anyone to run across this spot. The artillery officer couldn't conceive of anyone working under these conditions. He started toward the Command Post and the Germans shot at him. He dove into the CP hollering, "Where's the phone. We are being attacked. Get some artillery up here!" Two or three guys in the CP reminded him that the artillery people had to haul that ammo great distances, etc. From then on, we didn't get any lip when we requested artillery fire at night.

It was unhealthy to drink the water in most of the towns or from the farms. When we visited Europe in 1971, about half of our group got sick from drinking the water. The Quartermaster had units that purified our water. They had large plastic tanks, about the size of a swimming pool. They set them up by a river or lake and treated the water. It was put into five gallon cans and sent up to the various units. Each man in the infantry carried a small bottle of chlorine tablets. One tablet would treat a canteen of water (one quart). This water didn't always have a good flavor or smell, but it was safe to drink. Most of our vehicles carried five gallons of treated water.



Front



Rear

House in Gravelotte, France. Command Post for L Company - 19
Photos Taken in Summer of 1971

FOOTNOTES

[1]After the war, these concrete markers were erected every kilometer along the route of the Allied Armies. The white marker was painted in red and blue letters: *La voie de la liberation.* This picture was taken in 1971 when Amelia and I went to a Division reunion in France.

[2]*Hands Up.*

[3]One Corporal and two Privates of the Medical Detachment were assigned to each Rifle Company. The two Privates went with the two assault platoons The Corporal was in the Company Headquarters group and went wherever he was needed.

[4]All men 18 to 40 were subject to the Draft for the Armed Services. They were examined and classified according to their physical and mental condition. 4-F was the lowest rating, which meant a man did not qualify for any branch of the services. Calling a civilian man a 4-F was a commonly used insult.

[5]A Luger was the pistol carried by most German Officers. It was a souvenir much prized by American troops. The Luger was a World War I weapon. The P38 was made for World War II, a much cheaper model of the Luger.

[6]GI = Government Issue. The initials became the name commonly given to the ordinary soldier who did the dirty work and got little of the credit. It was used in reference to members of the American Army, Private up to Captain. Some units used it in various ways. If a soldier said "He had the GIs", he meant that he had diarrhea. He also might use it as an explanation. Example: " My G. I. aching back," to express disgust. Of course, its most widespread use is in the term GI Bill. Millions of World War II G Is attended college with the help of this act of Congress.

[7]I think this term was invented during World War II. Retreating troops usually left traps for the unwary enemy. Perhaps some American or British soldier gave them their name: a trap for a nitwit to set off.

[8]The Third Army was now in Lorraine, a part of France that had been annexed by the Germans in 1871 after the Franco-Prussian War. France regained Alsace and Lorraine under the Treaty of Versailles, signed in June, 1919.

[9]Captain Burns was the Battalion, S-3 (Plans and Training Officer) on the battalion staff. He was on duty that day.

[10]This picture looks like a PR effort well behind the front lines. Near the front, the red balls marking the highway were hand painted on signs, walls, houses, or barns.

1



Case, Cup, and One Quart Canteen

10

THE END OF THE SUPPLY LINE

September-October 1944

We arrived at St. Marie aux Chenes on September 15, 1944. The fighting in Normandy had been very rough and the number of casualties high, but we had two months of building up our strength with replacements and men returning from the hospital while racing across France in pursuit of the Germans. The success at the Falaise Gap and other places during the pursuit had boosted our morale. We were a lean, hard fighting team, all battle experienced veterans.

LULL

It was at the Moselle that we ran out of gas and cigarettes. The heavy smokers had a hard time getting by on the nine cigarettes a day that came in K rations.[1] Then the kitchens came up and the K rations were discontinued. I was lucky that I had recently captured several boxes of good cigars. We were notified that no gas would be issued to the kitchens for cooking, and for the cooks to use whatever fuel was available, coal or wood. We had a resourceful mess sergeant who had enough gas stashed away on his truck to last until the restrictions were lifted. He even furnished gas for the battalion mail truck.

The last half of September and all of October were fairly quiet. We were on the defensive in the towns of Vionville, Gravelotte, St. Hubert and patrolled to Bronvaux, Marange Silvange, and Ternel. Only a part of the battalion was used at any one time, so the rest of the battalion had an opportunity to train for river crossings and assaulting pillboxes and large fortified positions.

During this period, we used German 75 mm. ammo in our tanks. The infantry used German mortars, and the artillery had a complete 105 mm. German battery with plenty of ammo. We also used our tanks as artillery, controlled by the fire direction center. This enabled us to save a lot of gas and the tanks used captured 75 mm. German ammo.

We had been on the go night and day for about two months, and the sudden inactivity was a let down. Everyone became short-tempered. The shortage of cigarettes contributed also. I called the lieutenants and sergeants together and gave them a pep talk on the subject. That night while Lt. Smith's platoon was changing position, (men in the foxholes changing place with men in the cellars), several rounds of artillery came in wounding a couple of his men. Lt. Smith lost his head and asked Lt. Blackford, who was next to him, to take over his positions, while he took care of the wounded.

When I arrived at the scene, I saw that it was nothing that Smith shouldn't have taken care of within his platoon. Blackford's entire platoon was on the line and most of Smith's platoon was

sitting in the dry cellars. Well, I blew my top and told Smith off in front of his men. Just what I had told them not to do that afternoon. The next day I apologized to Smith for dressing him down before his platoon and told him how he should have handled the situation. I received some kidding from the other officers and had to eat my own words.

On the defense line at St. Hubert's,[2] we were dug in on a ridge above the town in the valley, and the Germans were on the opposite ridge. It was a beautiful location and very quiet. We didn't shoot at the Germans nor they at us. One of the Germans played an accordion when it wasn't raining. We all enjoyed it and were disappointed when he stopped. He must have been relieved before we left.

We had orders to patrol the town during the night. The Germans had a patrol in the town also, but the patrols managed to avoid each other. I passed this information on to I Company. When we were relieved by I Company, we went into battalion reserve and were ordered to take over a large inn and out building that I Company had occupied. I sent the company back, a platoon at a time as they were relieved. I was the last to leave. When I arrived at the inn, I was met by Sergeant Bowles, I Company's first cook.

He very graciously met me on the front steps like an inn proprietor and conducted me to a room he had reserved for the six officers of L company. It was a very nice room with two beds. I thanked him and he left. I put my gear in a corner and went out to phone Battalion Headquarters to tell them that we had completed the move. I opened the door of the room next to ours and saw two of I Company's cooks sitting on the bed. I then proceeded to check out the inn and the surrounding buildings.

The men were all well situated with plenty of hay to sleep on. The supply people had a room in a tool-shed. I and K Company's supply people had rooms in sheds here also, which was all right. The kitchens were a different matter. L and K Companies' kitchens were in small rooms not large enough to set up all three stoves. The personnel were crowded into other small rooms. I Company was set up in the main kitchen of the inn, and their personnel slept in beds upstairs. I located the I Company Mess Sergeant and told him to change places with L Company's kitchen and to move his men out of the upstairs rooms. His first cook, Sergeant Bowles, was a fat, jolly man. The L Company men gave him a hard time when he was moving out, but he had an answer for every quip. He and I remained friends and worked together later when I became Battalion Executive officer. I saw him at a 90th Division Convention in 1955.

BACK IN ACTION

Our next assignment was the defense of Gravelotte, facing Fort Jeanne D'Arc. The Germans shot at us at first whenever a target presented itself. The shells were large caliber but over half were duds. We suspected that it was World War I ammo and assembled by the French forced labor. They stopped firing after several days and we could move about with care and bring in supplies during daylight. Our casualties were light during this period, but personally I had a close call. Mortar fragments tore up my new overcoat, but I escaped with just light scratches.

The officers of L Company were returning from a meeting at Battalion Headquarters by truck. The road dipped behind a hill and we couldn't be seen by the enemy. Lt. Sanders and I dropped off to check out a 7th Armored tank and half track that was knocked out when the 7th took Gravelotte. We were looking for a camp gas-stove. The truck went on so that the Germans wouldn't suspect anything. But they spotted us and dropped several mortar shells on us. There were a lot of unfired 75 mm. shells around the half track. Luckily for us, none were set off by the mortar fire. We were afraid to use the road into town, so had to go the long way around the hills to keep the Germans from seeing us. We were also afraid that our own men might shoot at us. We got back okay and the company medic dressed my face and chest. I didn't apply for a Purple Heart.

A dud ricocheted off the paved street and lodged above the door frame of a house that was occupied by a machine gun squad. I told the men not to use the door until the engineers could remove the shell. The next day on inspection I noticed that the shell was gone, and I knew that the engineers had not come up as yet. The sergeant told me that one of his men got tired of crawling through the window so he yanked out the shell and carried it across the road to a ditch. The engineers blew it up two days later.

There was an open area on our right which could not be used in daylight. At night, we put out an outpost to ambush any patrols that the Germans might send through the area. One night the outpost was in position and I was listening on the phone. We used the small phone that didn't require batteries and didn't ring. The ring would give away the outpost's position, but someone had to listen at all times. The outpost announced that someone was coming up the draw. He kept me informed of the enemy's movements.

Now he has stopped - he's moving to the right - he's coming straight at us. Oh! Its a damn cow!

In front of our lines, we would send out a one-man listening post. He carried the small phone and a reel of wire strapped on his back. He would stop a safe distance from the German lines, plug in the phone and report any movements. The Germans brought up their supplies by horse and wagon. When our man heard it, we would fire several rounds of mortar shells in that area and the horses would run away. The Germans tried bringing in the wagon by different routes and at different times, but the listening patrol stayed out until he heard it. Then he would come in, mission accomplished.

Gravelotte was unusual in that no civilians remained in the town. The elderly usually refused to be evacuated. The cellars were well stocked with food and drink and the vegetable gardens were flourishing. Various fowl, pigs, and rabbits were in the barns. We made good use of the fresh meat and vegetables. We butchered a large hog and sent it back to the kitchen to be used when we were relieved by I Company. I remember walking in the rain back to Vionville thinking about the sausage and pancakes.

When the 10th Armored Division relieved us they couldn't believe that some of the squads were eating home cooked meals on tables set with linen, china, and silver - and red wine yet. Lt. Colonel Bealke, our Battalion Commander, brought up the Battalion CO who was relieving us to

show him our positions. As they entered the town, a goose wandered out into the street. Without any signals, the driver stopped the jeep and leaped out. Colonel Bealke went out on his side and in seconds the goose was captured! Tomorrow's dinner for Battalion Headquarters Personnel. The 10th Armored Division Colonel was amazed that this would take place right under the guns of Fort Jeanne d'Arc.

While we were on the line in the town of Gravelotte, a group of Frenchmen who had organized themselves into a company persuaded Regiment to let them join us on the defensive line. First they asked for supplies and got them. Then they asked for a piece of the action. We had to spend several hours organizing our lines to make room for them. This was done after dark so the Germans wouldn't know. About 2200 we had everything changed and the Frenchmen were on line on our left. About 2300 one of them presented himself at our CP, said he was executive officer, and had come to have liaison between us and his company. I told him that it was not necessary since we had a phone to his company CP and he might be needed at his company. He didn't agree so I told him to put his gear in the corner and to sleep there.

About 0200 the guard at the CP woke me to say that a group of Frenchmen were moving past the CP I woke up my runner who could speak French and sent him to find out what was going on. He ran back because he found out the French company was going home because the CO had been killed. I woke up the French Executive Officer and informed him of what was happening. He gathered up his gear and joined the rear of the company as it went by. We never did learn how the CO was killed. We spent the rest of the night moving back into positions that the French had evacuated.

All during the month of October, we kept getting rumors that we wouldn't attack again before Spring. We were issued overcoats, blankets, and new clothes. Men coming up from the rear said the engineers were building quonset huts for us to live in when we were not on the line. Large caliber artillery guns were moving into permanent positions. Since the weather was getting worse every day, we were more than willing to believe the rumors, but it didn't last long.

Ernie Pyle wrote the following about rumors:

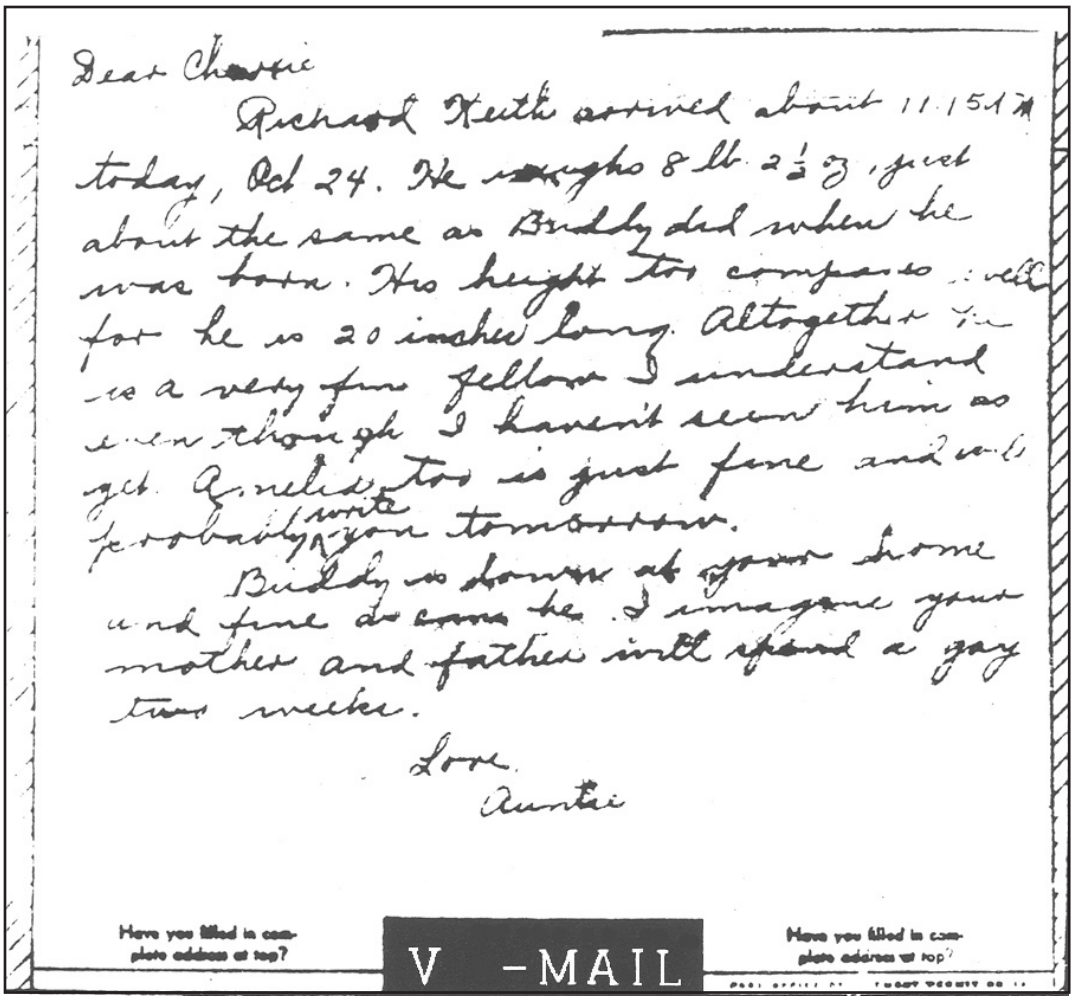
When the Army doesn't have furloughs, ice cream, beer, or clean clothes, it certainly has to have something to look forward to, even if only a faint hope for some kind of change that lies buried in an illogical rumor - how could you endure war without them (rumors)?

On November 1st, we were relieved by the 63 Armored Infantry, 10th Armored Division. My mortar section, 16 men, had found and rebuilt enough bicycles for each mortar man to ride out. They built two wheeled carts for the mortars and ammo. They went out in great style. Battalion Anti-Tank guns, located behind us, reported to Battalion that a German bicycle platoon had passed by. They called me and I had to explain what had happened. We entrucked about three miles back and moved to the town of Fillieres, so they had to leave their bicycles.

The company occupied a street of houses. The Company CP was in a tavern, the kitchen two doors down the street. Everyone was very comfortable. We had a training program with time

out in the afternoon for sports. We had movies every night, all old films and a repeat the next night if a new one had not come in. We had, however, 100% attendance every night.

On November 2, 1944, I received a V-Mail letter from Auntie[3] stating that Keith was born on October 24, 1944. The entire company soon learned the good news, but it cost me my supply of cigars. Some of the older men (that's men who had been in the company for several months) started to call me "Pop."



Dear Charlie

Richard Keith arrived about 11:15 A today, Oct 24. He weighs 8 lb 2½ oz, just about the same as Buddy did when he was born. His height too compares well for he is 20 inches long. Altogether he is a very fine fellow I understand even though I haven't seen him as yet. Angelia too is just fine and will probably write you tomorrow.

Buddy is down at your home and fine & comes he. I imagine your mother and father will spend a gay time weeks.

Love,
Auntie

Have you filled in complete address at top?

V-MAIL

Have you filled in complete address at top?

V Mail Letter from Home
Announcing Richard Keith's Arrival. Born: 24 October 1944

Transcription of above Letter

Dear Charlie:

Richard Keith arrived about 11:15 a.m. today, October 24. He weighs 8 lb., 2 1/2 oz, just about the same as Buddy did when he was born. His height too compares well for he is 20 inches long. Altogether he is very a fine fellow, I understand even though I haven't seen him yet. Amelia too is just fine and will probably write you tomorrow.

Buddy is down at your home and fine as can be. I imagine your father and mother will spend a gay two weeks.

Love,

Auntie

Letters Home

2 November 1944

Dear Melia:

Tonight I got the V-Mail letter from Auntie with all the good news. Its very funny that the slowest mail got through first.

Honey, I am the proudest man in the world tonight. Why, already every man in the company knows that I have two boys. I am very happy to know that you are doing so well. I certainly hope that you will continue to do so.

Honey, at a time like this when I am the husband of the most wonderful woman in the world and the father of two boys, I should be able to write and write the most beautiful love letters that have ever been written, but I am so excited and joyous at the news that I can't sit still long enough to write. I am very proud of my family. I used to say little family, but now I guess I should say medium size family. I know that I haven't written many love letters since I have been over here, but when you stop to think that someone else will read it before you do. Honey, I think of you constantly when I am not forced to think of other things.

I love you so much, Honey, that I don't know how to go about expressing it. I'll try to do better when I get over the excitement of being a new papa.

God bless you, Mr. Bud and Richard Keith, I hope that you will continue to improve and won't have any of the trouble that you had with Bud. Good night honey.

Always,

Charlie .

Dear Melia

Today is the first Sunday that we have really observed as Sunday should be. We got up late and ate breakfast at eight and then went to church at nine-thirty. We had a big crowd at church and the singing was very good. This afternoon didn't do anything but sit around and "shoot-the-bull." Belser[4] came over for a visit and we had a big time talking over old times. He had heard about the baby, and came over to congratulate me. He gave me a lot of news from the old Regiment. Colonel Folks has been sent to the Pacific. All the officers that we left at Ft. Benning are still there with the school. Belser, Gatewood, and I are the only ones from the Regiment who are still here. Lt. Smith, you remember him, is in one of the other Regiments here. I have seen him once.

By the time you get this letter, you will be home and Keith will be beginning to look like something. I mean that he will be changing and beginning to get some expressions in his interest in life, besides eating and sleeping. In the last package that I sent I included a little rubber sheet for his carriage. I picked it out of a town that we destroyed. There were some beautiful carriages there too. In the first package I sent him some safety pins that I took out of a German ambulance.

I tried to buy him something the other day, but everything over here is scarce and high. I have a pipe from Paris that one of the officers brought me when he was back there. We are sending back a few officers to Paris for three days. My Company has been lucky since we have sent one each time. They pick the names out of a hat and Lucky L Company has been living up to its reputation. We send two enlisted men every trip from the Company. It certainly is a great thing and the men really appreciate it. The fighting men are going first so that helps us.

Honey, I hope that you are doing fine and the baby isn't crying too loud. Give my love to Mr. Bud and Keith.

Always

Charlie



Foxhole Stove

FOOTNOTES

[1]K rations were the infamous battle rations given to troops fighting in the front lines. The boxes about the size of a cracker-jack box were waterproofed and came in three different versions: one for breakfast, one lunch, and one supper. They contained a packet of very dry crackers, often called dog biscuits, a fruit bar, and a can of meat, or eggs, or cheese. Concentrated food that quickly seemed tasteless. K rations have been described as "almost food."

[2]St. Hubert was the patron saint of hunting. There are several towns in northern Europe named after the saint. He is buried in St. Hubert, Belgium.

[3]Miss Irene Veronee of Johns Island, Amelia's aunt.

[4]1st Lt. from the 176th Regiment at Fort Benning and in Washington, D.C. He was assigned to the 90th Division at the same time I joined it.



60 mm. Mortar Shell



Sixty mm. Mortar

The complete mortar and mount weighed 42 pounds. It usually was broken down into three basic units: barrel, bipod, and base plate. Each unit weighed about the same, with the bipod the heaviest. The sustained rate of fire was 18 roundsper minute, but men could it for up to thirty rounds per minute when pressed. We only used two kinds of ammunition: high explosive and smoke.

11

THE FIRST MOSELLE CROSSING

THE BATTLE OF METZ
OR
HELL AND HIGH WATER

November 1944

Any or all of the above descriptions would apply to the battle that took place from the 9th to the 26th of November, 1944. On the night of November 4th, I stopped by Battalion CP after the show, and the S-3[1] casually informed me that all company commanders were going on a reconnaissance the next morning at 0800 and to bring K rations. I wasn't concerned, I thought it was probably some small action to straighten out our lines, etc. It would keep us from getting stale.

RECONNAISSANCE

I was riding in the back seat of Colonel Bealke's jeep enjoying the scenery of the French countryside and thinking of home, when I heard Colonel Bealke say that it was times like these that he wished he were a Pfc. in a Quartermaster bakery. Well, I sat up and took in every word he said after that. We were making a reconnaissance for the biggest operation since Normandy.

We pulled into a heavily forested area called the *Foret de Cattenom*. We were surprised to learn that our artillery and tanks were already there. The engineers with all their equipment were there also. We had to sneak down a ditch for about half a mile to the town of Cattenom. A troop of motorized cavalry held the town. They had been there for some time and had a lot of information on the enemy across the river. We climbed up into the attic of an old house, removed a tile from the roof which gave us a very good view. We did this at several locations and were able to see the whole area that we would have to cross. We spent about four hours and learned a great deal that we would use later.

We left our maps at Cattenom so no one would know what was coming up. All I could tell the company when I returned that night was that we would move out in a couple of days. We really intensified our training for the next two days.

FIRST ASSEMBLY POINT

On the 7th, the kitchen served dinner at noon; we loaded up and moved to Ludlange. The trucks came for us at 1400 and it was pouring rain. We only had enough trucks for one battalion and we could not enter the Cattenom area until after dark. We moved halfway up, detrucked, and moved the whole company into a big barn where we ate supper, out last meal--hot one that is.

Then we moved the remainder of the way after dark. The same trucks moved three battalions and regimental headquarters, so they were driving all afternoon and most of the night. The job was completed before dawn in spite of the rain, muddy roads, and no lights.

At Ludlange the company, 180 men, was in the big barn. It was a miracle that the barn didn't catch on fire because 90% of the men were smoking. The smell of wet wool uniforms and socks was stronger than the hog and barn odors. The kitchen was in a tool shed in the farm yard. This was the last hot meal we would receive until the 20th. After eating I went up to the Battalion Headquarters to await the trucks. Colonel Bealke and the other company commanders sat around the kitchen stove talking about everything except what was on their minds. There were too many French ears around. The company runners were in the next room helping the milkmaids with the evening milking. They all seemed to be having a great time, but I imagine the milk production dropped.

When the trucks arrived it was still raining and so dark you couldn't see your hand before your face. I sent one runner to alert the company. I and K Companies were loading first so the second runner went back to guide the company up when it was time, so they wouldn't have to wait in the rain. They came up the street single file, each man had his hand on the man in front of him so he wouldn't lose contact in the dark.

I counted off the number for each truck then moved the column to the next truck. I got into the last truck, and, when the rear flap was closed, the men asked me what was up. I gave them a brief account of what was coming up. This was the first information the men got on the Moselle crossing, but everyone was thoroughly briefed before we jumped off. The trucks took us to the town of Soetrich where we detrucked and walked in the rain for a couple of hours to Cattenom barracks. Each company had a guide to lead them right to the houses they would occupy for the next 24 hours. No fires or lights so we had to dry out from body heat. It was essential that we protect our feet from the cold and wet. The leather boots were only water repellent, so when the socks became wet, they had to be changed as soon as possible. The only way that we had to dry out the socks without fires was to place them next to our skin inside our shirt. This was uncomfortable but practical.

READYING THE ATTACK

The next morning, November 8th, we spent inside the barracks studying maps and planning just what each unit would do. I went to each squad and explained what each man should do. This was one of the few times that we were able to thoroughly brief the men before action, and it paid off.

The 358th Infantry Regiment, 344th Field Artillery Battalion, 241st Group Artillery Battalion, one company of the 712th Tanks, one company of the 74th Tank Destroyers, and Engineers were assembled in the *Foret de Cattenom* secretly under the cover of darkness and rain. About 2,000 men and numerous vehicles. The 359th did the same at the town of Malling. The 5th Division had a crossing site south of Metz.

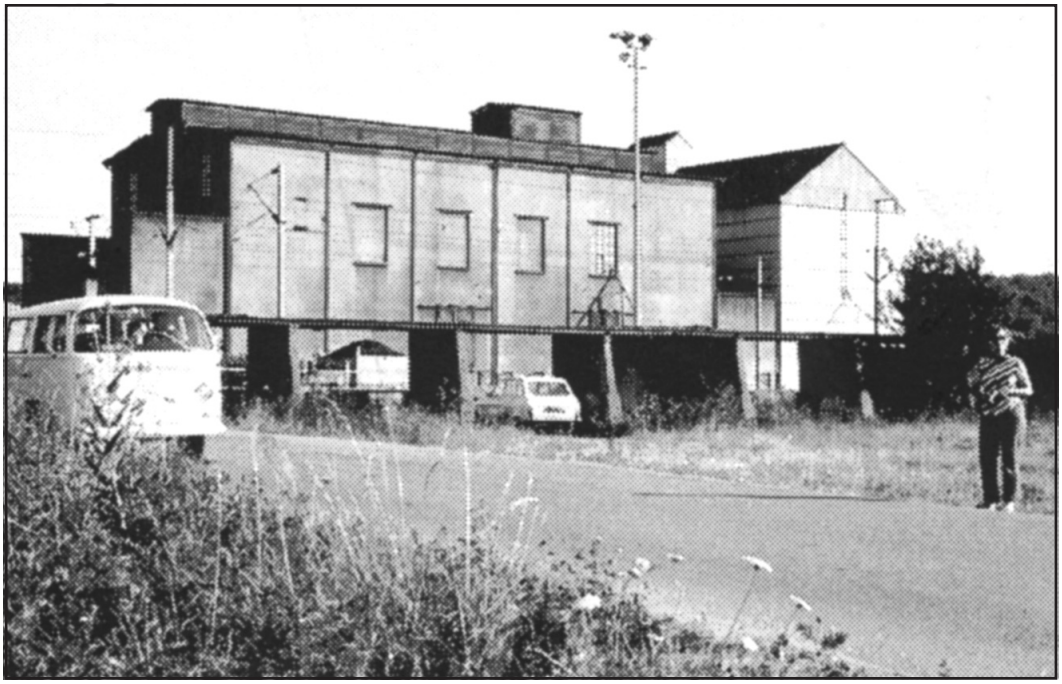
We moved out at 0115 on November 9th, and, thankfully, it was not raining. The Engineers met us at the edge of Cattenom and guided us to the boats that were lined up in the middle of the .town. Eight men to each boat, including the engineer, who would bring back the boat for the next load. The first troops in had to wait for the rest of the first wave to be assigned boats. One problem of waiting before jumping off is that the kidneys become over-active.

There were absolutely no open lights permitted, so you lit your cigarette by putting your raincoat over your head or lit it from someone else's cigarette. You could look down the street and see the little red dots which resembled lightning bugs in the summertime.

We carried the boats about 1,000 yards across a very muddy field. The field was mined, but lanes were marked by white ribbons. L and K Companies made up the first wave. In my sector, the Germans had a listening post on the river bank that was occupied at night. A squad was assigned the job of eliminating this post, and it was accomplished with a minimum of noise.

ASSEMBLY POINT FOR THE MOSELLE CROSSING

L Company's assembly point was a factory. A two-man German patrol came by the factory, probably going to the listening post. We ambushed them, but one was only wounded so we put him in the factory. The Battalion Headquarters and Aid Station were moving in there before daylight.



Cement Factory
Assembly Point for L Company - First Moselle Crossing
Photo Taken Summer of 1971

We were not supposed to take any prisoners before daylight, but we had a secure place to leave this one. The medics treated him, and we tied his feet and hands. We launched the boats at 0330. By 0415 L and K Companies were assembled and formed on a line of departure on a railroad track that ran parallel to the river. The Germans were unaware of our presence. Colonel Bealke was coming over in the second wave. When one of his runners slipped and fell, the runner's gun went off, wounding Colonel Bealke in the hand. By 0500 he was back at the old battalion CP in Cattenom. Captain McHolland[2] and I met to arrange the jump off on schedule. No Battalion CO was there for the attack.

THE THIRD BATTALION CROSSES THE MOSELLE

We did not fire any artillery before the attack. The Germans were convinced that no one would try to cross the river in such bad weather. They never did understand the crazy Americans. The first and third battalions were across the river before they woke up. At daylight the Germans, in a pillbox in K Company's area that had been by-passed in the dark, woke up and started firing a machine gun and artillery at the river crossing. I Company had to eliminate this pillbox when they came over.

We jumped off at daylight from the LD[3] at the railroad tracks, advancing up a low hill over open ground. Some Germans were dug in on this hill, but we were on top of them before they woke up., Most of the Germans surrendered but some tried to fight. Since we were integrated into the German position, we couldn't shoot but had to resort to hand-to-hand combat.

One of my best sergeants who had just returned from the hospital, wounded in Normandy, couldn't extract his bayonet from a German's chest. He had to fire his gun and blow the man apart. He was able to free the bayonet, but he was smeared with blood and flesh. If he could have changed his clothes and washed, he probably would have been all right. As time wore on and the temperature rose, the smell got on his nerves. He was evacuated that night for battle fatigue.

By late afternoon we had taken a high hill northeast of Fort Koenigsmacher. The Germans had been working on a tank trap on the reverse slope of this hill, so we moved down and occupied it. A German ambulance came down the road that ran parallel to our line. Some of my men shot at it, but I stopped the firing before they hit the driver. We had known the Germans to use ambulances to haul supplies. The shooting gave away our positions and we started to receive some fire from an 88 located further down the hill. It got so hot there that I moved the company back up to the top of the hill.

We couldn't reach the 88 on the reverse slope with artillery located across the river. We didn't want to give away our mortar positions before we resumed the attack. We had to take out this gun since we were going to attack down the hill the next morning. My plan was to send a patrol out after dark to knock it out.I assigned the job to the first platoon. The platoon came up with a volunteer who would sneak down the hill, suprise the German gun crew, and knock out the 88 by himself.

The Polish Volunteer

The volunteer was a Polish soldier who had been fighting with us for several months. He would go late at night when most of the 88 crew would be asleep. Well, the plan seemed reasonable so I agreed to it. He carried only a pistol, knife, and a grenade. No helmet or anything that might make a noise. No sooner had he left than I had misgivings. What did I know about this man? He could be a German spy. The more I thought about it, the bigger fool I seemed. Even after he returned and reported that he had cut their throats and given me the gun's location on the map. I told his squad leader to have him guide the squad directly to the gun when we jumped off at daybreak. There was also the possibility that the Germans might have sent a new gun crew.

We met three Polish prisoners who were working on a farm in France that the Germans had taken over. They wanted to go with us to fight the Boche.[4] One had bad feet so we put him in the kitchen crew.We encountered a strong enemy force, and the second one remembered he had to get back to the farm. The third one turned out to be a good, aggressive fighter, and he proved himself by knocking out the gun and the three man crew. He was accidently killed six months later when the Engineers blew up a building in Germany.

This Polish soldier[5] could not speak English so he was put into a squad whose Sergeant could speak Polish. He was a good Sergeant, but when he put an English sentence together he had at least two four-letter words in it, and he was teaching this soldier English! About a month later I was checking this squad. I talked to the Sergeant and several of his men. When I came to the Polish soldier he jumped up, gave me a snappy Polish salute, and said,"Good Morning, Damn Captain, how in the Hell are you?" I turned around but the Sergeant had disappeared.

ESTABLISHING THE MOSELLE BEACH HEAD

At first the Germans concentrated their artillery fire on the river crossing site. Since the flood waters had halted operations there, they could devote their attention to the front lines. Luckily, we had moved in fast and captured most of the troops outside of the main fort. We were able to get well established before they brought up reinforcements to counterattack us.

Most of the experienced fighters had German pistols concealed in their jackets and a knife strapped to the side of their boots. Extra toilet paper was carried in the helmet liner and a spoon in the shirt pocket. Overcoats and blankets were never carried. When we attacked, the supply sergeant and his crew picked them up and brought them up when we stopped. We were known as Patton's "Foot Cavalry," a name we earned while racing across France.

The shelling became heavier as time moved on. Most of our casualties were in the reserve and heavy weapons platoon. I learned at "The Island" on the Seves River that when you make your move in combat you need to be fast and furious. I followed this policy and I think it helped me to survive.

I was sitting in my foxhole trying to get a little sleep when Lt. Sanders from the reserve platoon dropped in. He was so upset he was almost hysterical. He had lost a sergeant, who wasa close

buddy, from an 88 shell that afternoon. Sanders had been wounded in Normandy and returned to the Company just before the Falaise Gap. He did most of the talking and it seemed to help him. After a while he decided he could make it, so he went back to his platoon. When he got into his platoon's area, one of his men who must have dozed off, was startled and his gun went off, just missing Sanders by a hair. We had to send him back to the aid station, and he was evacuated to the hospital. He later returned and finished the war as transportation officer in another regiment.

I had just drifted off to sleep when Lt. Byrd dropped into my foxhole. He was very calm and collected, but I knew he wasn't making a social call. He had a problem. He had been wounded twice before and had a good record as a platoon leader and a short time as company commander. He said he just couldn't take it any longer. He had told Sergeant. Burke and everything was under control in the platoon. We shook hands, and he went on back to the aid station. He later returned and finished the war as a supply officer in another battalion.

The German reserves couldn't be used without permission of the Army or higher authority. This practice was very fortunate for us because when permission would finally be given, the orders were given over the radio which was intercepted and decoded in time to meet the threat. The reason we could move fast was that we lightened the soldier's load. The only extra clothes that he carried were a pair of socks and a raincoat. Ammo was carried in the ammo belt which was held up by suspenders. Attached to the belt was a canteen and cup for water but very often the canteen held something stronger. The shovel and bayonet were attached to the belt along with two first aid packs. Some men had an extra canteen cover to carry grenades in. Every man carried a small bottle of Halazone tablets. One tablet would purify a canteen of water.

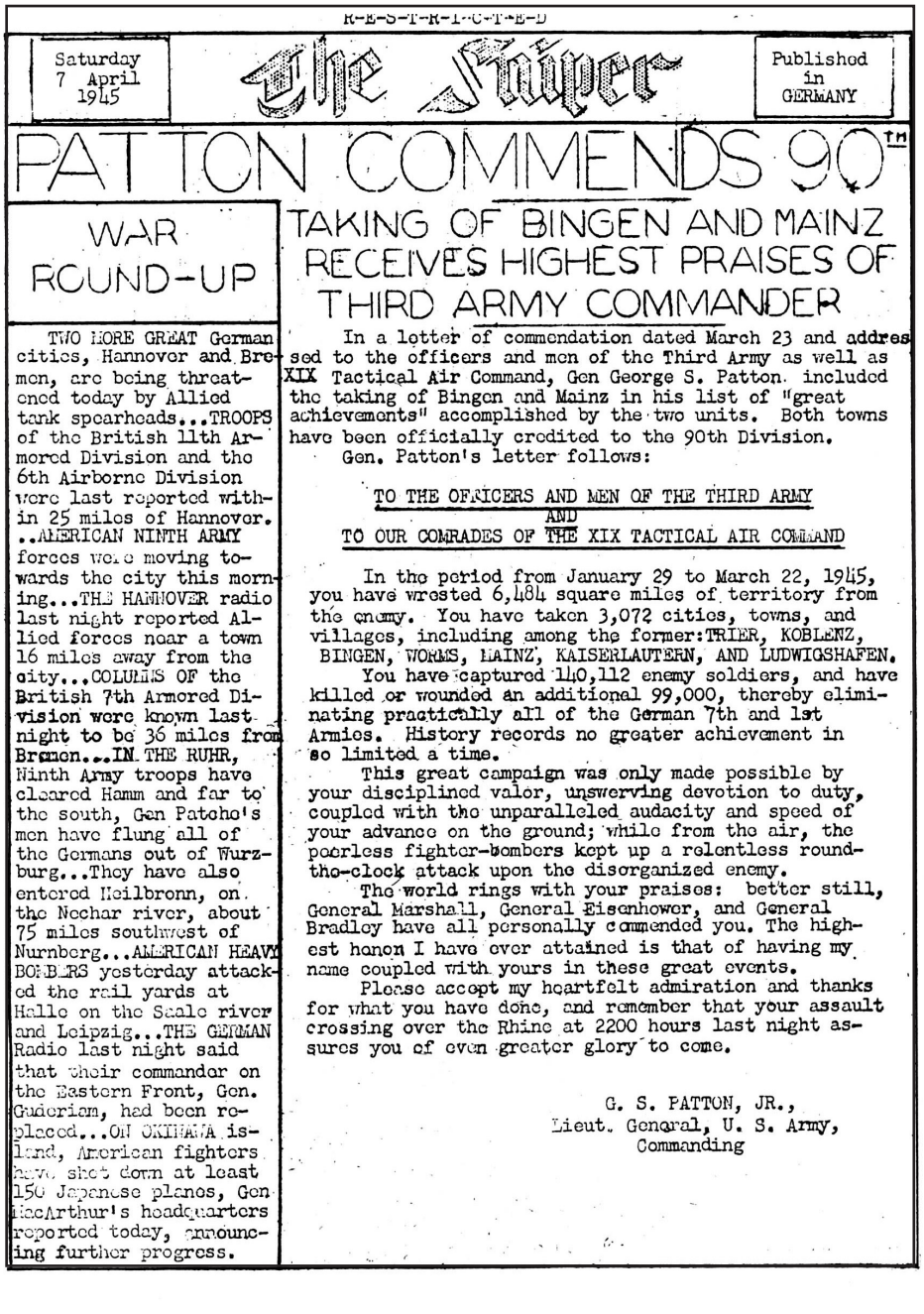
We jumped off at daylight; the squad with the Polish soldier checked out the 88 and found three men with their throats cut and the gun spiked.[6] We had to cross a valley about a mile wide. The two assault platoons and the machine gun section got down to the bottom, crossed the road and started up the other slope when a machine gun located on our right opened up, shooting down the road.

The reserve platoon and mortar section were caught on the other side and had to turn back. I was with the assault platoons and Lt. Blackford was with the reserve platoon. He took them back up to our old positions and then came down on the machine gun position, knocking it out. The valley was safe for about three hours before the Germans sent replacements from an underground passage from the fort. We lost one man taking out the MG. He had been sent to us by mistake; he was overage for combat.

The Germans Counterattack

We were now dug in on top of a wooded hill behind Fort Koenigsmacher. We controlled one of the roads leading in and out of the fort. The Germans counterattacked us that afternoon, but we were ready. We were well dug in with our positions camouflaged and a listening post out front. The LP heard them coming and crept back to our line to alert everyone. We phoned K Company on our left.

We could hear the Germans talking and walking through the woods before we could see them. The enemy couldn't see us and we held our fire until the last moment. We opened with MGs, BARs[7] and rifles at the same time and wiped out the first wave. When the second wave started falling over the bodies, it broke the drive so those left beat a hasty retreat. This was the beginning of the counterattacks that we received every day until the 17th. Our area was heavily wooded so the Germans couldn't use tanks against us.



R-E-S-T-R-I-C-T-E-D

Saturday 7 April 1945

The Paper

Published in GERMANY

PATTON COMMENDS 90TH

WAR ROUND-UP

TWO MORE GREAT German cities, Hannover and Bremen, are being threatened today by Allied tank spearheads...TROOPS of the British 11th Armored Division and the 6th Airborne Division were last reported within 25 miles of Hannover. ..AMERICAN NINTH ARMY forces were moving towards the city this morning...THE HANNOVER radio last night reported Allied forces near a town 16 miles away from the city...COLUMNS OF the British 7th Armored Division were known last night to be 36 miles from Bremen...IN THE RUHR, Ninth Army troops have cleared Hamm and far to the south, Gen Patch's men have flung all of the Germans out of Wurzburg...They have also entered Heilbronn, on the Neckar river, about 75 miles southwest of Nurnberg...AMERICAN HEAVY BOMBERS yesterday attacked the rail yards at Halle on the Saale river and Leipzig...THE GERMAN Radio last night said that their commander on the Eastern Front, Gen. Guderian, had been replaced...ON OKINAWA island, American fighters have shot down at least 150 Japanese planes, Gen MacArthur's headquarters reported today, announcing further progress.

TAKING OF BINGEN AND MAINZ RECEIVES HIGHEST PRAISES OF THIRD ARMY COMMANDER

In a letter of commendation dated March 23 and addressed to the officers and men of the Third Army as well as XIX Tactical Air Command, Gen George S. Patton included the taking of Bingen and Mainz in his list of "great achievements" accomplished by the two units. Both towns have been officially credited to the 90th Division.

Gen. Patton's letter follows:

TO THE OFFICERS AND MEN OF THE THIRD ARMY
AND
TO OUR COMRADES OF THE XIX TACTICAL AIR COMMAND

In the period from January 29 to March 22, 1945, you have wrested 6,484 square miles of territory from the enemy. You have taken 3,072 cities, towns, and villages, including among the former: TRIER, KOBLENZ, BINGEN, WORMS, MAINZ, KAISERLAUTERN, AND LUDWIGSHAFEN.

You have captured 140,112 enemy soldiers, and have killed or wounded an additional 99,000, thereby eliminating practically all of the German 7th and 1st Armies. History records no greater achievement in so limited a time.

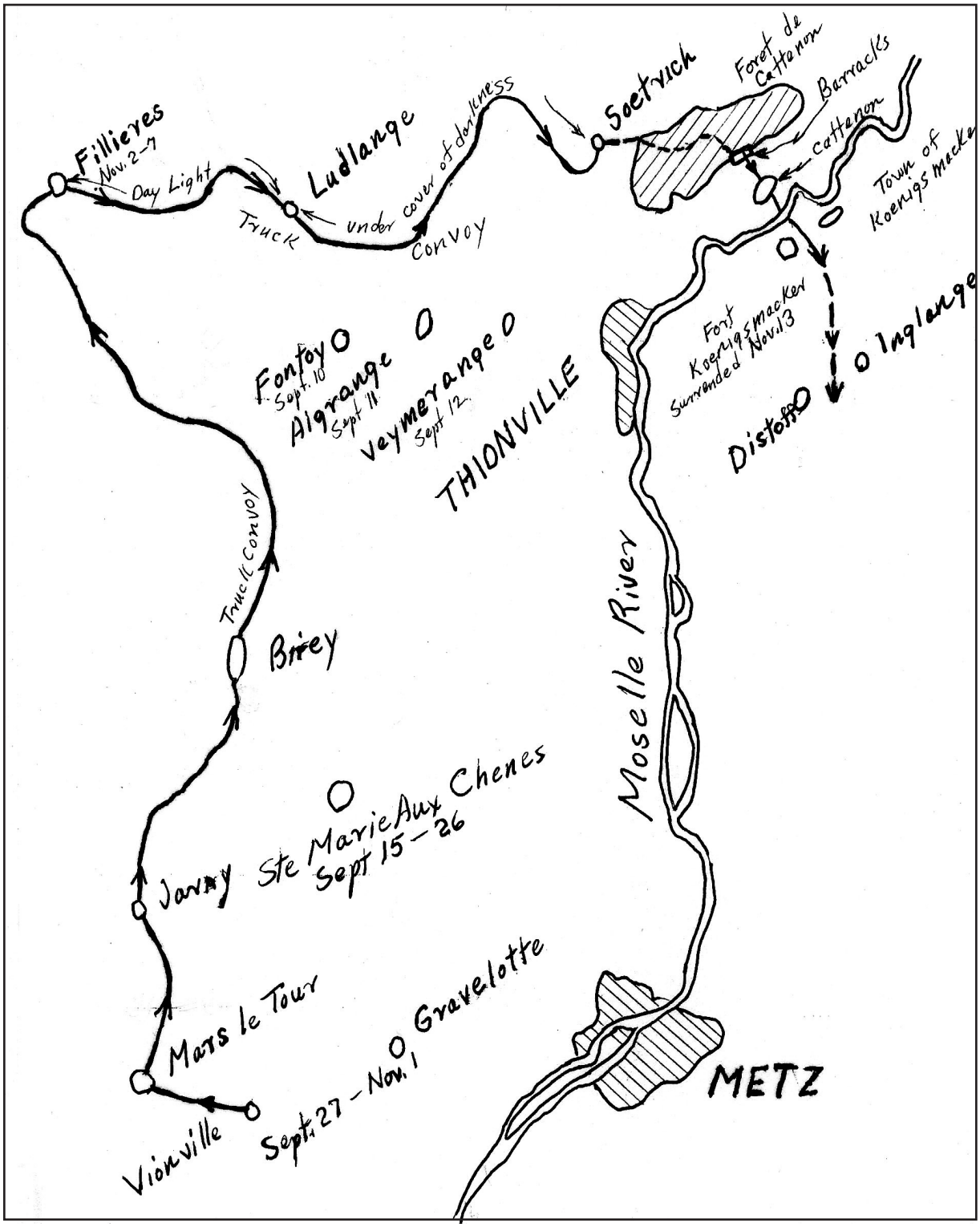
This great campaign was only made possible by your disciplined valor, unswerving devotion to duty, coupled with the unparalleled audacity and speed of your advance on the ground; while from the air, the peerless fighter-bombers kept up a relentless round-the-clock attack upon the disorganized enemy.

The world rings with your praises: better still, General Marshall, General Eisenhower, and General Bradley have all personally commended you. The highest honor I have ever attained is that of having my name coupled with yours in these great events.

Please accept my heartfelt admiration and thanks for what you have done, and remember that your assault crossing over the Rhine at 2200 hours last night assures you of even greater glory to come.

G. S. PATTON, JR.,
Lieut. General, U. S. Army,
Commanding

The Sniper[8]
December 1944



Area of Action and Occupation - 10 September to 15 November 1944

End of Supply Line and Build Up Period. 15 September - 15 November 1944

Preparation and First Crossing of the Moselle. 1 to 15 November 1944

FOOTNOTES

[1]Captain Burns, Battalion Planning and Training Officer.

[2]K Company Commander.

[3]Line of Departure - a line that the men in the attack force could form on and all leave at the same time.

[4]During World Wars I and II, The French, English, and Americans called the Germans various derogatory names. To the French, the Boche; to the English, the Huns or Jerries; to the Americans, the Krauts. A Polish prisoner of the Germans in France would use the derogatory French term for Germans.

[5]After the war ended, Company L named the race track "Cycyk Park " after Mike Cycyk who was killed late in the war during the fighting at Hof. See the *Citation* for July 21, 1945 in the Appendix.

[6]This copy of *The Sniper* with General Van Fleet's handwritten commendation is included in the Van Fleet Collection of the George C. Marshall Research Library, Lexington, Virginia, Box 47, Folder 12.

[7]In the days of muzzle loaders, spiking a gun meant driving a spike into the touch hole so that it could not be fired. With a modern gun like the 88, the soldier put a grenade on a vital part and set it off.

[8]Machine Guns and Browning Automatic Rifles.



A Bazooka.

The first model of this weapon was officially named *Launcher, Rocket, AT (Anti-Tank) Model 1*. The infantryman's new anti-tank weapon was immediately named the *Bazooka* and never called anything else during or since WW II. The photograph on page 171 shows a 90th infantryman holding a bazooka, with which he knocked out a German tank.

12

FORT KOENIGSMACHER

November 1944

Here is the story of the assault on Fort Koenigsmacher as told in the Division History.[1]

In the 358th's zone, the inviolable Fort Koenigsmacker, defended by an entire battalion of the enemy fell. In what was possibly the most dramatic episode of the 90th Division's career, the Fort, symbol to the Nazi of solid impregnability, to the American a most painful stiletto thrust in the 90th's back, succumbed to the decimated elements of the 1st Battalion. For 72 hours, the doughs on the top of the Fort had fought without respite, for three days and three nights they had accepted heavy casualties and still fought on. On the third morning the Division commander issued orders to halt the costly assault on the Fort.

The answer was typical of the spirit which motivated the 90th during those hopeless days in November, "This fort is ours! I could not ask my men to leave here now. They are more determined than I to finish the job."

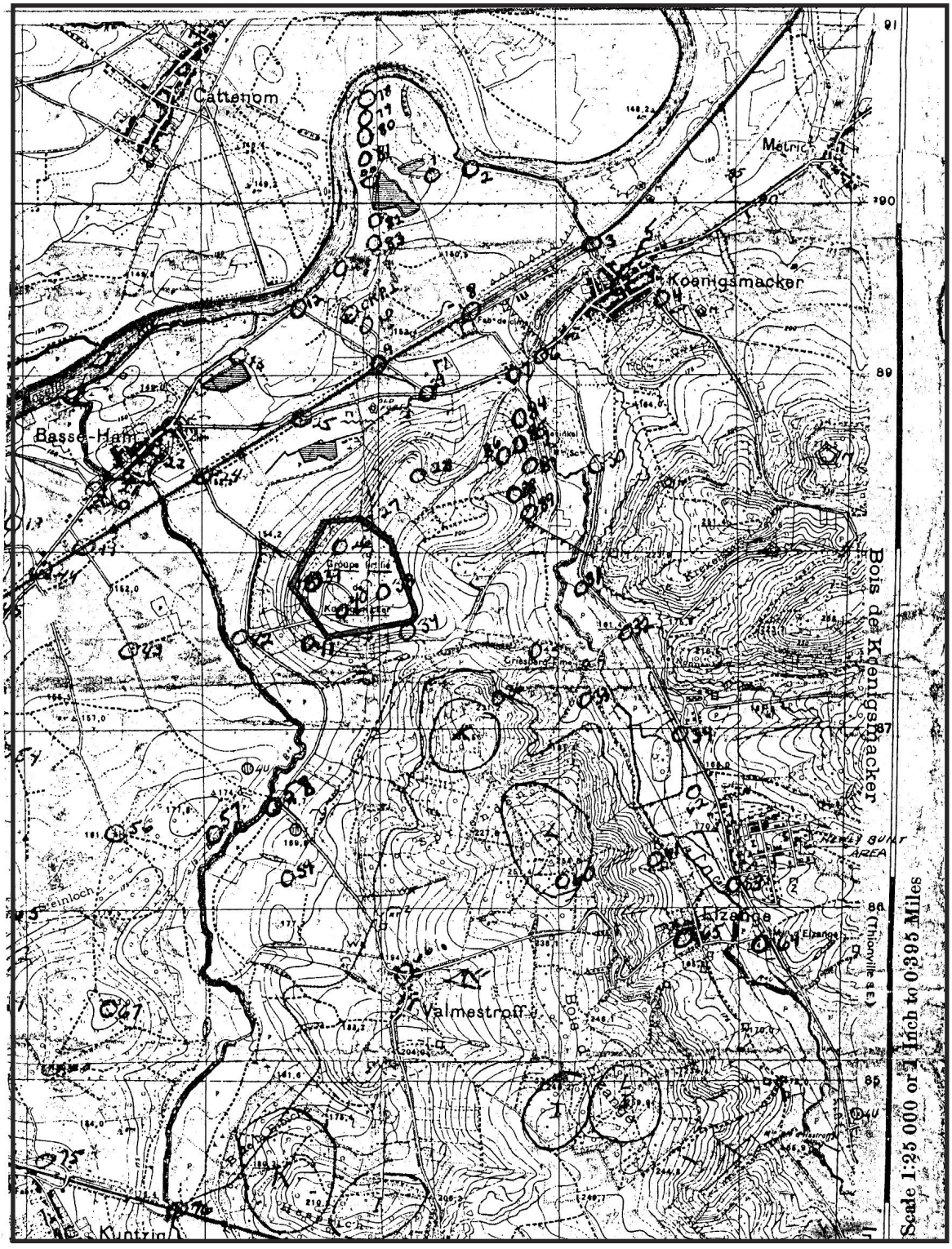
The First Battalion gained the top of the fort but couldn't penetrate it. Meanwhile, the Germans were shelling them. All except a small party withdrew to a more protected place. This small group poured gasoline (dropped by a small plane) down vent pipes and set the fort on fire from within. The Germans tried to escape through a tunnel, but G Company of the 2nd Battalion was waiting for them. A total of 300 prisoners were taken from the fort.

Under Artillery Fire

The artillery shelling that we received for the next two days was the heaviest of the entire war for us, but we held our ground and dug deeper. We could only get in supplies and evacuate the wounded after dark. Every day we attacked, pushing deeper behind Metz, cutting off the railroad and highways into the city. On the 12th, my artillery observer was a green lieutenant from an attached 155 mm. howitzer platoon. This was his first action and he did all right.

We had just taken another hill controlling another road into Metz. I was rushing around organizing the defense, and everyone was digging foxholes as fast as they could. We had to be ready for a counterattack, and the Germans were pouring in the artillery on our old position. As soon as they realized that we had pushed their people back, they would adjust the fire.

This green artillery lieutenant came up to me and said he was supposed to go back when the attack was over, but he pointed to the area behind us where the shells were exploding and asked what did I think he should do. I told him to dig a foxhole as fast as he could, because very shortly



The Area Around Fort Koenigsmacher
November 1944

that artillery would shift to us. He said no one in his crew had a shovel. I told him to get some off the dead men and start digging. They dug shallow holes and climbed in. When the Germans shifted the fire on us, they really had the dirt flying. Luckily for us the Germans had used most of their ammo on the positions that we had just vacated.

The next morning it was not raining and very quiet; we were sitting on the edge of the holes drying out, cleaning weapons, etc. L Company was on the right and I on the left, covering a highway into Metz. There was a deep draw coming up to the edge of the road in my sector. I had a man stationed up in a tree so he could see down the draw.

The artillery liaison officer and crew from our regular artillery came up. I didn't know him because he had been wounded before I joined the battalion. This was his first action after returning from the hospital. He tried to cheer us up by saying that he had the find of the war in his gas mask bag. We were all curious about what was in the bag. He pulled out the biggest red apples that I had ever seen. We cut them into small pieces so everyone could have a bite.

We were sitting around talking about the fine points of apples when word came down the line that the Germans were coming up the draw. The liaison officer and his radio crew ran down to the draw. I picked a BAR man and several others to strengthen our positions there. The liaison officer started shooting and the man in the tree told him where the shells were landing. He was firing all four guns, and as the Germans advanced, he would shorten the range. When he finally stopped the attack, the shells were landing 50 yards in front of us. The man in the tree who could see where the shells were hitting came down mumbling about the last shells going between his legs.

We were congratulating the artillery officer and feeling very good about stopping the attack when we learned that we had lost half of our mortar section from artillery fire. The mortars had been firing into the draw also. At first, we thought that it was German artillery but later learned it to be our own. One gun had a worn barrel[2] and several shells fell short. The liaison officer blamed himself in spite of everything we could say. He took it so hard that we had to send him back and he was evacuated.

Several volunteers went out and brought in wounded Germans who had been left in the draw. Our aid man treated them. We covered them with blankets and extra overcoats that we had taken from prisoners for this purpose. One of the Germans died during the night before he could be evacuated. One of the volunteers said that, "He was an ungrateful bastard to die after I risked my life to bring him in."

My raincoat had a bad tear in the back. Someone told me where a dead lieutenant about my size from the 2nd Battalion was located. I found him and took his raincoat. It was new so he couldn't have been in combat very long.

Fort Koenigsmacher Surrenders

On November 12, the pontoon bridge was completed since the water had receded and armored vehicles came over. On the 13th, Fort Koenigsmacker surrendered. This was the first time that any of these forts had surrendered to an assault force since their construction. General Patton said that the Forts were starved out in 1871. The Americans including the 90th Division were preparing to attack them in November 1918 when the Armistice ending World War I was signed.

On the 14th, we received about 20 replacements, including several sergeants, who were sorely needed. On the 15th, K Company, with a platoon of tanks, was to attack the town of Inglange, but the Germans attacked before they got going. I Company at the same time was to attack and cut the highway from Inglange to Distroff. L Company was in reserve, but was to follow I Company which was in bad shape. They had lost Lt. Faze[4] on the 13th, and he was really running the company. The CO of I Company was an alcoholic, but battalion didn't know it. On the 14th, I Company had lost an entire platoon when they went into the wrong town. Most of them were later rescued by the 2nd Battalion on the 16th.

I Company got as far as a trench where they were stopped by a machine gun on the other side of the road. Because I Company had been stopped, we began to receive a lot of artillery. I moved up into the trench with I company. We had several casualties, and Corporal Williams, our head medic, was killed while taking care of them. I found the I Company Commander, sitting in a pillbox nursing a bottle of cognac. I blew my top when I saw him just sitting there and told him to get out. He asked me where should he go and what should he tell them. I told him to go back to Battalion Headquarters and tell them that I had sent him. I emphasized by pointing with my gun. I could have gotten into trouble by this action. Handling this incident was a job for the Battalion CO I had no authority to tell him what to do, but he left.

We Take Our Objective

I reorganized I and L Companies and called for artillery concentration on the machine gun and surrounding area. We all jumped off together, although some of I Company men were hesitant until L Company officers and men got behind them. We took the objective. It was very costly, but it would have been worse to wait under the artillery barrage until Battalion could issue orders. We would have to take it sooner or later. If we had waited, the Germans could bring in reinforcements. No one from Battalion ever mentioned the incident with the Company Commander to me, but I think the fact that I kept the attack from bogging down, took, and held our objective without orders from Battalion played a big part in my receiving the Distinguished Service Cross and the French *Croix de Guerre* for this action. Lt. Smith was killed here and several men from I and L Companies were wounded.

Corporal Williams, our head medic, was affectionately known as Doc Williams. He never failed to answer the call for a medic when someone was wounded. The Germans had a bad habit of dropping one round of artillery on us, then waiting a minute or two and firing another shell in the same spot. The second round would catch a medic in a sitting position while working on the wounded. Sergeant Burke or I would grab and hold Corporal Williams until after the second

The Mighty Jeep[3]



Jeep Carrying Wounded Has Priority Crossing Bridge over the Moselle River



Jeep Bringing in German Prisoners
Two German prisoners captured near Longchamps, Belgim, January 1945.



Jeep Misused as a Passenger Vehicle



Jeep Used as an Altar

round had come in. Doc had seen so many wounded that he would shake when the artillery started, but, when he was working on a wounded man, he was steady as a rock. He was killed while tending a wounded man.

We collected all the wounded into the pillbox, and then jeeps would take them back to the aid station. Lt. Blackford suffered numerous wounds to his side and lost an eye from artillery fire. He wouldn't let the medics take him out until he could tell me goodbye. I was busy preparing a defense before the Germans could counterattack. While I was reporting to Battalion that we had taken the objective, I was wounded by a rifle bullet that ricocheted off a tree. It hit my shoulder holster strap, knocked me down and really hurt. After the medic cut my coat open and told me that it was just a burn, I felt better.

K Company repulsed the German attack and then took off to the town of Inglange, so by nightfall, the Battalion had taken both objectives. The worst was over, but we didn't know it. Since the Germans kept moving tanks and personnel carriers across our front, we were expecting an attack any minute so we didn't get much sleep. On the 17th, the 2nd battalion passed through us. They had had a couple of days rest and were in good shape. The Germans had pulled out all the way to the Saar River. All the movement during the night was a withdrawal. They didn't have an easy time because every time we heard a vehicle, we would shoot artillery at it.

Lt. Carraway, the last of my officers, went to the Aid Station because he had a small piece of shrapnel in his arm. We took our time and assembled on the road to Inglange. At the head of the column was a man with a leg wound riding in a wheel barrow. We had a German prisoner pushing it. The wounded man was real happy to be going back to Paris or England. My back was hurting, and a sergeant also had a slight wound. We had started out with 190 men, received 20 replacements and now our total strength was 51 men. We were still, however, the biggest company in the battalion.

Lt. Elwell, the Battalion S-3,[5] met us on the road to guide us to the houses that were reserved for L Company. Someone made a joke about the wheelbarrow and the prisoner, and we all laughed. Lt. Elwell said he didn't see how we could laugh after what we had been through. I told him we had to laugh to keep from crying.

I assigned houses to each platoon and set up guards at the end of the street. The men started fires in the cook stoves for coffee and K rations. I went to the aid station to have my back dressed. Doc had me lie on a table while he worked on me. I fell asleep so he left me there. I slept a couple of hours before someone made a noise that woke me up. When I went back to the Company CP they had a good fire going so I ate a K ration and lay down to sleep.

Mail Call

No sooner had I drifted off, than there was a big commotion outside. The mail orderly had arrived with the supply sergeant and two weeks accumulation of mail. The jeep and the trailer were loaded down. Most of it was for men who weren't there. We opened all the packages and ate any perishables. Some of the cookies were so old and dry that they almost exploded in

your mouth when you bit into them. All valuables and letters were returned by the mail orderly. That night I went up to battalion to see what the orders might be. We had to jump off at 0800 to check out some wooded areas that the 1st and 2nd battalions had missed. Replacements had arrived at the battalion C. P. so I guided the L Company group, about 40 men and one officer from the hospital, back to the company area. I gave them a short history of the company and a general idea about combat.

Letters Home

19 November 1944

Dear Melia:

I am still doing fine, honey. We have been making history these past few days and will probably make some more before this War is over. I can't tell you the details, honey, but you and the boys would have been proud of me. I am not being boastful, but my company did a wonderful job. The Battalion did a good job and we led the battalion. We are taking a well earned rest now. Today is Sunday and we had church in a beautiful little Catholic church. It must have been built years ago when the state financed the church. Most of the windows were knocked out, but other than that it was undamaged. There were many colored statues of Christ, Mary and all the other Saints.

I received two letters from you last night. Honey, your letters are really food for my soul. My morale jumped up so I could hardly control myself. We were having hot chow and I invited the Chaplain and the Doctor to come down. We were having stew, canned corn, coffee and crackers. Since we hadn't had a hot meal for some time, it really tasted good. The old woman that owned the house we were staying in made an apple pie so we really had a nice meal and having company made things very nice.

Honey, I can just picture how Keith looks. I certainly do enjoy hearing about him. Take care of yourself and the kids.

Always,

Charlie

22 November, 1944

Dear Melia:

I received a letter from you today written after you had gone home and Mama and Daddy had brought Bud home. I knew that he would be spoiled but was sorry to hear that he had a cold. I hope that he doesn't give it to Keith. I know that you will have a tough time in that house this winter with two babies. I'll be glad when Spring comes and you won't have to worry about cold drafts, etc.

I certainly was glad to hear that you and Keith are doing so well and that Keith is a good, strong healthy baby. You tell him that he mustn't give you any trouble or his Daddy will be rough on

his little fanny when he gets home. And Bud had better straighten out and not give you any trouble. He's a big boy now and will have to start helping you and Keith. I hope that he will not be jealous of Keith.

Enclosed is a copy of the Sunday edition of the "Sniper" (the Division paper) which we are allowed to send home. If you can, buy the two magazines that have the story of the Crossing of the Moselle River. I believe that the stories are prior to that time though. I was in all of them so I am interested.

The news looks good today. I sure hope that it will be over soon. I was thinking the other night about coming home. I hope that you will be able to meet me at the docks and we could travel home together. I could just see you all dressed up and looking like a million. I love you more and more all the time. Give my love to the boys.

Always,

Charlie

On the 21st of November, we went to the town of Rethel by truck. We were now attached to the Combat Command of the 10th Armored Division. This was their first action and they were making all the mistakes that a green outfit makes. Regiment first sent the 1st Battalion to help them, but the battalion commander was drinking and he told the General, "Just give me an objective, a line of departure, and get your damn tanks out of the way, and I'll show you how to fight the Germans." The General sent the 1st Battalion back, and we had to go. The battalion commander was later relieved and transferred.

Thanksgiving in Europe

On the 22nd, we were alerted, de-alerted, re-alerted, and re-de-alerted. In between all this, we had a complete Thanksgiving dinner. Most of the men were also suffering from diarrhea, so we had a busy day. Having diarrhea under the best of circumstances is not good, but in combat it's pretty rough. In the towns the only facilities were outdoor privies, and in the fields we used the cat method. We only had a limited amount of toilet paper that came in the K rations, so we always saved any toilet paper we received. The Aid Station had medicine for diarrhea, but very often it was too far away, and they didn't have small bottles so each man could have his own supply. The G.Is solved the problem. One of them discovered that canned cherries would cure diarrhea, and most of the houses had canned cherries in the cellars.

The Fall of Metz

The city of Metz surrendered on the 22nd of November to the 95th Division. This was the first time it had been taken by attacking troops in 1,500 years. It took three more weeks before all of the outlying forts were cleared of the enemy, and the whole area handed over to the French.

ADVANCE INTO GERMANY

The next day we moved by truck across the German border to a wooded area north of Wochern. The 10th Armored had tried to advance up a road in a narrow valley, but the Germans had pillboxes on the hill to the right of the town, with cross fire on the valley. Our plan was for the 10th to make enough noise up the valley, out of range of the pillboxes, to attract the enemy's attention while we circled around to the right and attacked the pillboxes from the rear.

The Battalion jumped off with I Company on the left, K Company on the right, and L Company in reserve. We crossed an open area undetected and attacked some Germans in the woods before reaching the pillboxes. It took all afternoon clearing out the woods, so I and K didn't attack the pillboxes until next day.

The Germans attacked at dawn the next day so they had to be repulsed before we could attack. L Company had to help bring up supplies, evacuate the wounded, and take the prisoners back because there was a large tank trap dug across the open area we had crossed. Because trucks couldn't cross the tank trap, we had to use ladders to get the men across. I and K Companies took about 100 prisoners in the woods in the counterattack.

L Company in reserve moved into the tank trap behind K and I Companies to be in a better position to help if necessary. It rained all night on the 24th and 25th, and it was miserable in the freshly dug tank trap. The company headquarters group had a new runner who spoke German. He was the only one able to sleep leaning on the side of the trap. To add injury to insult he started to snore. Some of the other runners wanted to wake him up but I wouldn't let them.

At 1300, I and K finally jumped off. K Company took three pillboxes and went into the town of Butzdorf with two platoons, leaving one platoon and mortars on the hill in the pillboxes. I Company took six pillboxes before dark but didn't try to take Tettingen until the next day. Both companies were counterattacked during the night. I company in the pillboxes on the high ground inflicted heavy casualties on the Germans. K Company's two platoons in the town of Butzdorf were cut off, and about half were killed, including Captain McHolland.

At dawn on the 25th, I company laid down a heavy artillery barrage and a smoke screen.[6] They took two more pillboxes and the town in short order. They also took a good many prisoners. L Company attacked the town of Butzdorf. I sent two platoons on the ridge on the right flank, and one platoon with two tanks (borrowed from the 10th Armored) up the road into town. We moved so fast that the Germans hadn't recovered from the artillery before we were on top of them.

The tanks were having trouble spotting which houses the Germans were in so a little private jumped up on the tank and guided it to the right houses. The tank would lower the 75 mm. gun and fire into the cellars. Rifle bullets were bouncing off the tank, but the private was not hit. The infantry following the tank would throw grenades into the openings made by the tank. There were very few survivors in these houses. After several houses were worked over this way, the Germans began to surrender. We cleared out the town, collecting about 60 prisoners. We set up a defense

with the tanks and the pillboxes on the ridge. The private was given the bronze star and promoted to sergeant. This fight cost the battalion seven officers and 148 enlisted men.

FOOTNOTES

[1]*A History of the 90th Division in World War II, Chapter VII, p.37*

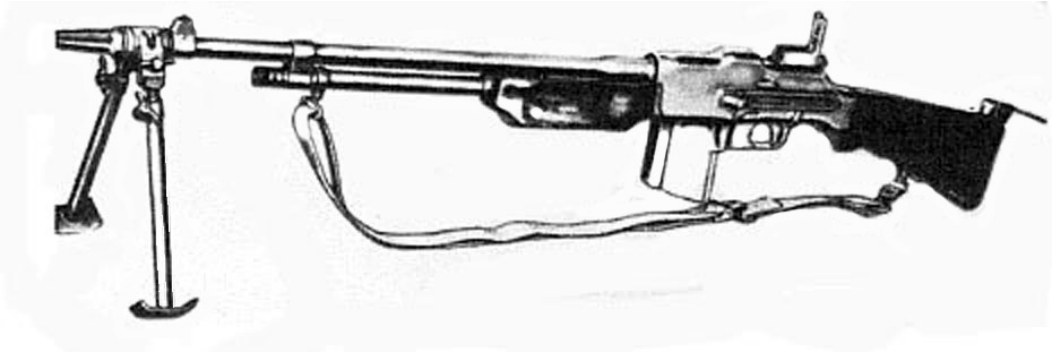
[2]When the barrel of any gun, rifled or not, becomes worn from heavy use, propellant gases leak around the shell and the range of the gun is reduced.

[3]Officially listed as a General.Purpose (G.P.) Vehicle, but immediately named by GIs and universally known as a Jeep. A quarter ton 4 x 4 general purpose vehicle. 4, 250 lb. 11 ft. long, 54 hp., 65 mph. Willys and Ford built 639,245 during WW II.

[4]Executive Officer of I Company. First Lieutenant Gerald Faze was killed in action on November 13, 1944.

[5]S-3 was the Plans and Training Officer on the Battalion Staff. Lt. Elwell took Captain Burns' place as S-3 when Burns was transferred to 3rd Army Headquarters as Assistant G-3 and promoted to major.

[6]Smoke screens could be laid down by the 4.5 mortars or a chemical mortar platoon or by artillery.



The BAR (Browning Automatic Rifle).

The M1918A2 BAR was the version used most in World War II. The folding bipod with skid-type feet was adjustable for height. The BAR weighed about 20 pounds compared to the ten pound Garand M-1 Rifle. In training, company commanders usually assigned the BAR to the largest man in a platoon.

Each platoon was issued one BAR. GI's at first didn't like to carry them because of their size and weight. But when GIs learned to appreciate it's firepower, they often were eager to be assigned as the BAR man in the platoon. The photo on page 171 shows a GI with the BAR that he used to knock out seven Nazi vehicles.



Battle Route of the Third Battalion, 358th Infantry

The Saar Crossing, The Ardennes, To the Rhine

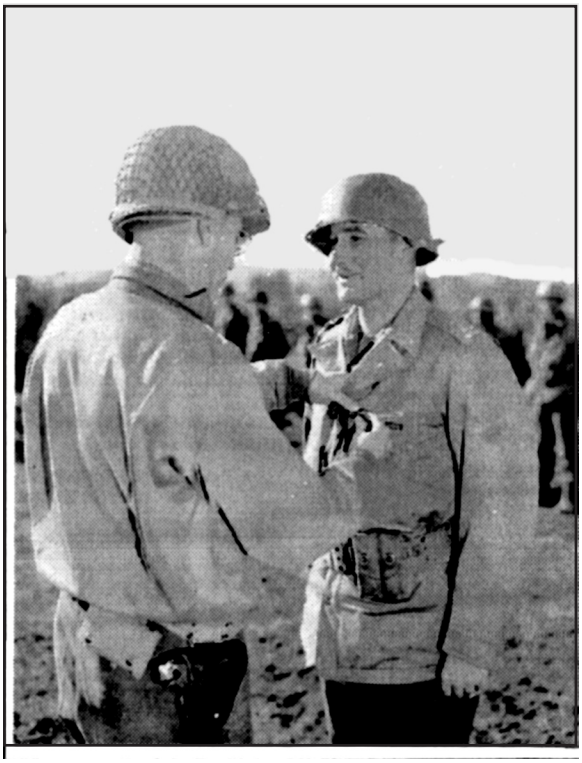
December 1944—March 194

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THE SAAR RIVER CROSSING

December 1944

The 10th Armored Division relieved us on the 26th of November, and we moved by truck back into France to the town of Rethel. On the 27th we moved to Veckring Barracks. We were issued new clothes and boots. We had hot showers, hot chow, movies, and a good rest until the 4th of December. The battle for Metz was over. The Battalion sent 150 men under Major Spivey[1] to represent the 90th Division in ceremonies in Metz. From our battalion, two sergeants and I were awarded the Croix de Guerre.



Maj. General Lowell W. Rooks Presenting
The Croix de Guerre to Captain Charles B. Bryan
17 February 1945. Sergeant J.A. Ryan, USASC

The Croix de Guerre was created in 1915 for World War I and reinstituted in 1939 for World War II. It was given to French citizens or foreigners, individuals or groups, for feats of bravery.[21]

At Veckring barracks, Sergeant Burke and Sergeant Smith and I were sleeping when one of the men burst into the room and said, "Captain, you had better come out here. There's women all over the place -- American women." The three of us hit the door at the same time, and I had to pull rank to get out first. Luckily, we slept fully clothed except for boots and steel helmets. About eight nurses and male personnel from the 65th Field Hospital were unloading in the quadrangle from the weapon carrier. They were all wearing steel helmets and fatigues, but you could tell when a nurse got out because three of four men would rush up to help with her gear. We moved out right after breakfast to prepare for the Saar River crossing.

Leave in Paris

On the 4th of December, the Battalion moved by trucks to Rammelfange, France, then marched across the border to Ober-Limberg, Germany. A Captain took over L Company. He was older than I, but he didn't have any combat experience. I hated to turn the company over to an



Campagnes pour la libération de la France

(Juin - Décembre 1944)

Décision N° 175

Le Général de Gaulle,

Président du Gouvernement Provisoire de la République Française.

Cite à l'Ordre DE LA DIVISION :

Captain Charles B. BRYAN 0390490 90me DIUS

" Pour services exceptionnels de Guerre rendus au " cours des opérations de libération de la France."

Cette Citation comporte l'attribution de la Croix de Guerre avec Etoile d'Argent

PARIS, le 29 Novembre 1944

Award of the *Croix de Gue*

Campaigns for the liberation of France
(June - December 1944)

Decision[3] No. I75

General De Gaulle, President of
the Provisional Government
of the French Republic

Cites for the Order of the Division:

Captain Charles B. Bryan
0390490 90th US Division

For exceptional war services performed in the course of operations for the liberation of France.

This Citation bears the designation of the Croix de Guerre with Silver Star.

PARIS, 29 November 1944

Translation of the Award for the *Croix de Guerre*

inexperienced officer, but then I hadn't had any experience when I took over the company. I had.orders to go back to Division Rest Center and then a 36-hour pass in Paris. When I returned, I would be the battalion executive officer.

I had a pair of dress pants and shirt and a cap on the kitchen truck. These clothes had already been to Paris twice. I had lent them to other officers when they went to Paris. I felt undressed without my steel helmet and pistol. We stayed at a fine hotel, slept between sheets, but the city was blacked out, and the bath water was cold. Food was scarce, but alcohol plentiful. We took in several night spots and tourist attractions during the day. The only taxis were man-powered three-wheel cycles. Anyone in uniform could ride the subways free, but it was difficult to get off at the right station. Cigarettes were a better currency than money. I bought Christmas presents for Amelia, Buddy, and Keith in the largest store I had ever seen.

THE SAAR CROSSING

While I was in Paris, the Battalion moved out to cross the Saar River on the 6th of December at 0230. By 0750, all companies were across into the edge of Pachten. The engineers had a foot bridge across by 0845, but the Germans knocked it out by artillery that afternoon. The Germans didn't think it was possible to cross the river at this point so they were caught asleep. They attacked early the next morning with infantry and three tanks. Work on the bridge was stopped by artillery. The Battalion repulsed the attack but couldn't stop the artillery fire on the crossing site.

I got back to the battalion rear area about noon on December 8, 1944. I had to wait for darkness to cross the river to the Battalion CP I wanted to tell someone about "Gay Paree," but everyone was either very busy or asleep. I located L Company kitchen, but Sergeant Lazanine and one of the cooks were driving trucks hauling ammo. The rest of the crew was asleep after working most of the night carrying supplies across the river by hand and bringing back the wounded.

The Army had developed an excellent supply system. It was simple, but efficient. The supply dumps were always set up in the same order. At night, a white tape about two inches wide marked the lane to follow to the different supplies: food, ammunition, communication, medical, etc. The supply sergeants could find whatever they wanted without lights. The dumps had to be camouflaged so the enemy couldn't spot them. The Battalion often used the shoulder of a road if the trees were thick enough.

The company supply sergeant delivered the supplies every day or night no matter what the circumstances. If it was impossible to use the jeep and trailer, the kitchen personnel and anyone else at the motor pool were used to hand carry the supplies. Normally, this was one of the best jobs in an Infantry Rifle Company, but several supply sergeants and drivers were wounded or killed by artillery fire.

The communication section had a relay station in a building on this side of the river. They had phones and radio here and I was finally able to tell Lt. Crotty all about Paris. All morning whenever I wasn't busy, I heard a voice that said, "You will get hit when you go across the river."

I had heard about this happening to others before they were wounded or killed. I kept as busy as I could until darkness.

I went across the river with the supply people, carried a box of ammo to the battalion supply dump, then reported into Battalion Headquarters. I wanted to tell them about Paris, but they had so many things to tell me about the first two days of the crossing. Our casualties were not great for this type of operation, but Sergeant Pinelli of L Company was killed the morning of the first day. Colonel Munson, our artillery battalion commander, was wounded while trying to knock out a pillbox with a 155 S-P[4] rifle. He was on the other side of the river, but the Germans got him with artillery. Major Charles Conn had to take command of the artillery battalion.

Major Spivey said he wanted me to help L Company knock out a pillbox the next morning. The Battalion staff brought me up-to-date on the problem. There were three pillboxes between us and the 359th regiment. We had them surrounded. They couldn't get out or get reinforcements in. However, they separated the 359th from the 358th and could direct fire on the crossing site They could give each other fire support if one was attacked. L Company had tried unsuccessfully to take one out the day before.

I contacted the CO of L Company, the artillery, and the tanks, and came up with this plan. The SP gun across the river would bottle up one pillbox, a tank would bottle up the second, and a platoon from L Company with two engineers would take out the third. Then another platoon with engineers would take out one of the pillboxes that had been bottled up. Two squads would fire into the gun ports and all openings on the pillbox while the engineer and a squad charged it. The engineers would blow the door open with 25 pounds of C-2. C-2 is ten times as strong as TNT. Then the squad would throw in the grenades.

The first thing was to put the tank in a protected position to fire on the middle pillbox. We blew out the front of a house to put the tank in so it could fire out the window. While we were doing this, one round of artillery came in about ten feet away. The L Company CO received two (million dollar wounds). One big one was in the muscle of the leg and the other a hit in the arm. I was knocked out, either from concussion or when I hit the concrete.

When I came to, I was in the cellar. I felt around and found out that my dog tags were cut off, my jacket and shirt were torn off, but that I was only scratched. I was so relieved that I started to laugh. The voice said that I would get hit, and this was it. The medics took the Captain of L Company to the Aid Station and insisted that I come too. I was so happy after just being slightly wounded that they thought my mind was affected.

About this time a German civilian volunteered to go to the pillboxes and try to persuade them to surrender. I returned from the Aid Station just when he was going out with a white flag. He went to all three, then back to the middle one. They talked for a long time, and we had just about given up when the Germans started coming out. The old man led them back to us, still carrying the white flag. There were 34 men and one officer. They had one prisoner from the 359th. He was bringing up supplies at night, got lost, and went to the wrong pillbox.

The Germans had treated him well, but I took him to L Company's CP and gave him some rations and cigarettes. L Company CP was in the basement of a store which we entered from the rear. The front of the store on the upper floors was under fire from a pillbox across the railroad tracks. The 359th man was waiting to go back that night with our supply people when he wandered upstairs, opened the front door, and was killed by machine gun fire.

Again in Command of L Company

I took command of L Company until they could find a replacement for the Captain. The next day we cleared out several blocks down to the railroad tracks. One platoon was cut off by a German tank. They were in a factory, and the tank moved up between us. The tank couldn't get at them, but they couldn't contact us. I laid down a smoke screen, but the green Lieutenant in charge didn't come back. Their radio had been knocked out so I could not talk to them. One of the men in this platoon who had just joined the company asked the veteran sergeant where the latrine was. The sergeant gave him a long, hard look and said, "You're standing in it." That night I sent a patrol over and the platoon came out unhurt.

The next day a platoon of our tanks (five of them) had been ferried over the Saar river and they reported in. They were not the platoon which usually worked with us. The sergeant of the first tank stuck his head out and said, "Captain, you still around? The last time I saw you was in Normandy. You ran me out of your area because I was drawing artillery fire and running over the telephone lines. What do you want us to do?"

I told him to pull up behind a building and shut the engine off because I had a special job for them. After they shut the tank off, I could hear the crew inside talking to the sergeant, "Why don't you keep your mouth shut? You're always getting us into trouble."

I met the lieutenant, and he and I went over to our left flank where we had had trouble with German tanks harassing us. We hit one four times with bazookas, but the tank was able to back out. We set a trap for it with three of our tanks. I told the lieutenant about the special job for the first tank, and he heartily agreed. I got the tank sergeant and showed him what his special job was.

There was a warehouse full of beef between our lines and the Germans. We had been sending patrols in there after dark, but they could only bring out small amounts at a time. The tank could go in before dark and bring out several quarters. I showed the sergeant where the warehouse was. I also told him that he would be fired on by machine gun fire when he crossed the street where the pillbox was located so to be sure and put the meat on the off side where they couldn't shoot it up. He was greatly relieved when he found out what the special job was. We had been eating very good food from the cellars in this town, but this day we all had steak.

The engineer sergeant attached to L Company was a good man to have around. He was not only a good engineer but a very resourceful man. He always kept me informed of his whereabouts in case I needed him or his squad. First thing in the morning, he would report in, and, if we didn't need him, he would go out and forage for food. He wore a large driver's coat. When he came back,

you would never know that he had anything until he started to pull things out of his pockets and from the inside of his coat. He might have a rabbit or chicken, bread and wine, or canned goods. He shared his loot with everyone around the Company CP. We were always glad to have him work with us.

On December 14th, the 3rd Battalion attacked across the railroad tracks and took out the remaining pillboxes. L Company on the left and I Company on the right. We positioned a tank opposite each pillbox to button it up until the last moment. We laid down a heavy artillery barrage covering the pillboxes and surrounding houses. We had prepared numerous openings or crossings so that the men would be spread out when they went through or over the back walls next to the railroad tracks.

At 0730, we lifted the artillery and jumped off. The tanks kept firing until we were in danger of getting hit. By 0830, the pillboxes and two city blocks were taken. I went with the assault platoons, then organized the defense. I came back to the pillbox where the new CP was located, left my gear and went to meet the tank lieutenant to tell him where I wanted the tanks in the defense. The reserve platoon was supposed to have checked all the cellars.

The Lt. and I were walking down the street in Pachten when a face appeared in a basement window and spoke to me. I waved and took two more steps before I realized that the face didn't speak English. I stopped, looked around, and he was still there. I almost pulled the buttons off my coat trying to get my pistol out. The face grinned when he saw my predicament. I told him to *Kom sie hier!* [5] and pointed toward the door. When he came to the door, I asked him if he had comrades. He said, *Jawohl*. He went back and came out with four other German soldiers. They had hidden in the coal bin. They had a machine gun, bazooka, and rifles.

This was my last attack as a company commander and the best one. The attack was perfectly coordinated, but the best part was that we had no casualties, and I Company had only one. The two companies took 75 prisoners. Some were so badly shaken up by our intense fire that they couldn't talk.

Battalion called on the phone that several newspaper reporters were at Headquarters. Earl Mazo[6] was one of them and he wanted to see me. He was from Charleston and I knew him at Clemson. I had to take one of the runners with me because you didn't go anywhere alone in case you were wounded. Some mortar rounds came in and we had to take cover in a cellar before reaching Battalion Headquarters. When we finally got there, the reporters had left, because of the mortar shelling.

Battalion Executive Officer

On the 16th, Lt. Carraway returned from the hospital and took over L Company. I went to battalion as executive officer. Frank Capa of *Life* magazine came up to the battalion to take some pictures of street fighting. Most of the street fighting was over, however, and the weather wasn't cooperating for pictures. Then we lay smoke[7] on the river to conceal the ferry crossing, and the smoke drifted into town.

We had the Battalion CP in the cellar of a big house. The cellar was blacked out, and we were using acetylene gas lanterns that gave off a strong odor. Capa decided that the air was so stale that he would sleep upstairs. During the night artillery hit the top of the house, and Capa spent the rest of the night in the cellar picking bits of glass out of his hair. The next night the Battalion staff was sitting around a table in the cellar writing letters. Someone pushed his chair back, and the scraping noise sounded like a shell coming in. Everyone hit the floor. We all felt very sheepish when we realized what the noise actually was. Whenever someone dove for cover, you followed suit and asked questions later.

The "Sock Toll"

One of my duties as executive officer was battalion supplies. I went back to the western side of the river to inspect the supplies. We had ample supplies of ammo and rations and a surprising number of socks. I checked all the companies and all the men had an extra pair. The Battalion supply sergeant was wounded in Normandy, but a very good supply sergeant came in with the replacements. When the original sergeant came back from the hospital, we had two good Battalion supply sergeants. Lt. Goodman, the Battalion Supply Officer, was also very good. We had a supply sergeant on each side of the Saar River and Lt. Goodman working both sides.

When I had completed my inspection of the companies, I noticed that the 2nd Battalion CP was a little way down the street so I paid them a visit. During the conversation I learned that they were very short of socks and were having a problem with trench foot. I didn't say anything about our ample supply of socks but went back to our supply dump and asked the sergeant how he happened to have so many socks. He tried to evade the subject, but I waited him out, and he told me that the 2nd Battalion was using our landing so he was charging them a toll.

We both enjoyed a good laugh, then decided that we ought to give them some socks. He took about 400 pairs to them that afternoon. They were very grateful to get the socks and expressed their appreciation every time we came in contact after that. I met one of the staff officers in 1971 and he still thinks I am a great guy to give them socks when they were so scarce.

That night I was at the landing when the supplies came over. The supply sergeant came down the road with a flashlight shining. I told him to put it out. He said, *Captain, I don't know where the shell holes are and I'm tired of falling into them.*" I told him to put it out before the Germans made more shell holes.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Captain Spivey took Colonel Bealke's place when the colonel was wounded crossing the Moselle River. He was promoted to major.

[2]The three grades for this award are:
The *Croix de Guerre* with Bronze Palm at the Army level.
The *Croix de Guerre* with Silver Star at the Division level
The *Croix de Guerre* with Bronze Star for Brigade level.

[3]My citation reads: *Cette Citation comporte l'attribution de la Croix de Guerre avec Etoile d'Argent*. (This citation bears the designation War Cross with Silver Star).

[4]A *Decision* is a document transmitting the orders of a military authority, a directive.

[5]A Self-Propelled gun. This was the largest self-propelled gun, mounted on a large vehicle with tracks like a tank.

[7]I've been told that *Kommen sie hier* is the correct German form.

[8]He later wrote a biography of Nixon.

[9]Making smoke to conceal movement or to mask an attack is an ancient military tactic. The usual method of laying down a screen was to get the artillery to fire smoke shells. Mortars could also fire smoke shells.



One of My Dog Tags

Dog tags (named by GIs for their appearance and purpose) were worn by all soldiers. Each tag was stamped with name, serial number, blood type, and next of kin. This tag was bent when I was knocked out by a collapsing wall during a German artillery barrage. (See page 99.)

14

DEFENSIVE LINE ALONG THE SAAR

December 1944

On the 18th of December, 1944, we heard about the German Ardennes counter-offensive, and all forward movement into Germany was stopped. We had been hearing trucks and tanks crossing our front at night for some time and were worried that they were going to attack us. We reported this to Regiment Headquarters.

Prayer[1] for the 3rd Army

Almighty and most merciful Father, we humbly beseech Thee, of Thy great goodness, to restrain these immoderate rains with which we have had to contend. Grant us fair weather for Battle. Graciously hearken to us as soldiers who call upon Thee that, armed with Thy power, we may advance from victory to victory, and crush the oppression and wickedness of our enemies, and establish Thy justice among men and nations.

Amen

Reverse Side

To each officer and soldier in the Third United States Army, I wish a Merry Christmas. I have full confidence in your courage, devotion to duty, and skill in battle. We march in our might to complete victory. May God's blessing rest upon each of you on this Christmas Day.

G. S. Patton, Jr.

WITHDRAWAL ACROSS THE SAAR

On the 20th, we started moving our vehicles back across the Saar River under cover of a smoke screen. Frank Capa left to go to Belgium to cover the Battle of the Bulge. The battalion moved down to the river at 2300 and crossed in 55 minutes on a foot bridge. I was in charge of the bridge and kept the men moving at a steady trot. The foot bridge was just a 12 inch plank on pontoons with a rope as a hand rail. I had a sergeant stationed at the last building in town with a phone to control the flow of traffic on the river bank. We had to halt traffic only once.

One man had a comfort roll over his shoulder. It caught on the hand rail support and it threw him overboard. The man behind him ran back and said that the bridge was broken. I went out and found the man in the river climbing back up on the pontoon. The bridge was intact. From then on, I pulled anyone with a bulky load out of line and made him take it off. Some of the men even had small wagons loaded with food and drink.

We crossed in record time, spurred on by the Germans dropping artillery on the river and by my big mouth. Luckily, they never hit the bridge or any of us. We had to blow up all the supplies that we had been accumulating for two weeks. We brought back the socks and any communication supplies and equipment. We were across the Saar River for 15 days, during which time the battalion took 286 prisoners, destroyed 25 pillboxes, knocked out three tanks, and cleared 21 city blocks. We lost ten men killed and between 40 and 50 wounded. Then we had to pull back across the river and give the town back to the Germans. The engineers blew up several vehicles that we couldn't get going.

We went into permanent defensive positions on December 22, 1944. L Company was on outpost line of resistance on the Saar River. I and K Companies were the main line of resistance on a line from Wellingen to Budlingen, Germany. The Battalion CP, Aid Station, and M Company[2] were in Flatten, France. The headquarters for an Anti-aircraft Battery, and Battery C of the 344th Artillery Battalion Headquarters were also in Flatten. There were only nine houses in town, so the populace moved into four, and we occupied five.

A small stream ran through the middle of the town, and it was frozen over. One morning, I went over to the A A[3] Battery Headquarters for a visit. When I came out I slipped on the ice on the steps and landed in a sitting position on the frozen stream. I slowly slid past our Battalion Headquarters next door. The guard gave me the rifle salute as I went by; I returned with the hand salute in the sitting position. We were both grinning.

The lieutenant in charge of the anti-aircraft battery showed me a thick file of correspondence he had concerning American planes that his battery had shot down. The American planes had attacked them first. One of the planes was piloted by a major who parachuted to safety, but he was sent back to a court martial. Some of the others were not so lucky because the planes blew up before they got out.

In Defensive Positions

The German towns in our area were unoccupied so the men fed the cows and other animals that were left. They milked the cows and boiled the milk before drinking. They gathered the eggs and butchered some rabbits and chickens. It was clear and cold, everything covered with snow.

On Christmas day, two Germans came across the river in a rowboat and surrendered. They had consumed a good bit of holiday spirits and decided they had had enough of war. The next day a boat load came over. It seems that they belonged to a unit in which all the men had stomach ulcers and were given a special ration. Someone sent them the wrong rations so they quit and came over to surrender.

One day, the CO of L Company called me on the phone and said that he had a house in his town with a tub and hot running water. I told Pfc. Sherman, my jeep driver, to see if he could locate some clean underwear and to get the jeep. I told the Battalion staff that I was going down to inspect the outpost lines. We tied down any loose objects on the jeep because it was a wild ride down the

icy road to the river. The Germans hadn't been shooting at us, but we didn't want to tempt them with a good target. We both took a good long hot bath and I did inspect the outpost lines. I had never seen L Company so clean before when they were on the line. It seems that they kept the hot water heater fired up all the time, and everyone was using it.

We all had extra food which we liberated in Germany or bought from the French plus our regular supplies. The men in the foxholes had extra food hanging in the trees near their foxholes. The problem was finding material to heat it. We sent Lt Goodman back to Reims, France to purchase champagne for New Year's Eve. We paid for the wine with soap and cigarettes. We were eating so well at Battalion Headquarters that the Regiment and Division officers kept showing up at mealtime.

On New Year's Eve, we shot several rounds of artillery at midnight to celebrate the event. We stayed in this position until January 6, 1945 when the 301st Infantry of the 94th Division relieved us. During this period, the only casualties were members of a patrol that disappeared on the road by the river.

The 94th Division Relieves the 90th

The 94th Infantry had been guarding Channel ports for several months. This was a passive defense. They had hot chow and shelter from the weather most of the time. The Germans had gone to a lot of trouble to keep us from using the seaports on the Cherbourg Peninsula.

The Americans took the port of Cherbourg in June 1944 but the cost in lives, time, and equipment was great, and then the port was so damaged that only a limited amount of supplies came in there. The beaches were still being used. The other ports on the Peninsula were bottled up with infantry on land and the Navy at sea to contain the German troops in these ports.

The 94th was supposed to start relieving us after dark so the enemy wouldn't know. They were several hours late and then they had to set up their kitchens to feed the men first. The men had to wait around in the cold, dark night with snow coming down. The officers of the 94th should have issued K rations to their men so they could prepare them in the houses or in the covered foxholes.

FOOTNOTES

[1]On December 22, the prayer was issued to all personnel of the 3rd Army. On December 23, the weather cleared. The Air Corps was able to fly round the clock missions dropping supplies to the troops encircled by the Germans in Bastogne.

[2]The heavy weapons company: 81 mm. mortars and water cooled machine guns.

[3]AA = Anti Aircraft

15

THE ARDENNES

January 1945

We were supposed to leave by truck convoy early in the morning for the Battle of the Bulge. Colonel Spivey had gone on ahead and I was to bring the Battalion in two convoys. Moving a whole division a distance across territory controlled by the enemy or close to the front lines, required a routine and good organization. Here is how the movement was managed.

When troops travel in convoy, Corps or Division controls the roads and bridges. There is a check-point at each road junction and bridge. A convoy is allotted a time limit to use them. You are given a time when the head of the convoy should reach the check-point and a time when the last truck should leave it. Some of the bridges could only handle one-way traffic. It was very important to adhere to the schedule especially at night without any lights. Military Police usually were stationed at the check-points., We didn't have any trouble until one truck had a flat tire in the city of Luxembourg. The convoy went on to our assembly area and I stayed and guided that one in. Several times during the race across France we picked up German MP's directing traffic at cross roads.

LEAVE IN LUXENBOURG CITY

On January 7, 1945, the Battalion was in the town of Lannen, Luxembourg. A Red Cross Clubmobile visited us. When they returned to their headquarters in Luxembourg City, they requested an escort. Colonel Spivey told me to take care of that detail. I told Sherman, my driver, he could invite a friend and I invited Captain Bovard, our Artillery Liaison Officer, to go to Luxembourg City for the night. The whole regiment was in reserve, but if the Battalion had to attack we would be the least needed.

The trip was uneventful until we had a flat tire on the edge of the city. The Red Cross Clubmobile sped by thanking us, but not stopping. We wanted to ask where we could get something to eat. We contacted an MP and he told us that we had to put the jeep in the motor pool and where the billeting office was located. The eating places were all closed by now; maybe a GI kitchen might have something left.

We went to the billeting office first to get a place before they closed for the day. We got a place for Sherman and his friend across the street from the motor pool. Bovard didn't like our room so back to the billeting office. The next one had only one single bed, so back to the billeting office. I told Bovard, *We'll take the next one if it has a roof and four walls. We need to find something to eat.* It was a nice room, but there was only one single bed. I told the lady that we would take it and would be back later.

Out of Chow

We stopped at an Army kitchen and the cook said he had just given all the left-overs to some little urchins that came around every night. We saw a soldier with a 90th Division patch on his jacket. We stopped and he told us that he had been assigned to Third Army Headquarters when he got out of the hospital. He didn't know of any place to eat, but there was a Third Army Officer's Club down the street. Sherman and his friend got a K ration from the jeep, and Bovard and I went to the Officer's Club with high hopes, rapped on the door, and stepped inside.

Everyone there was in dress uniforms. We had on field jackets and wool pants. I had a few torn places in my jacket but it was clean. I had a close haircut and a shave. A burly, mean looking Colonel came to the door and said," Where are you boys from?" I said *The 90th Infantry Division, Sir*. He broke out a big grin and said, *Come on in and I'll buy you a drink.* He had a barrel chest with lots of decorations from World War I. He looked real good with the smile.

He introduced us by saying we were from the 90th and these other Colonels and Lt. Colonels came up and started asking questions about the Moselle and Saar crossings. I told them how good our artillery was and Bovard told about the infantry. During a break I asked a girl tending bar if she had any food. She shook her head no. They lined up to buy us drinks. We kept telling War stories and every time I put my glass down someone filled it up. Before the burly Colonel left he told a Major to see that we got to our room safely.

When they closed the club up, the major and the barmaid walked us to our room. We walked down the middle of the street arm-in-arm singing all the way. Bovard and I didn't realize we could sing so good. They delivered us to the door and the landlady let us in with a clucking noise. I started up the stairs and started to fall forward, so I went faster and faster. When I reached the landing I fell flat on my face. (Any old drunk can fall down the stairs.) I rolled over and sat up, looking down the hall. There was someone in a long white nightgown in every door.

There I sat, a disgrace to the Battalion, the Regiment, the whole Third Army. I mustered up all the dignity I could, stood up, straightened my shoulders and walked into the bedroom. Bovard was slowly coming up the stairs. I saw two beds. I said, *Charlie, old boy, you really are drunk.* I reached out and felt the real bed, took off my boots, and climbed in. Poor Bovard, I thought, would have to sleep on the floor.

I woke up the next morning late and there was another bed in the room. I blinked my eyes and looked again; there was another real bed with Bovard in it. We got up and went downstairs. The landlady said she was sorry that we missed breakfast (she didn't know how sorry we were), but she had some coffee for us. It wasn't real coffee but it was hot, wet, and dark brown. We thanked her, signed the papers so she could collect the rent from the billeting office. We also apologized for our behavior last night.

I thought I had plenty of K rations on the jeep, but they were all gone. I went to get Sherman. When I knocked on the door of the house where he was billeted, the hostess insisted that I come in and meet everyone. The whole family was there surrounded by empty K ration boxes.

Sherman held a little boy in his lap, and he and his friend looked happy and content. I think there is a moral lesson here.

WE JOIN THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE

The Battalion was still in Lannen when we got back. The next day, January 9, 1945, we moved to Rambrouch using organic transportation[1] and shuttling one company at a time. It was very crowded with troops here. I was sleeping on some straw on the floor in front of the stove. Some hot coals fell out and the straw caught fire. I woke up with my knees in my face. The fire ruined my raincoat that I had over me.

The next day we walked to Bavigne and the Battalion was committed on the 13th in the fighting around Bras. The Battalion Rest Area at night was started about this time. It was extremely cold and the terrain was rough, rocky, wooded, and hilly. The Germans were using a lot of artillery and rocket fire here. The tree bursts were deadly.

The Germans put out a lot of land mines. They would freeze under the snow and wouldn't explode when a truck ran over them. It would warm up and thaw out. Another truck would follow the tracks, thinking it would be safe, but the mine would blow up. We put sand bags in the bottom of the trucks and jeeps for protection.

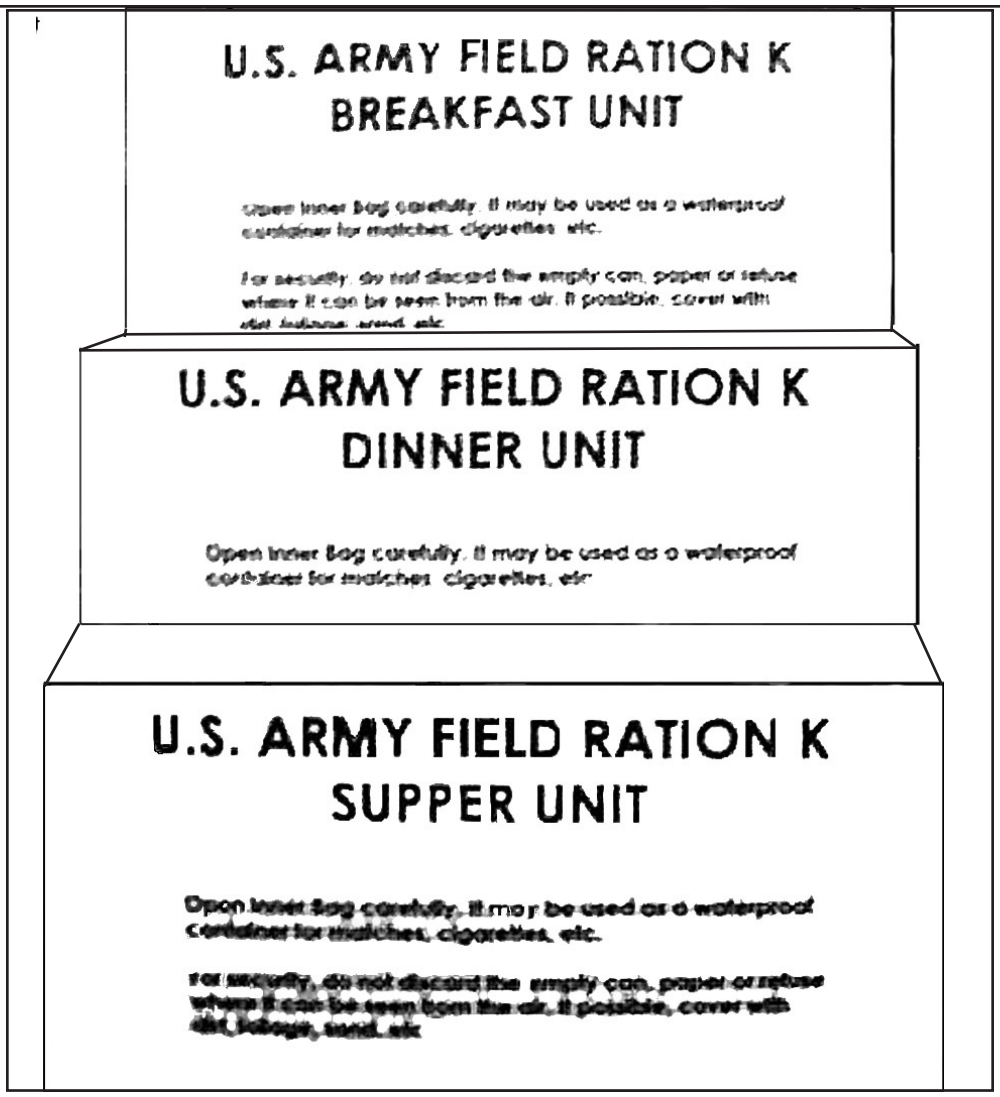
February was unseasonably warm and the snow would melt during the day and freeze again at night. This had a destructive effect on the roads that had Armored Division traffic. I saw a road paved with asphalt that was in excellent condition when we walked over it. A combat team of tanks, half tracks, and loaded trucks passed over it when it was thawed out and it disintegrated. In some places the Engineers had to take up the railroad tracks so the bed could be used for truck traffic. We lost some men during this period because we couldn't get them to the hospital in time.

FOOTNOTE

[1]Organic transportation means that we used only the vehicles assigned to the Battalion.



All infantrymen wore a web belt. The eyelets in the belt allowed a man to attach a variety of equipment. On it he carried some of the essentials for daily living as well as items used in combat.The belt above holds a canteen for water (essential) and a first aid kit containing bandages and a packet of sulfa. Most of us 'acquired' pistols which we would attach to the belt. We customized our belts as we felt most useful. Other common items were a compass, bayonet, knife, ammunition pouch (for our pistols), and other personal items. After weeks of combat, each GI might have a variety of equipment hanging from his belt whether standard issue or not. The canteen above is not as an infantryman might position it. It would get in the way if he had to crawl or even to lie flat under fire.



K Rations

K Rations came in small sealed boxes with three "menus." As I remember them, the breakfast unit had a fruit bar, a can of scrambled eggs, and a package of "dog biscuits." The luxuries were a packet of coffee, sugar, and chewing gum. The dinner unit had a can of potted meat, more dog biscuits, and a chocolate bar. The supper unit had a can of dense cheese, more dog biscuits, and another chocolate bar. In each unit, a small pack held three cigarettes. These contents were fairly standard, but there might be variations. The fruit bar was made of densely packed dried fruit, included for its calories and to keep the infantryman "regular." The chocolate bar was dense, hard to chew, and covered with white powder as if spoiled.The chocolate D-Ration was simila..

Instructions on Box

Open inner bag carefully. It may be used as a waterproof container for matches, cigarettes, etc.

For security, do not discard the empty can, paper or refuse where it can be seen from the air. If possible, cover with dirt, foliage, buried etc.

16

BATTALION COMMANDER

February 1945

This write-up was sent to me by the Division Public Relations Officer McNamara.

90th Infantry Division **PRO McNamara**
For Immediate Release

With the 90th Division

Their ranks green with replacements, their commander, a Captain new in his job - the 3rd Battalion, 358th Infantry of the 90th Division set what was believed to be a new record in German conquest on the Western Front when the unit cut a crescent pattern of assault from Binscheid to Ringhuscheid, capturing 10 towns in a 54-hour blitz that left the German defenders completely bewildered on the west banks of the Prum.

Led by a soft spoken Southerner,[1] Captain Charles B. Bryan of Johns Island, South Carolina, the Battalion, gambling on untried reinforcements, constituting 30 percent of its strength, cracked a main line of German resistance inside the Siegfried to plunge deep into Nazi rear areas, overrunning in the process artillery positions, quartermaster units, searchlight crews, convalescent centers, and elements of a division headquarters.

In the explosive smash, the Battalion captured the towns of Hickeshausen, Halenbach, Arzfeld, Windhausen, Krautscheid, Ringuscheid, Bellscheid, Oberpierscheid, Iederpierscheid, and Rollersdorf. In covering the distance of more than 10 miles - assaulting and firing much of the time - the Yanks grabbed 450 prisoners - four of whom were in their home towns on furlough - and knocked out eight pillboxes.

"We could hardly hold them back," said 1st Lt. Byron Clark, 3926 Harrison St., Kansas City, MO, battalion staff officer, "they wanted to cross the Prum and head for the Rhine. They figured once they hit the rear echelon troops, they were through the Kraut defense and could go forever. Maybe they could."

Jumping off north of Binscheid, the battalion swept into it's attack to the southeast and within three hours had secured it's initial objectives - Hicheshausen and Halenback, capturing 58 prisoners and routing and killing the remainder of the German troops in the area. In a desperate maneuver to choke off the American power tide, the Germans rushed 250 men from the Prum River

area to reinforce their critical positions. The Yanks maintained their momentum, however, seized 104 of the Nazi replacements and rushed on to Arzfeld where they grabbed 87 more of the jittery Germans together with an 80 mm. mortar unit intact.

Adding to the enemy confusion was an American armored column operating on the right flank under the command of Lt. Col. Frank G. Spices of Jackson Barracks, New Orleans, La., who corralled 109 additional prisoners in his area.

Enroute to Krautscheid, the Yanks advancing with cyclonic fury, bypassed German positions, captured the town and returned the following morning to clean up the German ranks in the American rear.

"Everybody had a field day," Captain Bryan explained quietly. "Even our anti-tank platoon which is seldom used in moving assault hit the jackpot:.

The anti-tank platoon, under the leadership of 1st Lt. Clayton L. Rise, Hot Springs, Ark., captured 30 prisoners, two 105 mm. horse-drawn howitzers, one 150 mm. gun with prime mover, one Ford V-8 staff car and a German jeep.

"It was the screwiest action I ever saw," related Capt. Conner A. Burnette, Knoxville, Tenn. "Going into Krautscheid we used marching-fire as we did on all the objectives. Over the rattle of small arms I heard music coming from somewhere within the assault troops. Investigating, I found one of the GIs in one of the forward squads fingering a Jew's harp playing 'Lonesome Valley' while his buddies provided the essential base of fire.:"

Co. "I" commanded by DSC winner 1st Lt. Glenn E. Rugh of Curren Terrace, Norristown, Pa., captured in one minor phase of the action two German officers and five enlisted men. A Company guard was assigned the job of escorting the prisoners back to the battalion PW[1] cage while the company moved on. A mortar shell dropped close to the guard and prisoners, injuring the Yank. Instead of breaking for their lines, one of the prisoners shouldered the wounded American, another picked up his rifle and the group continued on their way, reporting promptly to the PW cage where they enlisted aid for the 90th Division casualty.

A short time later another German officer and eight of his men who had been scouting American equipment in the area turned themselves over to the Yanks.

"They said they had accomplished their mission," related Captain Robert P. Bovard, Mansfield, Ohio, "and that when they saw the amount of stuff we had on tap they realized the futility of further fighting."

Every man in the Battalion participated in the capture of at least one town.

According to Major William Falvey of Knox, Indiana, Regimental Staff Officer, six men of L company were the last to add a village scalp to their credit.

Having seized nothing but several German hills in the operation, S/Sergeant James Sdrouglias, 247 Audubon Ave., New York City, and Sergeant Leo Miller, Fremont, Ohio, took four volunteers, two automatic rifles and spraying lead as they advanced, walked into the village of Rollersdorf, seven miles northeast of Bitburg, cleaned out the houses on both sides of the street and took 15 prisoners.

"Also liberated," said Major Falvey, "were several German chickens.

From the Regimental History:[3]

Driving on through Habscheid, the Regiment pushed up to the Prum River on its North Flank. Here it was relieved by elements of the Fourth Division and a new drive toward the river was begun to the South. The First Battalion attacked from the town at Binscheid and later seized the town of Holzchen while the Third Battalion in a bold stroke, struck for Arzfeld and continued a lightning fast, wide-flanking maneuver that paced the Division. All units acted with such speed the enemy had no time to reorganize. The enemy line was broken and he ran around in confusion while the outfit again pushed up to the Prum River. On the 25 of February, the Division was relieved and assembled in the same general area as SHAEF Reserve.

From the 3rd Battalion Infantry History:[4]

. . .The 2nd Battalion relieved us and the companies went into pillboxes and houses around Habscheid. The next two days were spent cleaning up, seeing movies, and eating hot chow.

Then on the 18th of February, the Battalion moved out with the town of Masthorn as the objective This was secured by early morning of the 19th against enemy resistance that consisted mainly of artillery and rocket fire. It was in this action that Captain Bryan took command of the Battalion as Lt. Col., Spivey had pneumonia and had to be evacuated. Company G, 358th Infantry relieved us at dusk and the Battalion returned to its former billets in Habscheid.

Following an order received at 1245 February 21, the Battalion moved out at 1400 with the mission of taking two towns 10 kilometers away before dark. By shuttling troops on organic transportation[5] all companies were able to arrive at an LD position by 1800. Company I then secured Hickshausen by 1900. Company L, now under Capt. C. A. Burnette, had occupied Halenbach by 2000. This was done with 82 prisoners and two pillboxes being added to the battalion's score. From here, the Battalion really took off and moved to the Prum river which it reached on the morning of the 24th. During this 72 hour period the Companies cleared a total of eleven towns including Arzfeld, Krautscheid and Mauel, took over 400 prisoners, destroyed or captured three self propelled 88's, one tank, one 150 mm howitzer complete with prime mover, two 105 mm howitzers complete with horses, one Ford staff car and a considerable number of trucks, motorcycles and wagons. Frequently the Battalion would occupy a town so quickly that the Germans would just wander in thinking it was still in their hands.

THE 72-HOUR BLITZ - MY VERSION

February was the end of winter and the beginning of spring. Both seasons were bad for the Infantry in the open country side. But it did give them an incentive to fight hard to take a town or pillbox and get out of the weather. I was Battalion Executive Officer whose duties were to see that supplies got to the men at the front when needed and the wounded were evacuated. The supply department under Lt. Goodman and the Medics under Dr. Bulger were the best, always on the ball, so I had to come up with something extra to justify my position.

We had very little rest since the Battle of the Bulge. First the cold and snow, then the rain and mud were taking a bigger toll than the Germans as we were breaching the West Wall of Germany along the Belgian border. One thing I did to help the situation was to organize a Battalion rest camp. Every night, when possible each company would send back as many men as could get on the supply jeep and trailer when it came back to the rear. You wouldn't believe how many men they brought out. They picked the men who were in the worst shape.

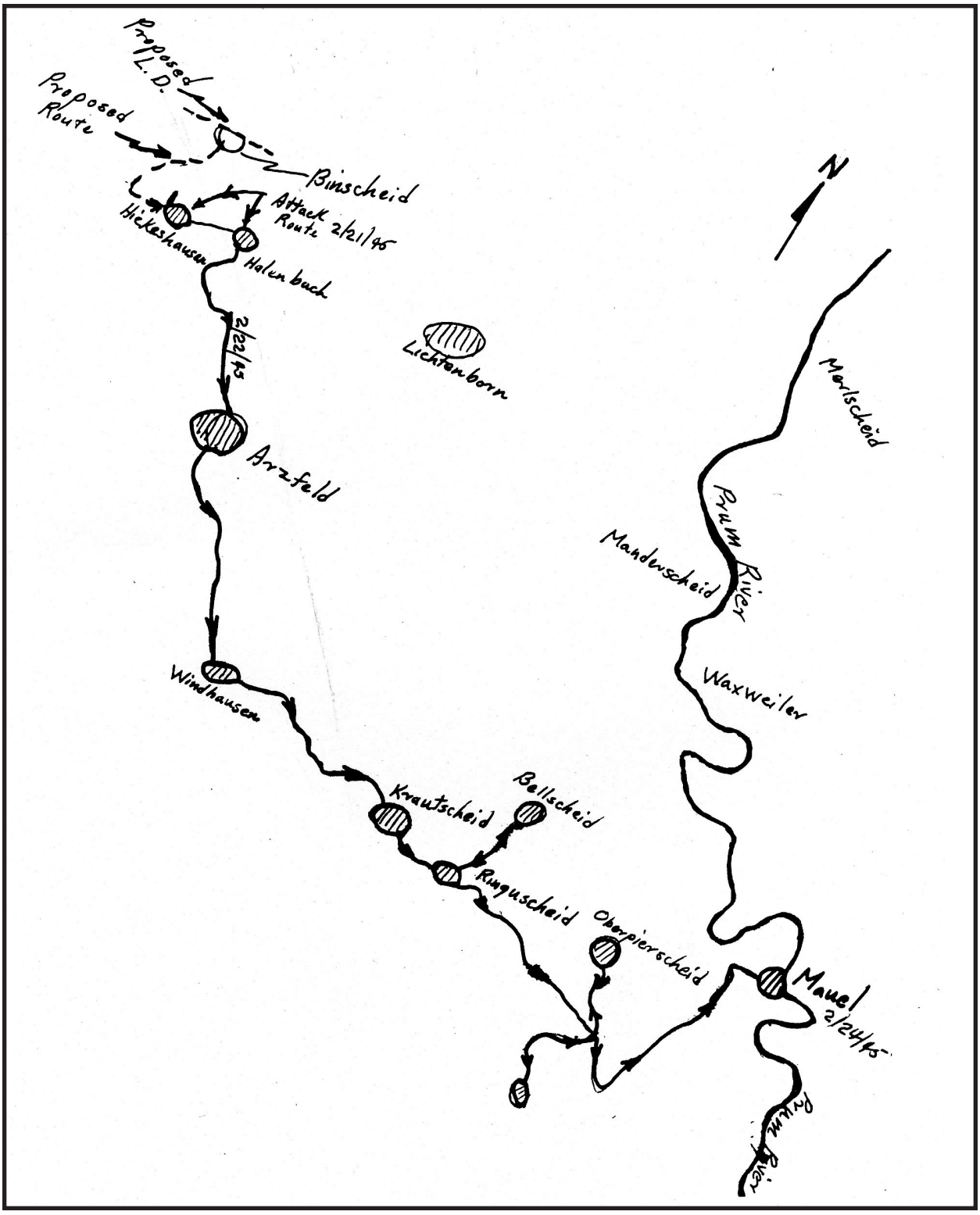
Sergeant Lazanine of L Company and First Cook Bowles of I Company ran the camp; they could bring in cooks from their companies as needed. Sergeant Lazanine was the organizer. He would secure a shelter and extra provisions; Sergeant Bowles did the cooking and provided a lot of humor. The men had a chance to dry out, eat hot chow, and sleep in a warm dry place before going back up on line before daylight the next day. I know we saved a good many men who would have been evacuated for Battle Exhaustion.

On the 16th of February, we were relieved and promised three days rest by Regiment. But on the 18th, we were ordered to take the town of Masthorn located on a creek on the left boundary of our area. The bridge was already blown. Our objective was to clean out the town and the woods to the south. Colonel Spivey, not feeling well, asked me to take the company commanders on reconnaissance and make plans for the attack.

When we got back to the town of Habscheid after the reconnaissance, the Battalion was ready, but Colonel Spivey had been evacuated to the hospital so I was given a chance to lead the Battalion in attack. My plans were for L Company to move up a draw on the north side of the town and attack across an open field. K Company was to attack through the woods on the south converging on the Town. K Company to jump off first so the Kraut's attention would be to the south when L Company crossed the open field

Captain Burnette had just joined the Battalion so I went back to L Company with him and talked to the platoon leaders to make sure they all understood what my plans were. Captain Burnette commanded L Company for the remainder of the war in the ETO.

We jumped off on schedule after laying an artillery barrage on the town and on the woods across the creek. The enemy in the town and woods gave up with just a token resistance when they realized they were being squeezed by two companies. We suffered some casualties from artillery fire across the creek. We were relieved that night and went back to Habscheid to continue our rest.



Battle Route of the Third Battalion, 358th Infantry. **The 72-Hour Blitz**
21 February - 24 February 1945

BATTALION COMMANDER

Colonel Bealke, Regimental CO, phoned me that night to congratulate us and informed me that I was now in command of the Battalion. It was a real break to take command when we were not in contact with the enemy. I had a chance to put into effect some of the ideas that I had conceived while serving as executive officer of the Battalion.

All attached units were sent back to their base outfits to be resupplied and overhauled. Ordnance and supply people checked everyone in the Battalion. I asked Regiment to send me large maps of the area we had been over and where we might be expected to go and also someone who knew what the other units were doing. They sent Lt. Clark, a liaison officer between Division and Regiment.

I called in all platoon and company commanders, about half of the platoon commanders were Sergeants. Lt. Clark did a very good job of explaining what the other Battalions and Regiments had been doing and showed us the area that we would probably be going into. Everyone entered into the discussions and the Sergeants seemed to appreciate being included. We talked all afternoon in a very relaxed atmosphere covering all phases of our work. This was something that had been needed for a long time and we all benefited from it. There was a coal mine in the area that had hot showers, so we were taking turns bathing by companies. We also had movies and hot chow.

I felt very good about taking over command of the Battalion. I had been through Battalion Commander's School at Fort Benning and practical experience under Colonel Bealke, in combat as a Rifle Company CO for five months, and two months as Battalion Executive Officer. The Battalion had managed very well without an executive officer since the 1st of November 1944. I was determined to do a good job and make myself indispensable.

I kept abreast of the situation at the Battalion CP and went down to the companies every chance I had. This gave me a good knowledge of the company officers and Non Coms.[6] This knowledge and my relationship with the companies was a great help when I became Battalion CO.

Back into the Line

In the middle of the day of the 21st, Regiment called to say they were sorry to cut our rest short, but we had to take a couple of towns right away. I said that we didn't have our tanks, TDs (Tank Destroyers), and artillery people. They replied that they had all been notified and should be on hand in time for the jump off. Well, all my good feelings about taking over command went out the window on the phone line.

I called in the Company commanders and Lt. Rice, the Anti-tank platoon commander. We took off in two jeeps in a cloud of muddy water coming out of the shell holes in the street. Captain Jaffray was to collect the Battalion from the various activities and shuttle them on Battalion trucks to a cross road about half mile from the LD. It would take about three trips to get everyone up

there.

When we arrived at the LD, we were shocked to find that it hadn't been taken yet, and we couldn't find anyone who knew what was going on, so we backed up and set a new course. The terrain was very hilly, with valleys, open meadows, and heavily wooded high ground. Instead of following the main road, which made a long sweeping curve on the high ground, we decided to cut straight across the hills and valley, then up the hill through heavy woods into the back of the town. We couldn't use the tanks but it was doubtful if they would arrive in time anyway. We went back down to the road to meet the troops. I was a very unhappy Battalion CO. It seemed that everything was working against me.

Just as we got back to the road, someone said, *Here they come.* I looked up the road and there was Captain Jaffray leading the Battalion with a column on each side of the road. I told the Company COs that we would jump off as soon as the two assault companies were ready. Then I heard the high whine of jeeps running wide open. As I looked up the road, two artillery jeeps with trailers bounded over the hill and came to a screeching halt where we were waiting. Captain Bovard, the liaison officer, came along later because his crew was laying a telephone line from the artillery Fire Direction Center to the Battalion Headquarters as they came up.

The lump in my stomach was shrinking by the minute. We couldn't have worked out the problems any better on paper in the classroom. The staff officers of Regiment and Battalion did a great job here. Not a minute was wasted since the phone call from Regiment at 1245 and the Battalion jumping off at 1400. I heard the tanks and TDs clanking down the highway. Lt. Rice would bring them up as soon as he could find a road through the woods. I was inspired by how everything had worked out. I had to hurry to catch up with the men I was supposed to be leading.

Jump Off

We advanced undetected through the woods into the back of the town. The Germans were setting up a defence where the highway came into town. They were surprised and surrendered after a few shots. All afternoon stragglers kept coming down the highway escaping from the fighting in Binscheid that we were supposed to use as the LD We sent back about 80 prisoners before dark.

The companies set up their defence for the night. Lt. Rice brought the tanks, TDss, and his Anti-tank platoon over some logging roads through the woods. Just before I left for the Battalion CP, an outpost signaled that someone was walking down the road into town. When he had passed our lines a G.I. stepped from behind a tree, placed his gun in the intruder's back and said, *Hande Hoch!* (Hands Up!). The intruder seemed to think that it was a joke. He said *Hande Hoch* and laughed, but when the G.Ipressed the muzzle of his gun in his back and said, "Stick em up, you son of a bitch," he didn't laugh, just raised his hands promptly. When we took him inside one of the buildings, we discovered that he was a German officer sent up to inspect the German defense.

Mortar Fire

I took off for the Battalion CP with my party which consisted of two men from the S-2 section, my radioman, two linemen from the Battalion Communications Section, two prisoners, and

the just captured inspector. We went back the same route we had used that afternoon. While crossing the open meadow, the Germans dropped several mortar shells on us. We made a wild dash for the woods on the other side with the German officer leading the way. He was traveling the lightest. One of the linemen was wounded in his leg. We put sulfa powder on the wound and bandaged it to stop the bleeding. He just happened to be the biggest man in the Battalion and was carrying two reels of telephone wire beside his personal gear.

The two German soldiers were husky and about the same size, so I got the S-2 man who spoke German to tell them to walk on each side of the wounded lineman and support his weight, the German officer to carry the wire and gear. I would carry his gun. The officer said something about the Geneva Convention and him being an officer, but I told him in English while pointing with my gun, "to pick it up." He responded silently. It was slow going the rest of the way. We had to stay under cover of the trees, cross a stream, and go around the long way because the wounded lineman couldn't go up hills.

We got back to the Battalion CP about 2200. We sent the prisoners back to Regiment. I hadn't eaten anything since noon so I really enjoyed the fried eggs and biscuits that Olsen cooked for me. Olsen was the Battalion CO's orderly, but he would get food from Battalion Headquarters Company kitchen when it was available or cook for the CO and the Battalion staff from K rations and food liberated from cellars. I took off the wet boots and put my stocking feet in the oven to dry out as I ate supper and read the orders for the next day. Colonel Bealke called on the phone to congratulate us and talk about the next day's operation.

The Battalion staff had been working on maps and orders for the companies ever since the orders from Regiment had arrived. I called in all COs: company, tank, TD, anti-tank, and Battalion staff officers and we made the plans for the next day. Everyone had an opportunity to contribute. We were all in good spirits after the success that afternoon. Battalion Headquarters Company had suffered as much as the rifle companies. A radio repairman was sitting in the door of the Aid Station working on a radio when a stray bullet hit him in the heart.

Tank Knockout

We jumped off on schedule but two minutes later had to change our well laid plans. L Company on the left ran into a dug-in-tank that stopped them cold. K Company on the right overran the Germans, so I told K Company to keep going and L Company to hold while I Company would come up on the right behind K Company and swing to the left and attack the tank from its rear. Having the forward CP right in the front line, I was able to give these orders without any loss of time.

The tank tried to escape when it realized what was happening. When it was running in the open, we laid a heavy barrage of artillery on it, knocking one of the tracks off. The tank crew surrendered. K Company captured the mortars that had shelled us the night before. We reorganized with a rifle company on each side of the road. The tanks on the road and the other rifle company and TDs in reserve followed by M Company (heavy weapons) and Battalion Headquarters Company. We used this formation for the next three days advancing deep into enemy territory.

The Blitz Continues

We kept going that afternoon surprising and capturing rear area units intact. That night we reached a plateau that was level and more open country, which make it easier going. There was a large inn & tavern along the highway by itself, which is unusual in Germany. Even the farm buildings are located in towns. The inhabitants wouldn't open up or even answer our loud knocks and shouts. The inn was constructed to keep out intruders. The heavy doors couldn't be blasted open with rifle fire. I told the troops to keep on going and radioed Lt. Jones in Headquarters Company to blow the door with TNT when he got to the inn. He found only an old frightened couple inside. They could have saved the door by opening up.

We kept going until about 0300 then stopped to rest until daylight before entering the next town. We rudely woke up all the inhabitants. We sent one company back to take some positions that we had by-passed in the dark. Trucks and automobiles were sent back to Regiment with prisoners, guns were destroyed in place by running tanks over them.

When we stopped we had all around defence like the old wagon trains. When on the move we had scouts out in front and on the flanks. The scouts warned us of any approaching enemy and we set a trap for them.

We moved so fast and continually that we didn't have time to liberate much food until we stopped in Mauel on the Prum River. The Germans didn't seem to have any communication. The telephone lines were knocked out by air and artillery.

Regiment had to send us supplies in 2 1/2 ton trucks with armored cars and light tanks for their protection. On their return trip they took the prisoners back, but we had so many that Regiment had to send additional trucks and men to guard them.

The second night we had occupied a small town and went on the defensive hoping to get some rest. The Germans had other ideas, because all night long signal flares went off just beyond our line. We were expecting an attack at any moment. There was no attack during the night and when daylight came no enemy was in sight, but the Battalion had a restless night.

We Set an Ambush

We continued the attack, reaching the Prum River about mid-day. We had just set up a defence when two German tanks and infantry came down the road we had traveled that morning. They were trying to get across the Prum River and we had the bridge in that area. We were all out of sight, about 600 men. The TDs defending the bridge, the tanks in reserve in the center of the town, and Lt. Rice's anti-tank platoon, three 57 mm. guns, covering the road into town.

I told the tank CO to keep his tanks hidden and let Rice have a shot at the German tanks. The Germans suspected that something was wrong because they would advance about 100 yards, stop and search the area with field glasses. One of our tanks must not have gotten the word to lie low because he started up his engine and changed his position.

The Germans spotted his movements, so they pulled off the road and destroyed their tanks and tried to escape on foot. We got some of them with mortar and artillery fire but some managed to get across the river. We went out and brought in the wounded.

End of the Blitz

Colonel Bealke called and wanted to know if I wanted to keep going. I told him that I was raring to go, but we were short of supplies and the men needed to rest, and we could probably do more good by guarding the bridge. He laughed and told me to sit tight, so we did and collected prisoners until the rest of the Regiment caught up with us 24 hours later.

In considering what we accomplished, our casualties were light. Four killed in I Company and two in Battalion Headquarters Company. Twenty to thirty wounded in action and no missing-in-action. We always hated to lose anyone. I don't know how many Germans we killed and wounded. Between 400 and 500 prisoners were taken, some high ranking officers.

The most important result was that the Battalion received a big boost in morale and esprit de corps. What looked like a sure fire SNAFU (Situation Normal All Fouled Up) at the beginning turned out to be one of the best operations that I took part in during the war. We had a problem living up to our reputation thereafter.

Regiment put me in for the Bronze Star for this action, but it was turned down by higher authority. I agree. I don't think I should have been given a decoration; I didn't do anything heroic, but I did earn my pay here. We all did. I felt safer here with the 3rd Battalion men all around me than I would walking through some sections in the city of Charleston now.

My reward was knowing that I played a part in restoring the 3rd Battalion to the position it had in the Regiment under Colonel Bealke. The men that took part in this action will have a story to tell their grandchildren.

On the 25th of February, 1945, B Troop 6th Cavalry Squadron relieved us. The entire Division was placed in Corps Reserve, and we were billeted in the towns of Sengerrich, Escheeld, and Reiff. A Red Cross Clubmobile visited us here. A couple of days later a U.S.O. show came to town. There was a small theater that would only hold a third of the Battalion. They put on three shows. The biggest hit was three sisters singing *Rum and Coca Cola.*[5] They had to sing it a couple of times at each performance. This was the first USO show that most of us had seen. Some of the men had seen them at the convalescent centers.

In a ceremony held on March 2nd, the Battalion was awarded the Presidential Unit Citation for the Battle of *Foret De Mont Castre* by Major General Rooks, Commanding General of the 90th Division. The weather was very cooperative. It snowed practically up to the time of the parade and then the sun came out. Just as soon as the parade was over, it started snowing again. The General pinned the Unit Citation Bar on Colonel Bealke, and a representative from each company. There were only a few men left who took part in that operation. The Battalion was the first unit in the Di-

vision to be awarded the Presidential Unit Citation.[8] The following story in the *Sniper* summarizes the action for which the Battalion received this award.

CITATION FOR 358TH BATTALION
THIRD BATTALION CITED FOR BATTLE OF MONTE CASTRE

The Third Battalion of the 358th Infantry has been awarded the unit citation for extraordinary heroism in France.

During the period July 10-12, the officers and men of the battalion displayed great courage, endurance and dogged determination in the attack through the dense Foret de Monte Castre. The position, known as the 'Mahlman Line' was part of the main enemy defensive line.

It consisted of dug-in positions, cunningly camouflaged in the tangled underbrush and other devices which utilized to the fullest the natural qualities of the area. Despite fierce enemy counterattacks, the battalion relentlessly drove forward and eliminated a battalion of parachute infantry and a company of parachute engineers, both of which were part of the elite 5th German Parachute Division.

On the second day of the fight, the battalion overran the objective, killed 40 Germans, captured 8 machine guns, bazookas and mortars.

On July 12, as it left the forest, the battalion retaining its aggressiveness fought with exceptional daring and great skill and took successive objectives.

The battalion's break through the enemy's main position contributed materially to the division's advance. The inspiring leadership of its officers and the gallantry displayed by all ranks were in accordance with the highest military tradition.

The Sniper
March 1945

FOOTNOTES

[1]This was the only time that I was accused of being soft-spoken. The lack of sleep had a quieting effect.

[2]PW = Prisoner of War

[3]*A Brief History of the 358th Infantry*, page 52.

[4]*Battle History, Third Battalion, 358th Infantry*. Page 55.

[5]The trucks and jeeps assigned to the Battalion: five 2 1/2 ton kitchen trucks; one 2 1/2 ton and three 1 ton trucks in A & P Platoon; and about 25 jeeps and trailers.

[6]Non Coms were the non-commissioned officers: corporals and sergeants.

[7]These singers must have been the famous Andrews Sisters: Patti, Laverne, and Maxene. They entertained through the USO wherever American servicemen were stationed and were actually performing in Naples when V-J Day ended WWII in August 1945.

[8]The Presidential Unit Citation is given to combat units of the United States for extraordinary heroism in action. The degree of heroism for a unit citation is the same as would be required for an individual to be awarded a Distinguished Service Cross. All personnel assigned to this unit in the future are authorized to wear this citation.



Infantryman with Handie Talkie

We usually called these little radios, Walkie-Talkies. They provided quick communication over short distances to forward posts or back to the Battalion Command Post while we were advancing. As soon as possible telephone lines were laid down and telephone communication was used.

17

THE RACE TO THE RHINE

March 1945

During the 72-hour blitz, the battalion entered the Rhineland Pfalz (territory). Ahead we faced crossing the Moselle (again) and the mighty Rhine. We crossed the Kyll River and captured the town of Gerolstein, a large rail center. The next crossing was at Pelm. The highway leading from the river was in a narrow ravine, one row of houses on each side of the road. We attacked with one company, and they used only one platoon at a time. There were two German tanks with some infantry blocking the road. The tanks could support each other and the infantry was protecting the rear of the tanks.

We picked off the infantry first, or they withdrew, and the tanks got nervous and started to withdraw. They would leap-frog around and cover each other. It was a slow, nerve-racking job. The company relieved the platoon every two hours. Everything depended on the one platoon. The company commander was behind the platoon and I was behind the company. The Engineers were building the bridge and the 11th Armored Division was on the other side of the river ready to roll. Our goal was to have a clear route out of the ravine and on the open plateau so the 11th would have room to maneuver.

It was night, but we had enough light provided by shining a search light on low clouds. The search light was located far enough back so the artillery could not knock it out. It was about as bright as full moonlight. Things worked out on schedule. We pushed the Germans out of the ravine about daylight, and then the other two companies in the Battalion attacked on both sides of the road. We knocked out one tank with artillery when it was running in the open. The other tank got away. The Engineers finished the bridge and our vehicles came over. The Armored Division started to roll.

PROMOTION TO MAJOR

I went back to Battalion Headquarters located in a house on this side of Pelm. I was eating breakfast, when Colonel Bealke came in, walked around behind me, took off my Captain's bars and pinned a Major's oak leaf on me. The official date of the promotion was March 4, 1945.

It took the 11th two days to pass through. We were motorized and followed them, clearing out pockets that they had by-passed. On March 13th, we crossed the Moselle for the third time, but this time we walked across on a pontoon bridge to Brodenbach. We then took off in a 3rd Battalion Blitz taking seven towns including a German Headquarters with maps, office machines, and files but only 45 prisoners. We ended up in Halsenbach.

The Germans Ambush I Company

Regiment ordered us on the 16th of March to send a patrol down the North-South highway near Halsenback. I Company hadn't done anything lately so I sent the whole company. If they ran into anything, Captain Rugh could handle it. They were joined by Colonel Tulley, Assistant Division Commander, who was with a unit of Division Cavalry. They ran into a well laid out road block manned by SS[1] troops. The Cavalry lost a TD, knocked out by an 88, and Captain Rugh was shot in the jaw by rifle fire. Colonel Tulley hadn't been in combat since WW I. He got on the radio and ordered the Battalion Surgeon to come up there. The company medic on the scene gave first aid, then sent Captain Rugh to the Battalion Aid Station on a jeep. Dr. Bulger treated him. He was then sent back to a field hospital.

I rushed up there with L Company and reorganized the attack with I Company on the right side of the road so they could swing around and attack the road block from the right side. L Company would do the same from the left side. We couldn't use the road because it was covered by the 88. We closed in and more or less blew the road block apart. Some of the Germans escaped in an armored half-track that had the 88 mounted on it. The others didn't surrender, so the only prisoners were the wounded. The Battalion History recorded 37 dead.

I haven't seen Captain Rugh since the war, but I heard that he was in and out of hospitals for several years before his jaw and face were rebuilt. He had been awarded the DSC for a previous action. I also heard that he became a successful businessman. Colonel Tulley realized that he had made a big mistake and apologized. He was an Officer and a Gentleman by Act of Congress. He was a good man and wasn't afraid to admit that he was wrong, even to junior officers. He was assigned to the 90th Division so he could get a promotion to General. He could have stayed in Headquarters, but he got out to learn first hand what went on in the infantry (we didn't always follow the book).

General Weaver, our former Assistant Division Commanding Officer, was very active. You could never tell where he would show up. One night we marched until midnight, then went into a defensive position. I was out at daylight checking our positions when a jeep came down the road with General Weaver. He pulled his map from under his shirt and we compared positions, etc. He said he liked to see company commanders checking positions first thing in the morning. He then drove on.

General Weaver led a combat team composed of all our tanks and one Regiment of infantry during the breakout of Normandy. When the Division CP was attacked in September by a strong force of tanks and infantry, General Weaver took charge of what forces were available and fought them for two days. They killed or captured the entire attacking force. His aide was wounded in this fight. Later Weaver was given command of the 8th Infantry Division, but he died from a heart attack before the war ended. We kept a bottle of good whiskey on hand. When he inspected the Battalion, we would present it as if it had just been found, and he usually would remember that he had to get back to Division Headquarters, taking the bottle with him.Colonel Tulley didn't drink, but he liked strong cheeses. We tried to keep some on hand for his visits. Cheese wasn't as plentiful as whisky in Germany.

The German defense was very inconsistent. We would go for several days without any resistance then wham! We would have a hell of a fight with some fanatics. One day we were supposed to attack a town by passing through another battalion who were taking the woods in front of the town. They were having trouble with a road block, so I went around them moving my tanks and trucks down a railroad track through the woods. The tracks were rough on the trucks.

We attacked the town from the side before they could set up a defense. I then radioed the other battalion that I could attack the road block from the rear. We used four tanks and a company of infantry. We moved under an artillery barrage, and when it was lifted the tanks opened up. The Germans didn't have time to shift their anti-tank guns. The roadblock was manned by the SS (mostly teenagers), and we had to annihilate them.

THE FALL OF MAINZ

We drove down to the Rhine River twice. Each time we thought this will be it, only to pull back and move parallel to the river. On March 22, we attacked Mainz at 0600. K and L Companies cleared 60 city blocks by noon. I held I Company, the reserve, back on a hill overlooking the Rhine River, because they were not needed and we would be relieved by the First Battalion that night. There was very little resistance although we took 240 prisoners. The Army Air Corps had turned the city into rubble. I went back to the jeep to listen to the BBC. news broadcast on the car radio in my jeep. They stated that elements of the 3rd Army engaged in hand-to-hand combat in the city of Mainz. We had a good laugh about that news.

The communications jeep was hit by rifle fire while laying a line into Mainz. A soldier in the back had his arms resting on the machine gun ammunition box and one round hit the box. It did not explode and no one was hurt. He was a little excited when he showed me the hole. This was our third trip to the Rhine. German troops were crossing the river in barges within sight. We set the 4.5 mortar at maximum range. The first round was over, shortened range; next round short, adjust range; the third round was on target. We fired all three mortars. Three quick rounds for effect and all landed in or close to the barge. Most of the occupants were blown out and the barge sank.

After the Moselle and Saar River crossings, the Third Army would send for the 90th when they came to a river, so we thought they would surely send for us for the Rhine crossing. But on March 24th, we moved by truck to Salzen to wait our turn to walk across the Rhine on a bridge established the day before by the Fifth Infantry Division. We were half disappointed and half thankful. The area was jammed with traffic waiting to cross and get out of the hot zone.

Lt. Sanders, who was in L Company in August and September, came up to visit me. I enjoyed seeing him again. We watched a German and his daughter installing a drainpipe made out of wood. It was in three foot sections of a 6" x 6" timber with a three inch hole drilled in the center

.We walked across the Rhine on the side of the pontoon bridge with truck and tank traffic in the center. When we cleared the causeway, I moved the column off the shoulder of the road. I was concerned about planes going after the bridge. After we left the shoulder, the footing was rough

R-E-S-T-R-I-C-T-E-D

Saturday 7 April 1945

The Sniper

Published in GERMANY

PATTON COMMENDS 90TH

TAKING OF BINGEN AND MAINZ RECEIVES HIGHEST PRAISES OF THIRD ARMY COMMANDER

In a letter of commendation dated March 23 and addressed to the officers and men of the Third Army as well as XIX Tactical Air Command, Gen George S. Patton included the taking of Bingen and Mainz in his list of "great achievements" accomplished by the two units. Both towns have been officially credited to the 90th Division.

Gen. Patton's letter follows:

TO THE OFFICERS AND MEN OF THE THIRD ARMY
AND
TO OUR COMRADES OF THE XIX TACTICAL AIR COMMAND

In the period from January 29 to March 22, 1945, you have wrested 6,484 square miles of territory from the enemy. You have taken 3,072 cities, towns, and villages, including among the former: TRIER, KOBLENZ, BINGEN, WORMS, MAINZ, KAISERLAUTERN, AND LUDWIGSHAFEN.

You have captured 140,112 enemy soldiers, and have killed or wounded an additional 99,000, thereby eliminating practically all of the German 7th and 1st Armies. History records no greater achievement in so limited a time.

This great campaign was only made possible by your disciplined valor, unswerving devotion to duty, coupled with the unparalleled audacity and speed of your advance on the ground; while from the air, the peerless fighter-bombers kept up a relentless round-the-clock attack upon the disorganized enemy.

The world rings with your praises: better still, General Marshall, General Eisenhower, and General Bradley have all personally commended you. The highest honor I have ever attained is that of having my name coupled with yours in these great events.

Please accept my heartfelt admiration and thanks for what you have done, and remember that your assault crossing over the Rhine at 2200 hours last night assures you of even greater glory to come.

G. S. PATTON, JR.,
Lieut. General, U. S. Army,
Commanding

WAR ROUND-UP

TWO MORE GREAT German cities, Hannover and Bremen, are being threatened today by Allied tank spearheads...TROOPS of the British 11th Armored Division and the 6th Airborne Division were last reported within 25 miles of Hannover. ..AMERICAN NINTH ARMY forces were moving towards the city this morning...THE HANNOVER radio last night reported Allied forces near a town 16 miles away from the city...COLUMNS OF the British 7th Armored Division were known last night to be 36 miles from Bremen...IN THE RUHR, Ninth Army troops have cleared Hamm and far to the south, Gen Patch's men have flung all of the Germans out of Wurzburg...They have also entered Heilbronn, on the Neckar river, about 75 miles southwest of Nurnberg...AMERICAN HEAVY BOMBERS yesterday attacked the rail yards at Halle on the Saale river and Leipzig...THE GERMAN Radio last night said that their commander on the Eastern Front, Gen. Guderian, had been replaced...ON OKINAWA island, American fighters have shot down at least 150 Japanese planes, Gen MacArthur's headquarters reported today, announcing further progress.

and soft in the fields and there was a lot of complaining in the ranks. Shortly after leaving the road a truck sideswiped a tank. The tank traveling about 20 mph, ran on the shoulder where we had been walking. It would have crushed several of us before it could get back on the road.

We turned right on a road on the side of the mountain that ran parallel to the river. We were headed for an assembly area near Leeheim. Several enemy bombers came in low, strafing the bridgehead. Hundreds of anti-aircraft guns opened up and the shells were hitting on the side of the mountain all around us. It seemed like eternity, but it only lasted for moments. We were lucky that only one man was wounded. That night the planes hit again; we were out of range and enjoyed the show. Searchlights, tracer bullets, flares, bursting shells, and exploding planes. It was quite a sight.

Rapid Advances

The next day we cleared ten towns, covering eighteen miles; we covered twelve miles on the 25th, stopping for the night in Obersthausen. We thought the Germans were in the town of Dietesheim on our side of the Main River, but they had withdrawn across the river. We moved silently into Dietesheim and I told everyone to stay out of sight. Across the river, the Germans were working on their defensive positions. An officer in a car was inspecting, etc. They were unaware that we were watching.

During the first part of the night, the Engineers moved the boats into the town. We shot artillery to cover the noise of the trucks. On the German side of the river, there was a flat plain about 1,000 yards to the woods where they were dug in. We decided that our best bet would be a surprise action, no artillery. We started across at 0400 on March 28, 1945. We hadn't seen any emplacements that could be used as a listening post in front of their line, but we checked anyway. We formed a skirmish line on the road that ran parallel with the river and started toward the woods. The situation became more tense as we got closer to the German positions. Any minute a flare would go off. If that happened you froze in place. A flare is so bright at first that it partially blinds you. If the enemy starts shooting, you shoot back and spray the whole area, hoping to make him duck down. You run like hell, shooting from the hip to close in as soon as possible.

It was so quiet you could hear your heart thumping, as we got closer and closer to the German positions. We had about 300 men in the first wave. We arrived and found the foxholes empty. We thought it must be some kind of trick. The linemen were laying a telephone line behind us so I waited for them to report to Regiment. We wanted to keep radio silence. There was a big fight going on to our left where the highway was located.

Colonel Bealke told me to keep going when it was light enough, and he would send the Reserve Battalion over our crossing to turn to the left and attack the Germans at the other bridgehead from the rear. We advanced about six miles inland to the city of Mittelbuchen. We ambushed the Germans coming to occupy the empty foxholes. We stopped for the night here to wait for the rest of the Regiment to catch up. A prisoner revealed the reason our crossing was unopposed. It seemed that the troops on line were to be relieved that night, and when the relief did not show up, they left

anyhow. That reveals the condition of the German Army at this time.

FOOTNOTE

[1]The SS (*ShutzStaffel* ["Protective Echelon"]) were members of Hitler's Nazi party militia. The SS wore black uniforms and were the elite corps of the Nazi party. Most were fanatical Nazis, notorious for their brutal and terroristic methods. They committed atrocities in all occupied countries during the war. One branch of the SS manned the concentration camps. By the end of the war, the SS had 39 divisions.



DECKUNG NEHMEN!

Bleibe in geschützter Stellung bis die amerikanischen Soldaten nahe genug sind. Dann wirf Deine Waffen weg und stehe aufrecht, ohne Helm und Koppel, Hände über dem Kopf, die Handflächen nach vorne. Schwenke dieses Flugblatt oder sonst etwas Weisses und rufe:

„Ei Ssörender"

Das bedeutet: „Ich ergebe mich"

Geistesgegenwart und schnelles Handeln sind Deine besten Waffen in der Verwirrung des Kampfes. Die angreifenden Truppen werden Dir helfen diese Verwirrung auszunutzen.

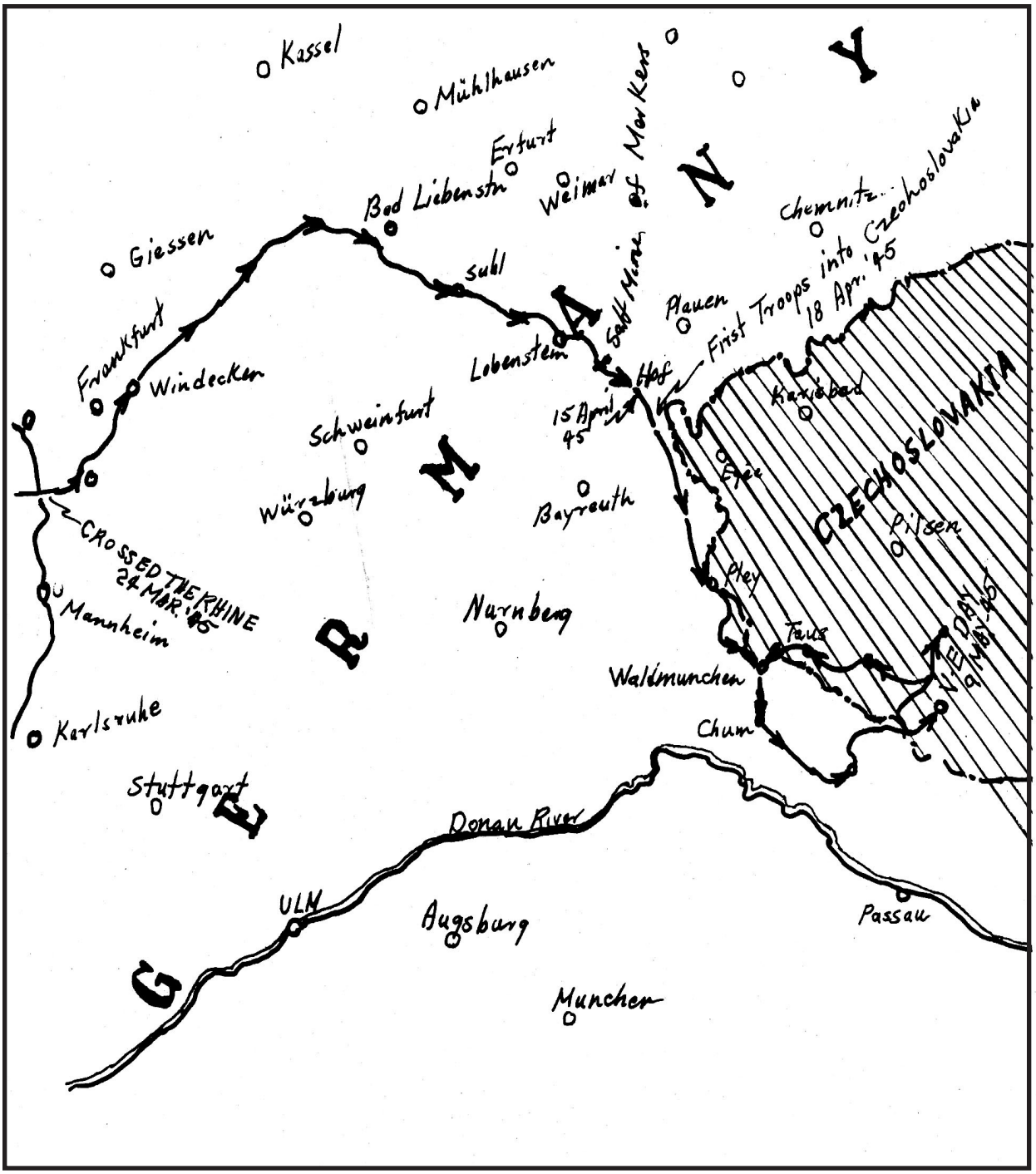
TAKE COVER

Stay in a protected place until the American Soldiers come close enough. Then throw your weapon away and stand up, without your helmet and weapons belt, keeping your hands over your head with the palms of your hands facing forward. Wave this leaflet or something else that is white and calI Surrender

This means: I Surrender

Quick wits and speedy dealing are your best weapons in the confusion of battle. The attacking troops will help you use this confusion.

Translation of Surrender Leaflet



Battle Route of the Third Battalion, 358th Infantry
From the Rhine Crossing to the Czech Border. March-- May 1945

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RACE ACROSS GERMANY

March - April 1945

After crossing the Main River on the 28th of March, the 90th Division moved rapidly. The advance became a race across Germany toward the Czech border. On the third of April, our mission was to clear out a town and the woods on its right. L Company was assigned the woods and I Company the town. There were soldiers in the town but they were not organized and quickly gave up. The woods were another story. The Germans had a pretty good defense and were not inclined to give up. I sent the reserve, K Company, through the town so they could attack the enemy in the woods from the rear. L Company would pull back and lie low, I Company would revert to reserve when they finished searching all the houses. Then they would assemble so they could move quickly if necessary.

I had an observation post on a hill on the edge of town overlooking the woods. The Communication Sergeant brought the radio to me because Colonel Bealke wanted to talk. He wanted to know my position and stated that he was looking for someone to burn a town down. I told him that I had just committed my reserve so we could finish the job here before dark. If we pulled out right now, I still couldn't get to Unterbreizbach before dark, and then someone would have to come back to clear out the enemy in the woods. I felt relieved when he said he would look for someone else for that job. I really didn't want to burn a town down.

UNTERBREIZBACH

That night, when I got back to Battalion Headquarters, I asked the staff what was on for tomorrow. They answered that we had to burn a town down. It seems that the Division Cavalry was patrolling in this area. They fired on the town of Unterbreizbach and white flags were displayed. A patrol entered the town, except for the get-away jeep. This is correct procedure for a patrol, foot or motorized. When the patrol entered the town square, they were killed or captured by S. S. troops. The get-away member witnessed this and reported directly to Division by radio. Division called the 358th Infantry because our regiment was the closest.

We arrived by truck a little after daylight and detrucked in the hills above the town. It was a peaceful "picture postcard" town located on the bend of the river. It was an agricultural town in a fertile valley. The farmers were already starting to go to work. We dropped a round of artillery on the edge of town. The white flags came out and we went in very cautiously. I Company and the tanks went to the north side of the river so they could proceed on that side later. K Company put out security so we wouldn't be surprised by a counterattack.

I told the Burgermeister why we were going to burn his town. Mandel[1] and the Town Crier went through the town shouting that the people had 30 minutes to get out. One platoon of L Company went through the town to be sure all the people and livestock were out and to open all doors and windows. Another platoon came later setting the hay on fire. It was a "hell of a mess." We didn't hang around to admire our work. We moved on with I Company on the north side of the river and the rest of the Battalion on the south side. We were headed for a bridge that was reported to be intact.

THE MERKERS SALT MINE

We stopped for a break at the entrance to the Merkers Salt Mine. There were several residences, offices, warehouses, and a prison compound. No people were in sight. I talked with the company commanders while they were eating. The companies took off for Bad Salzungen to capture a bridge that our artillery observers in their plane reported to be intact. The bridge was blown before we got there. With I Company across the river we had a good bridgehead so we stopped for the night. The A & P[2] platoon started repairing the railroad bridge which wasn't in too bad a shape. They completed the job by daylight.

A British Sergeant came into our line. He had been a prisoner of war working at the Merkers Salt Mine, so my men brought him to Battalion Headquarters for questioning. The Germans had moved the British prisoners a day ahead of our arrival. The Sergeant told us that the Germans had loot and art treasures from all over Europe stored in the mine. He had managed to escape and stole a car. He was going back to the mine to settle a score with some of the guards when they returned. We gave him gas and rations and a gun and ammo. We reported to Regiment about the treasures in the mine. In his account of the war, General Patton[3] claimed his troops recovered 4,500 gold bars each weighing 35 pounds for a value of $57,600,00. At today's (1995) value of about $380 per ounce, each gold bar would be worth $212,800. 4,500 gold bars would be worth $957,600,000 or nearly a billion dollars!

About midnight, Captain Parish in I Company called me on the phone to tell me that he had a German Colonel who wanted to talk to me personally. The colonel was the head of several hospitals in Bad Liebenstein. I told Parish to tell him he could talk to me on the phone or he could talk to him (Parish). The colonel ended up doing a little of both. Bad Liebenstein was a resort city with lots of hotels and they were being used as hospitals where he had about 1,000 patients. He wanted to surrender the town so we wouldn't shell it or burn it down. I told him to collect all the weapons and ammunition in one place. All able bodied soldiers in one place and his patients to be in or by their beds.

Pistol Collection

The next morning everything was as ordered. We searched the city for weapons, but they had all been collected and sorted out. Rifles in one room, pistols in another and shotguns and miscellaneous weapons together. We divided them and distributed them to the companies. Any that were not taken by our men were destroyed. I had a collection of twelve pistols: German,

French, Belgian, and one Russian. I had a pistol from WW I, a Waffenfaunik Mauser, but not the wooden case and leather holster. The wooden case hooks into the handle for the pistol to form a shoulder stock to make a weapon twenty-four inches long. The pistol has a rifle sight on it and was issued to artillerymen. I found a case and holster here so I now had a complete weapon for my collection.

We were ordered to halt here and were relieved by the 345th Infantry, 87th Division. This happened on the fifth of April, my twenty-sixth birthday. We had the CP in a mansion with hot water, showers and tubs, and a good wine cellar. We all got cleaned up and had a birthday party with champagne. The next day we moved back to Immelborn. On the 8th of April, we took off again and made good progress against light resistance.



Treasures from the Merkers Salt Mine

Cpl. Henry J. Poppen (left), Iroquois, S.D., of the 90th Division, 3rd Army, and Major William C. Skelton, Hartwell, GA military government section, XII Corps, look over some of the crated works of art captured by the 90th Division in the Merker Salt Mine near Kaiseroda, Germany. The mine contained 200 tons of German gold bullion, hundreds of famous sculptures and over 2,000 valuable paintings. Lt. J.M. Zanni. USASC.



Art Treasures Looted by the Nazis Stored in the Merkers Salt Mine

Members of the 90th Division, U.S. 3rd Army, under the direction of Col. Bernard Burnstein, advisor to Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Forces, discover Reichbank wealth, SS loot, museum paintings, removed from Berlin, in the salt mine vault at Merkers, Germany. Here an American GI removes a case of historic engravings from the vault. 15 April 1945. Cpl. Donald Ornitz. USASC.

Awards Presentation

On April 9, 1945, the 358th Infantry was in reserve and they formed up on a field for an awards ceremony. General Earnest, the 90th Division Commander came down to make the presentations. Only a General can present the DSC.

A Sergeant from the 1st Battalion and I, from the 3rd Battalion, were given the Distinguished Service Cross. 117 other medals, Silver and Bronze Stars were given to men of the 358th.

The DSC

The Distinguished Service Cross was established in 1918. It is given to all ranks in the Army for exceptional



My 26th Birthday Picture
April 5, 1945

R E S T R I C T E D

HEADQUARTERS
THIRD UNITED STATES ARMY
APO 403

GENERAL ORDERS 18 March 1945

NUMBER 60

1. AWARD OF DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CROSS.

2. By Direction of the President and under the provisions of Sec I, Cir 32, Hq ETO US Army, 20 Mar 1944, as amended by Sec I, Cir 56, Hq ETO US Army, 27 May 1944, a Distinguished Service Cross is awarded to:

Captain CHARLES B BRYAN, 0390490, Infantry, Company "L", 358th Infantry Regiment, 90th Infantry Division, United States Army. For extraordinary heroism in connection with military operations against an armed enemy in FRANCE. On 10 November 1944, Captain BRYAN fearlessly led his company in a bold assault on a strong enemy position near INGLANGE, FRANCE, inspiring his men by his conspicuous, heroic leadership. Following his example, the company assaulted with bayonets and grenades and killed and captured nearly a hundred of the enemy. On 11 November, Captain BRYAN again distinguished himself by personally leading his company against another strong enemy position, again inspiring his men to take the objective and inflict tremendous losses of men and materiel upon the enemy. His heroic determination and courageous devotion to duty reflect great credit upon himself and are in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service.

* * *

By command of Lieutenant General PATTON

/t/ HOBART R. GAY,
Brigadier General, U. S. Army,
Chief of Staff.

OFFICIAL - SEAL

R. E. CUMMINGS,
Colonel, Adjutant General's Department,
Adjutant General.

A TRUE EXTRACT COPY: Charles G. Brandt

CHARLES G. BRANDT,
Captain, Infantry,
Asst Adjutant.

General Orders for the Distinguished Service Cross

18 March 1945

heroism in combat. It is similar to the Navy Cross and the Air Frce Cross.The DSC is next after the highest, The Congressional Medal of Honor. The Silver Star ranks next below the Distinguished Service Cross. The Bronze Star is the lowest of the major decorations.

The 90th Division History states that 78 DSCs were given out to division members during World War II. The 3rd Battalion received 17 of these or 21.8 percent. There are nine battalions in a division. One battalion accounts for about 11% of the division strength.

I was recommended for the DSC for my action at the Falaise Gap[4] August 21st to 23rd, but it was reduced to the Silver Star. I think that I did more at the Falaise Gap than I did at the First Moselle Crossing. In awards, I hit the jackpot at the First Moselle Crossing, November 9th through 26th. In this action, I received the DSC, the French *Croix de Guerre*, and the Purple Heart.

At a previous ceremony, General Patton presented the Distinguished Service Cross to several men. He had to make a speech, and said, *These men should be sent home to breed the future generations*. Everyone agreed with him, but it didn't happen. I received a lot of kidding after that. Men I hardly knew would say, *I hear you are being transferred to the States for stud duty, ha! ha!*

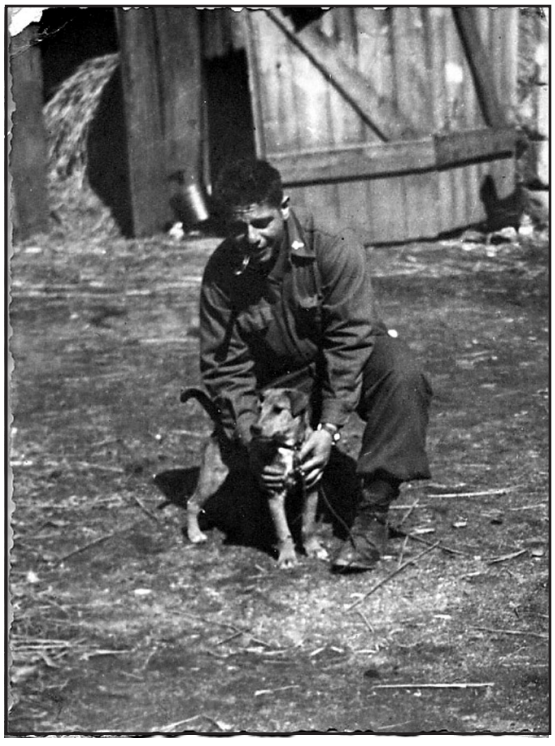
On the 12th our objective was a town on the north side of a main supply route. The map showed two villages on a hill overlooking the highway and the town. We would have to take the two villages first, then charge down the hill and take the town. When we arrived in the area we saw that there were three villages on the hill. They were defended by infantry and one tank. The German tank knocked out one of our T.Ds, but the other got him. It was getting late and when Jaffray heard on the radio that we had cleared out the third village, he thought we had cleared out our final objective.

We formed up on the hill preparing to attack. We were arranging for an artillery barrage when Captain Jaffray and the billeting party in two jeeps came flying up the highway. We stopped the artillery before it started and waited to see what was coming up next. We were too far away to stop him. Jaffray came marching out at the head of a column of about sixty Krauts and the jeep was bringing up the rear. We cheered them on and walked down the hill into town with our guns on our shoulders. Two men rode a draft horse. One man from each company was in the billeting party. They met the companies and guided them to their areas. We organized a defense and had a peaceful night.

Two days later we ran into a large road block just outside of a town. We went around it and told the inhabitants to take it down (that's the safest way to find out if it is mined). They said it was mined so we blew it up and the inhabitants had to fill up the hole. Our objective was a high hill that dominated two highways, one running north and south on the west side of the hill and one running east and west on the south side of the hill. The north-south highway was the left boundary of the jeep was bringing up the rear. We cheered them on and walked down the hill into town with our guns on our shoulders. Two men rode a draft horse. One man from each company was in the billeting party. They met the companies and guided them to their areas. We organized a defense and had a peaceful night.



Third Battalion on Paarade in Germany to Issue Decorations
L. to r. Lt. Col Bryan, Maj. Morris, Dr. Bulger, Lt. Clark, and Lt. Goodman



Third Battalion Chaplain
Captain Anthony R. Sidotti and his dog Yank



T/5 Joseph A. Sherman
The best Jeep drive in the Third Battalion

Kid from the U. S.

You are fighting in Europe, why ?
Why do you risk your life ?
To save the Western Hemisphere from a threatening «Nazi Invasion» ??
You could not possibly believe in that trash propaganda handed out by American bigwigs to keep citizens in a proper frenzy.
With Europe some 2000 miles even beyond the Pan-American 300-mile safety belt you know damned well:
It's not «Hemisphere defence» that sent you over to give a flesh and blood performance.
But then what is it ?
Turn around and have a look at the

«Friendly Folks back home»

those who stimulated the big war boom
eager to collect the prosperous profits.
Your job is easy:
You just got to die to fill their pockets.

See how it works ?

S W a



Sucker, you believed it.
They don't give a damn.
They enjoy their war-profits.
You suffer.

If they asked you again:
What would be your choice?

German Propaganda Leaflet Dropped on our Troops

The Allies also distributed leaflets by small plane or artillery shells urging the Germans to surrender., descriobing the good treatment good food they would receive. Many Germans ca,e in waving the leaflet as a white flag.

We Poach a Target

There was a town occupied by the enemy just across the highway from the hill. This was in another division's area. The only road to the top was on that side. We would present a good target to the Germans in the town, and they would also be a problem for the Cavalry that was to relieve us. I phoned Regiment to get someone to contact the other division and get permission for us to go into this area. Colonel Bealke was not there and no one was interested. I knew that this division was two days behind us, so I thought it would be safe to go ahead.

We could see from our OP that most of the Germans were in the town square, and we thought they were ready to give up. I sent one company and emphasized that speed was essential. Go in and bring out the main body of Germans as quickly as possible. I have forgotten the time, but I am sure they broke all records and brought out about fifty Krauts. The Cavalry relieved us that night so we moved on.

The next day the Battalion was spread out. I Company had to check out ten miles of roads in the hills on our left. K Company had to clear out a patch of woods and a town about five miles away on our right. We received orders at 1300 with a LD and an objective about six miles away.

I couldn't raise I or K Company on the radio. We could see the TD's that were with I Company so knew what time they would come in. I moved L Company to the L.D. and went to check on K Company. There was a main road through the woods into town. I knew they had used that road, but they were supposed to have checked the woods and a secondary road on the left of their area. This road would be a shortcut for us. (Two jeeps with eight people). The voice told me to be careful. We dismounted and spread out on each side of the road. About halfway through, a German soldier came out with a white flag. There were five of them in a dugout. They could hear the shooting in the town behind them, so figured it was time to give up.

German and American weapons were firing in one end of the town. I saw the K Company jeep down the street and knew that the CP would be near. When we arrived, there was a guard sitting on the steps fast asleep. We stepped over him and went in. The radio was in the window with the aerial outside. The operator was sitting on the floor asleep. The Company CO sat at a table with his head on his arm, asleep. Several men stretched out on the floor, asleep. It was a weird scene.

I first thought that something serious was wrong. I shook the Commanding Officer and he shot up like a Jack-in-the-Box, making so much noise that everyone jumped up. I didn't have to say anything; they felt bad about what happened. I felt relieved that they were just suffering from lack of sleep. We were all in the same boat. I told them to get on the ball and finish the job here. I was sending trucks to haul them to the LD. They put it into high gear after that.

Later at the LD we were preparing to take off without I Company. Colonel Bealke drove up, but stayed back talking to some of the men. When I couldn't pretend to be busy any longer, I went over to receive my punishment for going across the division boundary line. He looked serious, took off his helmet and said, *See these gray hairs - you put some of them there*. I asked him what he would have done in my place. He changed the subject.

On April 13th, we were in reserve and occupied a town without any opposition. We had a quiet night and needed the rest. The next day things just didn't seem right. I could not put my finger on it, but I had an uneasy feeling about the situation. Then I realized what was wrong. There were no German civilians moving in the streets. The town was occupied by farmers, and they usually ignored the war when possible and tried to carry on their business as usual.

About this time, I was notified that a German soldier with a white flag was outside. I looked out of the window and there was a Sergeant from K Company with a German soldier. He was not blindfolded and was looking around taking note of the building we occupied. (It's customary to blindfold the enemy when you bring him into your positions under a flag of truce.)

I went out and talked to him. He would only give his name, rank, and serial number. He stated that he came in to see if we would honor the white flag. I asked several questions, but he wouldn't give any more information. He spoke English so I was careful what I said to the Sergeant. I told him to take the German back the same route he had come.

I told the switchboard operator to get all the Company Commanders on the phone for a conference. I sent word to the Aid Station that it should move and told Sergeant Polito[5] to prepare to move the Battalion CP. I asked the Company Commanders, *Where are the inhabitants in your area?* They all answered, *They are in their houses, no one outside working.* I asked, *What do you think that indicates?* They answered, *The people must be expecting an attack or some action by the enemy.*

I told K Company to change the positions that the German soldier had seen, and for all the companies to be on full alert. We all decided that the best thing we could do was to break up or discourage any attempt to attack us. The Battalion Staff and the artillery liaison officer all agreed this was the only answer.

We fired a heavy barrage of artillery into the woods on the left side of the town where we thought the tanks and trucks would be concealed and another barrage into the town square where the infantry would be assembling. We didn't have an attack, but shortly afterwards the Aid Station was besieged by the wounded from the town. More civilians than soldiers. Dr. White[6] reminded me of this incident when he visited me. I had preferred to forget it. But we were not attacked.

BATTLE FOR HOF

On the 15th, the Division objective was the large industrial town of Hof. The 3rd Battalion with the help of the 90th Recon Troop was given the job. The Battalion was motorized and I Company was leading, riding on the tanks and T. D.'s. We jumped off at 0730. Koditz, the last town before Hof, was taken by 1100 where we knocked out one tank and took 95 prisoners. Company I reached the outskirts of Hof by 1300 and ran into a vicious house to house fight. The streets were a death trap, so we advanced by moving through holes blasted in the walls between houses. All three companies were committed and by nightfall three-fourths of Hof was cleared. We halted in place, but the shooting continued during the night at anything that moved. Several civilians were killed

trying to get home.

The city was finally secured by noon of the 16th after 825 prisoners were taken. The hospitals in town held about 4,000 wounded German soldiers. The rest of the 358th moved in. The 3rd Battalion had liberated a lot of whiskey from warehouses before I could put a guard on them. The troops were beginning to get into trouble, so I assembled the Battalion and moved out to the east to a small town that wasn't so crowded.

The Battalion Battle History Records the Incident:[7]

The battalion also uncovered a number of liquor warehouses. During the afternoon of the 16th the Battalion pushed out to the Army Restraining Line and held up.

We forced marched for several hours before taking a break. We were stretched out for a couple of miles in a valley when a German plane came over low trying to get back into Czechoslovakia. Everyone shot at it and the machine guns on the jeep opened up. The valley made a sharp turn to the right, and the plane went straight into the mountain and blew up. At least 200 men claimed credit for downing the plane with one shot. I sent a patrol to check on the pilot. He had been killed on impact. The forced march and the plane had a sobering effect on everyone.

Colonel Bealke called me on the phone that he had three reporters who wanted to go to Czechoslovakia. (I wished he had one that wanted to go to Johns Island, S.C. Would I take them there!) I said, "Sure, send them out; we'll go first thing in the morning." One reporter from Georgia came out that night. I wined and dined him on K Rations, and he promised to send me a copy of his article and pictures. I never did hear from him.



Hand Grenades

Five types of hand grenades were made, three were used in combat: fragmentation, offensive, and chemical. Fragmentation grenades were used by the foot soldier. They weighed about 20 ounces and had a time delay of four or five seconds from the time the safety lever was released.. The killing radius was five to ten yards. The range depended on the strength of the thrower with a maximum of about 35 to 40 yards. Because fragments from the explosion could range out for 50 yards or more, we would keep down until our grenades exploded.



FB Browning M1903 9mm Automatic
Belgian



Nagant Revolver 1930 Model
USSR (Russian)



Tokarev 7.62 mm TT 1933 Pistol
USSR (Russian)



Steyr 9mm. Pistol M12
Austria



Walther P-38 9mm. Pistol
German



Walther 7.65mm Model P
German



Mann Automatic 6.35 mm.
German



7.65mm Model 27 Pistol
Czechoslovak



M1911 .45 Caliber Automatic
United States



Luger 9mm PO8
German

At the end of World War II, Germany was awash with weapons of all kinds, especially small arms. Although pistols were not issued to infantrymen, many of us "acquired" weapons of all kinds. When we found good German weapons with ammunition, we used them against the enemy. The photos above show some of the pistols I have seen.

FOOTNOTES

[1]German interpreter from S-2 Section (Intelligence).

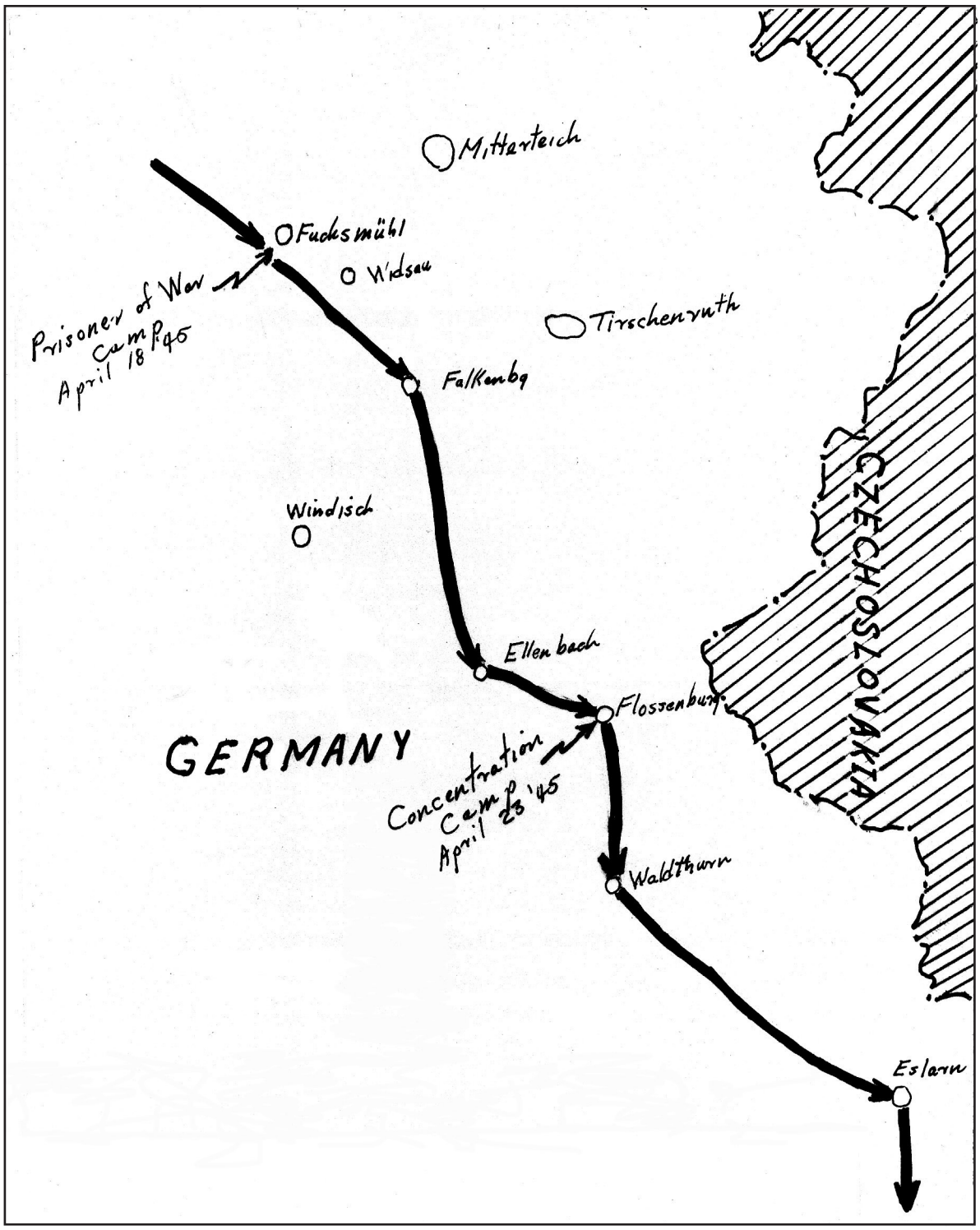
[2]Ammunition and Pioneer Platoon (trained engineers).

[3]Patton, George S., Jr. *War as I knew It*. Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1947. Page 288.

[4]See pages 40-46 above.

[5]First Sergeant.

[5]The Battalion Surgeon who took Dr. Bulger's place.

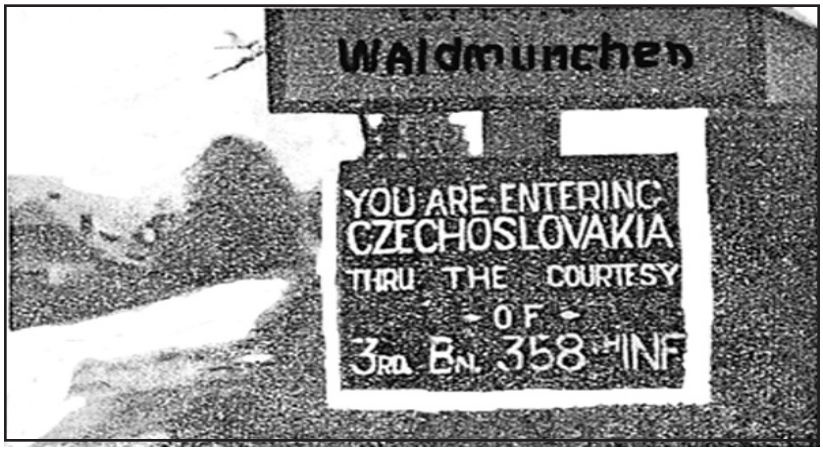


Battle Route of the 3rd Battalion, 358th Infantry
Along the Czech Border April 1945

19

THE CZECH BORDER

April 1945



The A & P[1] Platoon Made a ThisSign for the Occasion

Someone added:

Now you may fraternize by courtesy of the same outfit.

The 90th Division History[2] Records the Situation:

A news blackout had been imposed on the activities of the 3rd Army for several days. The news hungry public read newspapers avidly for word of Patton's dramatic drive. For the 3rd Army nothing was impossible. For all they knew spearheading elements might already be in Czechoslovakia." (Unreasonable, of course.)

The answer was not long in coming. When the blackout was finally lifted, the 90th had taken Hof against fanatic but futile resistance, and elements of the Division, duly accompanied by press photographers and war correspondents sent to immortalize the historic occasion had indeed set foot upon the soil of Czechoslovakia. The 90th Division thus became the first unit in the E. T. O to slice across the German nation, to cut the land in half, to divide Bavaria in the south from the great industrial Germany in the north. The date was 18 April 1945.

From The History[3] of the 358th Infantry:

The news spread like fire, when, on the 18th of April the 358th Infantry was the first to enter Czechoslovakia, with the Second and Third Battalions and Regimental Intelligence and Reconnaissance Platoon sending patrols across the border. These elements were the first of the Western Allies to cross Germany completely from border to border.

The Following Account is Recorded in the 3rd Battalion History:[4]

From this position, a Task Force consisting of Company I on armor, the Regimental I and R platoon, attached heavy machine guns from Company M and the Battalion command group left on the morning of the 18th with the mission of crossing the Czechoslovakian border. This was accomplished when 1st Lt. Merrill B. Rudes, Battalion S-2 crossed the border at 0955, thus becoming the first American soldier to do so. And consequently, this Battalion became the first Allied unit to cut clear across Germany. The Task Force returned at 1200, bringing with them 36 prisoners they had gathered during the journey.

My Version

We took off as soon as the other reporters arrived. We picked up some prisoners going in. They were happy to catch a ride away from the Russians. Two days before the fanatic enemy was giving us a lot of trouble. When we arrived at the border, we erected the sign and everyone with a camera took pictures. An artillery plane landed on the road. The pilot shut the engine off and got out to walk across the border.

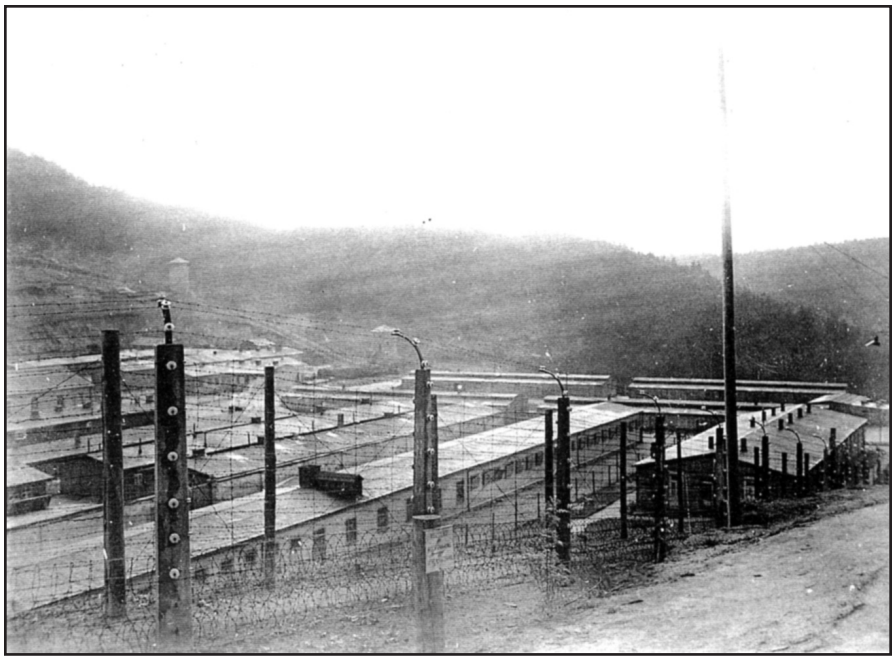
Our security spotted a company of Germans forming up to attack us. We already had orders to head south that afternoon. We had crossed the Army Restraining Line so I didn't know if we really should be there. I didn't want to get involved here. I started a withdrawal with the tanks covering our rear. The pilot did not ask for help in starting his plane. Everyone would have been glad to help. He must have set the throttle too advanced, because when he spun the propeller it started to move forward, keeled over, and crushed the front end. The pilot set it on fire and got into one of the jeeps. The tanks discouraged the enemy from crossing the German border.

FLOSSENBURG

We set off on a seven day, 76 mile chase through Ober-weissenbach, Brand, Falkenberg, Ellenbach, Waldthurn, and Eslam, capturing 500 prisoners. The German concentration camp at Flossenberg was liberated on the 23rd with a mere 1,163 of the original 16,000 prisoners still there. The doctor of the camp stayed with this group because they were too weak to march. Some of these died every day. Hundreds from the Flossenberg concentration camp were lost during the march. They couldn't keep up and the guards shot them.

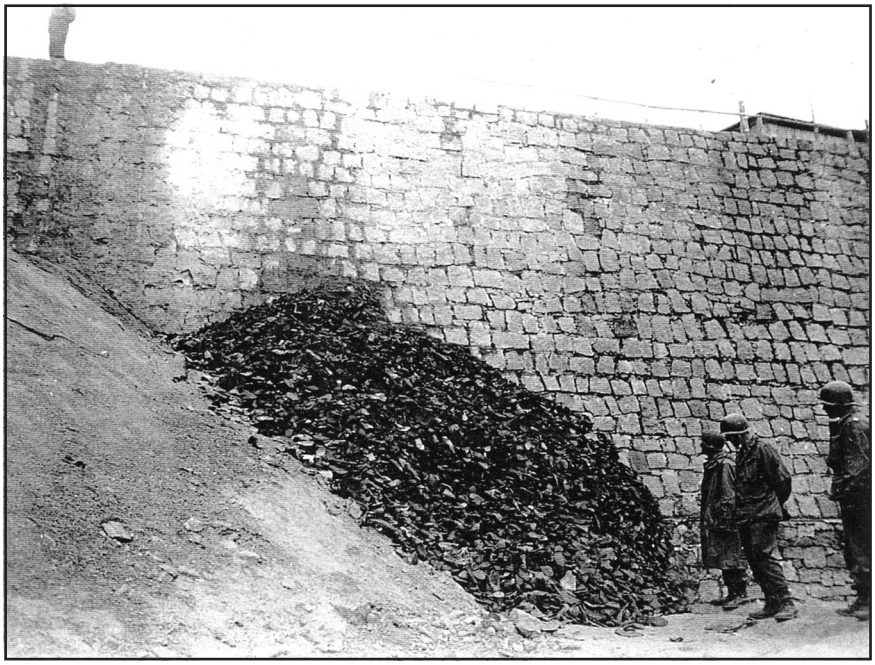
One of the first Americans in the camp was Major Bill Falvey, S-2, 358th Infantry. We tried to make sure that everyone in the Battalion got to see the inside of the camp. It was hard to believe that civilized people would commit such atrocities. It was a living reason why we had to fight and win this war. The odor in the prisoners barracks was so bad that some of the men became nauseated.

We were moving south parallel to the Czech border. We received orders not to fire any artillery into an area in Czechoslovakia. Later I learned that the Lippizaner mares and colts had been moved there by the Germans. After the war, they drove them through Waldmunchen on their way home to Vienna. The resistance was light



Flossenberg Concentration Camp

The camp had barbed wire enclosures and an electric fence. Originally the camp held 60,000 prisoners and all but 16,000 were marched away to avoid their falling into American Hands. Those left in the camp: 400 typhus cases and those too weak from hunger to walk. 1,600 a month died of starvation. Prisoners were both war and political of all nations. T/4 James A Ryan, USASC.



Shoes from Victims of Nazi Camp

Infantrymen of the 358th Regiment, 3rd US Army, examine huge pile of shoes in the Flossenberg concentration camp. Shoes represent prisoners who died and were burned. Camp originally held 60,000 and all but 18,000 were marched away to avoid their falling into American Hands. Left were 400 typhus cases and those too weak from hunger to walk; 1,400 a month died of starvation. Prisoners were both war and political, of all nations. T/4 J. A. Ryan.



Piles of Corpses at Flossenberg Concentration Camp

The Germans moved the inmates two days ahead of us. Over 1,100 too weak to travel, were left with the camp doctor. The pictures of the corpses shows the number that died in those four days.



Freed American Prisoners of War

M/Sgt Winfield van Hagen, Williamstown, MA. (lower right) interviews American prisoners freed from prisoner of war camp. T/5 J. S. Ryan. USASC.



American Prisoners of War Liberated by the 90th Division



Liberated GIs Showing Effects of Mistreatment

These men show the effects of a starvation diet, forced marches, and labor in the rock mines while prisoners of the Germans. The GIs were captured in the Battle of the Bulge. .

R-E-S-T-R-I-C-T-E-D

SATURDAY
21 April
1945

The Sniper

DAILY PUBLICATION OF THE "FIGHTING 90TH"

Published
in
GERMANY

60 YANKS DIE IN NAZI MARCH OF DEATH

PROOF OF GERMAN ATROCITY REVEALED BY 63 SURVIVORS, BEATEN, STARVED IN PRISON

Sixty-three American survivors of one of this war's worst German atrocities--a literal March of Death rivalling in horror its Baatan counterpart--last night described in detail from hospital cots the inhuman and barbaric treatment they had received while prisoners at the infamous Bad Orb concentration camp at Fuchsmuhl.

Their rescue yesterday, by Co.s "I" and "L" of the 357th regiment, revealed that 227 others were still on the march somewhere between here and the Russian front, and expressed fear that many of them will die by the wayside, their bodies thrown into a hole for a quick burial, the fate of 60 of their comrades on the fateful march they survived.

Members of three infantry divisions--the 45th, 28th, and 106th--they told for the first time how they were beaten with sticks, bayonets, whips, and fists; how they were forced to work in salt mines and rock quarries 10 to 12 hours a day on a diet of thin watery soup.

GERMANS CAUGHT BETWEEN TWO FIRES

Emaciated, their bodies discolored with ugly welts, and crawling with lice, the men revealed how desperately the Germans tried, first, to keep them from the onrushing Russian armies in the Frankfurt sector; and then, second, form the advancing American forces closing in on them from the west.

Those who failed to stand the terrific ordeal were abandoned on the road, while others were loaded on stretchers and stacked ten to a horse drawn wagon. The sixty-three rescued represented the more serious cases, too cumbersom to carry for fast travel.

Their sole source of food during the march was one loaf of soggy bread per day for ten men.

WAR NEWS ON NEXT PAGE

THIS IS YOUR ENEMY.

(AN EDITORIAL)

It COULD have happened to you.

The inherent cruelness of the German people has never been more vividly illustrated than in the bestial treatment they accorded our soldiers at Fuchsmuhl.

It should serve as a powerful lesson to every one of us that Germans are not to be trusted; that we must never for a moment relax our vigilance and our determination of total defeat of Germany; that we can't get soft now.

Remember Fuchsmuhl the next time you might feel in a forgiving mood for any German soldier. Think of the sixty bodies now rotting in German holes; and then think of the dozens of others certain to die by the wayside, victims of a human madness nurtured by Hitler.

And if that isn't enough, maybe we can arrange to have you talk to some of the sixty-three lucky enough to have been found alive.

The Sniper
21 April 1944

until May 1st when we turned east through Waldmunchen and then hit some strong road blocks in a dense woods. We lost two tanks and had thirty-four casualties, including six dead. One of these was a tank driver who had come all the way from the beach. He was known and liked by most everyone in the Battalion.

LAST PROMOTION

We were relieved by the 38th Infantry, 2nd Division on the 4th and assembled in an area near Kirchaitnach. I went to Regimental Headquarters located in a big house. They were very formal, the clerk asked me to sign in on the daily log. The last entry on the log was the order from Division promoting me from Major to Lieutenant Colonel, with an official date of 28 April 1945 The clerk said Colonel Bealke wanted to see me. He congratulated me and gave me a Lieutenant Colonel's silver leaf.

I now had Captain's bars painted on my helmet, Major's gold leaves on my jacket shoulder straps, and Lieutenant Colonel's silver leaves on my shirt collar.

The whole Division was now in reserve, but the situation was abruptly changed on 4 May, 1945 when a representative of the 11th Panzer Division entered the 90th lines under a white flag of truce bearing the following letter.

Division C P
3 May 1945

11th Panzer Division
Commander

The development of the military and political situation makes it desirable to me to avoid further losses on both sides. I have therefore ordered the Major, bearer of this note, to negotiate with you the cessation of hostilities.

Von Wietersheim
Lt. General and Division Commander

WAR'S END

We had fought the 11th Panzer Division off and on for the past month. The 3rd Battalion took in about 1,200 prisoners. I divided them into two convoys. They were all motorized. The light vehicles, jeeps and cars in one convoy, the big trucks in another. The Division History states that the final count was 9,050 Germans, 700 trucks, and a wealth of guns and material taken in.

On 6May 6 1945, 862 men and 127 officers surrendered to the Battalion saying that they had orders to do so from Admiral Doenitz.[6] At 1125 on May 7, 1945, Regiment informed us that the war was over as of 0145 that morning. A Czech lady invited the Battalion Forward Headquarters Group, about eight men, to have lunch. She served a big cheese omelet with fresh bread and jam. We furnished the coffee. The Battalion remained for two days in the vicinity of Strasin enjoying band concerts, street dances, movies and hot chow.



Surrender of the 11th Panzer Division to the US 90th Division
6 May 1945



A group of soldiers of the 90th and 2nd Divisions, 3rd Army wait outside a building to photograph German Gen. Wendt von Weitersheim, commanding general 11th Panzer Division who is making his surrender to the 90th Division near Vseruby, Czechoslovakia. 6 May 1945

FOOTNOTES

[1]Ammunition and Pioneer Platoon of the Battalion.

[2]*A History of the 90th Division in World War II*, page 79.

[3]*A Brief History of the 358th Infantry*, pages 55 and 56.

[4]*Battle History, Third Battalion, 358th Infantry*, p. 63.

[7]The Imperial Austrian stud farm was in Lippiza (once in the Austrian Empire) now near Trieste, Italy. The breed dates back 400 years and is one of the most valuable in the world. The Lippizaner horses are specially trained for dressage at the Spanish Riding School in Vienna. After the war, schooling began again and the horses now give exhibitions all over the world. The colts are black until they are about one-year old when they change to the usual shade of grey.

[8]*A History of the 90th Division in World War II*. Pages 81 and 82.

[9]Admiral Doenitz became head of the German Government after Hitler's death in his bunker (April 30) when the Russians captured Berlin.



Nazi Stiletto
Note the eagle on the hilt clutching the swastika.



Nazi Knife with Stag horn Handle

The knife blade has an inscription incised into the steel: a Nazi slogan ***Arbeit adelt***: *Work Ennobles*. This slogan is reminiscent of the inscription over the gateway to Auschwitz: ***Arbeit macht frei*****:** *Work will make you free***.** The scabbard is decorated with a swastika



German Bayonet
This bayonet was carried by German troops who entered Paris in triumph when France fell to the Nazi's in 1941.

20

MY COMBAT EXPERIENCE

July 1944 - May 1945

COMPANY COMMANDER

I was a Rifle Company Commander in combat from 16 July 1944 to 4 December 1944, 141 days. Even when we were in reserve and resting, we were not far from the action. We had always taken our objective on schedule and, during this period, we experienced over 100% replacement of enlisted men and 200% replacement of officers. I think 141 days as a Rifle Company CO in the 90th Division could be a record. I had been slightly wounded twice and was just about burned out. I was relieved on December 4th and went to the Division Rest Center, then given a 36-hour pass to Paris. I returned to duty on December 8th and was given the safest job in the Battalion: Battalion Executive Officer. The next day I was slightly wounded again.

I received the Purple Heart[1] and Oak Leaf Cluster, but I don't mention this around someone who has been severely wounded. The Purple Heart is given if you lose your life, or an arm or leg, or if you are only slightly wounded. I think that there should be a distinction here.

ALCOHOL RATION

You might think that we had a problem with alcohol from what I have written. In most cases, the men and officers looked out for each other. We kept some cognac at the Company CP and when a patrol came back to make their report, we would give them some hot coffee laced with cognac. Men just off patrol were keyed up, and the warm drink would help them relax and get to sleep for a couple of hours before jumping off the next morning. These men usually played an important part in the attack.

When we were in a rest area, the Battalion Supply Officer would sometimes bring up whiskey[2] or some other drink from Scotland. An officer could buy one bottle, but each company was allotted six bottles. I would buy all six (it was very cheap), and give each platoon leader, Sergeant or Lieutenant, a bottle. I figured if a Sergeant was doing an officer's job, he deserved the privileges as well as the risks. We shared the whiskey, so it didn't go very far.

Once, I was sent to the Third Army Headquarters in Luxembourg City on Battalion business. Sherman and I left first thing in the morning. The roads had been cleared the day before, so were in good shape, but it was snowing again. It increased as the day wore on.

Going back that afternoon, the road in the woods was visible, but in the open meadows it was a crooked road under a solid blanket of snow. I obtained a pole and walked ahead probing for the road. This was slow going, but we didn't want to end up in a drainage ditch. It was very cold, so after every meadow crossing, we would both take a swig from the cognac bottle. It was here that we decided to put doors on the side of the jeep.

THE ENGINEERS

The 315th Engineers was an excellent outfit. A platoon was assigned to each Rifle Battalion. A squad worked with each company.

When we had to take out a concrete pillbox, the job would be assigned to a Rifle Platoon. The Rifle Platoon consisted of three squads of twelve men each (usually 9 or 10 men). The usual procedure was for two Infantry squads to get into position so that they could keep the pillbox closed up by firing into all the openings. The third squad accompanied by two Engineers would crawl up under the fire to blow the door open. When they got as close as possible the Infantry would cease fire and one of the Engineers would rush up and set the charge of 25 pounds of C-2 at the door. The fuse was long enough for him to fall back a safe distance. When the door was blown open, the third squad rushed up and threw in hand grenades and also shot into the pillbox.

Once the Infantry got close enough to button the pillbox up or got on top of it, the fortress became a death trap. Sometimes we poured gasoline down the air vents and dropped a grenade in to set it on fire. We used pillboxes as a shelter from the weather and had our security outside in trenches or foxholes. When it rains in the foxholes, you think, "If I could just stand up I could get some sleep."

On one occasion, we were taking a pillbox and everything was working as planned. The first Engineer was putting a charge on the door. A small aperture above the door opened up and a grenade fell out. It exploded and set off the C-2. The Engineer disappeared. The second Engineer rushed up before the smoke cleared, set his charge, and blew the door. The infantry didn't take any prisoners.

On another occasion, we had information that a road we needed was mined with antitank mines. The Engineer Company sent up a Lieutenant and a Sergeant to disarm them during the night. It was under enemy observation so no lights could be used.

When they arrived, they hadn't had any supper so Olsen fixed some eggs and biscuits for them. I talked with them while they ate. During the process of disarming the mines, one went off and killed the Lieutenant. The Sergeant completed the job by himself. Our tanks and vehicles used the road in the attack the next morning.

We planned to attack across a plowed field which was supposed to be mined. The Engineers sent us two men with a mine-detector to clear a path for the tanks. We laid down an artillery barrage and started across the field. We started to receive some fire, so we stepped up the pace

and started shooting from the hip, spraying the enemy positions. The Engineer with the detector was hit. The second Engineer didn't take up the detector, but verbally attacked me. It was not the place or time for a discussion. A couple of my men led him off, another man picked up the detector and we moved on. The medics took care of the wounded Engineer. Sometimes the supporting troops believed that only the Infantry was supposed to get wounded.

MINES AND BOOBY TRAPS

Mines are used in combat by units in a defensive position. The Germans seemed to have an unlimited supply. The only time that we used mines was when we stopped in front of Metz on the Moselle River. We never used booby traps.

The 90th Division History lists 131 casualties from mines and booby traps. Chaplain Esser lost a finger when he picked up something that was booby trapped. Sergeant Moore, a platoon leader in L Company, was wounded in his arm. The company medic treated him, and he stayed with his platoon until everything was stabilized. On his way to the aid station, he stepped on a mine. It was rumored that he would lose both feet, I never did learn the final results.

Sometimes we used a trip wire at night for defense. It was a small but strong wire stretched across a road or path about six inches above the ground. Sometimes, we attached a tin can with a few rocks that would rattle if the wire was hit. One night a Frenchman wearing wooden shoes hit our wire. We could hear him running back down the road for half a mile.

THE MEDICS

In training back in the States, we were jealous of the Medics. When it was hot, they trained in the cool shade, and if it was raining or cold they trained inside. We made jokes about pill rollers. You had to be in top physical condition to get into the service so there wasn't much need for the medics services.

In combat we needed them, and they came through with flying colors. I don't remember how many times I had to order our medics to stay down and wait until the second round of artillery came in before going to a wounded man. I even had to tackle Corporal Williams. The Germans always shot a second round at the same spot.

One time, we were waiting at the LD to jump off. One of our Medics, who had been to the Aid Station for supplies, came by. A new recruit who had just joined the company made a remark about the pill roller. An old veteran grabbed him by his shirt and said, "Don't ever call him that again; he is called Doctor around here." The recruit was probably nervous about his first attack, but I am sure he didn't make that mistake again.

We all felt that if we could get a wounded man to the Aid Station that the medic would save him. They did a super job, and the medics who were assigned to Rifle Companies had over 300% replacements.

After the First Moselle Crossing, I went to the 65th Field Hospital to check on the L Company casualties. The hospital had transferred all of their patients and were resting before the next attack. My timing was right and I was invited to dinner. I noticed that all the Doctors and Nurses were wearing slippers. I asked someone about this and was informed that they had been standing so long that they couldn't get their boots on their swollen feet.

EQUIPMENT

Most of our equipment was excellent. The M1 Rifle was one of the best. The Germans came out with a very similar rifle before the end of the war. I sent home one of their old types, but never did get one of their newer models (disadvantage of being stationed at battalion headquarters). Our 60 and 81 mm. Mortars were very reliable. After getting on the target, and starting to fire for effect, a good crew could put three rounds in the air before the first round hit the ground. I read several accounts that the Germans were amazed at the amount of mortar and artillery fire they received. They said we would fire artillery at just one man. If that one man was carrying an important message it might make the difference. Their ammunition was often rationed, thanks to our Army Air Corps..

Our vehicles never let us down. They were all overloaded, and several times we had to winch them across a muddy ford. The Germans lost a good many tanks from the lack of spare parts. They had a problem transporting them to the right place at the right time. The Army Air Corps was responsible for that.

If we lost a tank, it was replaced before we went back into action. Our tanks could not win in a direct shoot-out with a German tank. They were armed with an 88^3 and our tanks had only a 75 mm. gun, but our tanks could out maneuver theirs, and we usually outnumbered them.



Tank Fitted with Scraper Blade

On February 4th, 1945, we had to move through St. Vith[4] en route to another area. I had seen a lot of destruction in this war, but I can safely say that this town was the most completely destroyed town in the E.T.O. It was just a field of rubble; no wall stood above the rubble. There was no outline to mark the streets. This town had changed hands several times during the Battle of the Bulge. The Allies resistance slowed the German advance so that they failed to capture the necessary fuel dumps they needed to keep going.

The Engineers were busy elsewhere so the Tank Company sent up a tank equipped with a road scraper blade. This tank cleared a road through St. Vith. When this tank is moving with the blade up, it cannot shoot its big gun to the front, only to the sides or rear. When the blade is down it can fire 360°.

After hearing some exciting stories, slightly exaggerated, of our adventures, the tank crew wanted to go on with us. Our tank Lieutenant got them transferred to his platoon. They did some road clearing, but their main mission was to take out any OPs (observation posts) during an attack. They would get into a position where they could see the objective. When the attack started, the tank would shoot out any suspected OPs. We had been doing this for some time, and the tank relieved one of the regular tanks for the attack. We would check out these positions afterward. Several times we found evidence that they had been occupied. Once there was a radio tuned into the German Fire Direction Center.

In the middle of March 1945, our objective was a small town located on an important crossroad. We planned to attack from the south with a company on each side of the highway. We had a very good OP and could see that the Germans had a well-prepared defense from that quarter, so I halted the assault companies and told them to keep firing enough to hold the German's attention. The reserve company would swing around on the right and attack from the northeast. About this time, one of my runners spotted a group of Germans (about 100) preparing to attack the reserve company. I called Lt. Jones on the radio to bring his A & P platoon and the Tank with the scraper blade. They had enough trucks for everyone to ride. The tank could make about 20 mph. They didn't have far to come.

We (the forward Headquarters) had a ringside seat for the whole show from the OP. The tank could fire from its side while moving. The timing was just right. They caught the Germans in the open. They ran parallel to the Germans firing the 50 caliber machine gun and the big gun with anti personnel shells. The tank reached the head of the German forces, wheeled around and came back firing from its other side.

The reserve company hit the German defenses from the rear before they could reorganize. I would have liked to have had a movie camera for this action. The tank with the scraper blade was the star performer.

The steel helmet that we wore was one of the most versatile pieces of equipment that we used. The steel part was the same size for every soldier. You wore a plastic liner underneath it, and that was adjustable to the head. Here are some of the uses we put our helmets to. The steel part made a good seat. It was frequently used as a wash basin and sometimes used to dig a foxhole, if

the soil was loose. I have seen a good stew cooked in a helmet. After wearing it for a week or two you felt undressed without it.



GI Helmet, World War II
Courtesy of the American War Museum, Charleston SC

Our bazooka was ineffective against the German tanks. The bazooka rocket would bounce off the front or upper side. We had to shoot them into the radiator of the tank in the rear or break the tracks on the side. We used the German bazooka toward the end of the war.

The GI raincoat was too short. It usually came down to a couple of inches above the boots. The water ran off the coat to the pants above the boots. At one of the camps in England there was a British Army shoe repair shop. We were there a couple of days so I had them sew a 12 inch strip on the bottom of my coat. It didn't look so good but it was an improvement when it rained.

THE RIFLE COMPANY

The most dangerous job in the Infantry is the Rifle Platoon Leader. The turnover for the Officers in I Company was 900%, K Company 766%, and L Company 716%. The Rifle Company Commander has to keep in mind replacements for all key personnel and train these people when possible. Because of the continuing turnover, the company commander had to work, reorganizing and instructing, when he should be resting. Then he had to censor and sign all outgoing mail.

We were usually relieved every 3rd day when feasible. In the First Moselle Crossing, we fought continuously from November 9th to November 18th. I was so tired that I hurt all over. I felt like I had a tight band around my chest. I was L Company CO at this time. When it was over the company was assigned a group of houses in a French village. There was no celebration; all we wanted was a dry spot big enough to stretch out and sleep.

If the company has two platoons and the machine gun section deployed on a defensive position in foxholes, the company CO should be close enough behind so that he knows what is going on. Then, he can take appropriate action, but not be in a position he might be pinned down. If he is in a dry cellar with the reserve platoon and the rest of the headquarters group, it's bad for the morale of two thirds of the company. When it rains at night now, I am very thankful not to be in a foxhole.

A lot of the men and officers spent months and sometimes years training for combat, but they were wounded or killed before they had a chance to use their skills and knowledge. Lt. Miller who was with me at Fort Benning was wounded on his first attack, spent months recuperating, then was killed on his second attack. Some men were hit by artillery before they made their first attack.

Lt. Blackford would have made an excellent Company Commander, but lost his eye before there was a vacancy. I was very lucky to be able to use the training and experience that I had accumulated in R.O.T.C., over two years active duty as a platoon and company officer in the States, and five months active duty in combat under Colonel Bealke. During this period I learned a lot from Sergeant Cox and Sergeant Burke.

Napoleon said he would rather have a lucky officer than a smart one. I think that would apply to me. I did have more than the average training for an Infantry Officer at Fort Benning Infantry School for Officers, Junior and Senior Classes.

Some people think that officers only have to give orders, but its a lot more than that. All the Officer's Schools in the Army emphasize the fact that giving the order is only 20% of the officer's job. Seeing that the order is executed is 80%. I might add that the officer has to know how the order should be executed.

I read somewhere, that in an emergency, regulations are to be intelligently disregarded. I agree with that if the unit you command will benefit by such action. I disregarded regulations several times in my short career and got away with it.

RIFLE COMPANY SUPPLY SECTION

When replacements came in, we would have them turn in all extra clothing. They could keep two pairs of socks and two pairs of underwear, but only one of everything else. The supply sergeant sorted these into piles and the company veterans picked out what they could use. Any clothes left were stored in a trailer for future use.

We were issued waterproof boots in the last week of January 1945. They were in short supply, so if a man with these boots came through the Aid Station on the way to the hospital, they exchanged his waterproof boots for regular leather boots. They had a trailer load of all sizes. The goon squad (a sergeant and four men assigned to locate and move the dead men out of the area) would remove the waterproof boots from the dead.

Sometimes socks and handkerchiefs were scarce. We had to liberate material from homes for handkerchiefs. Once I cut the shirt tail off a wool shirt to use as a handkerchief. By the end of the day, my nose was red and sore as a boil. Under combat conditions, the supply people did a great job.

KP (Kitchen Police)

In the Army, to police is to clean up. A rifle company in garrison would assign six to eight KPs to the Mess Sergeant each day. On week ends and holidays, men were put on KP as company punishment for minor offences. They helped prepare food and cleaned up the kitchen, dining hall, and the utensils.

In the field, when the kitchen was in the 2 1/2 ton truck or in a tent, only two KPs were needed. Each man washed his own mess gear in garbage cans filled with soapy water and rinse water, sometimes boiling. The KPs tended to these operations.

In combat, sometimes men who were on the verge of battle fatigue were assigned to the rear area under the Mess Sergeant and the Supply Sergeant. They would hand carry supplies, bring out the wounded, and move the dead to an area where they could later be picked up by trucks.

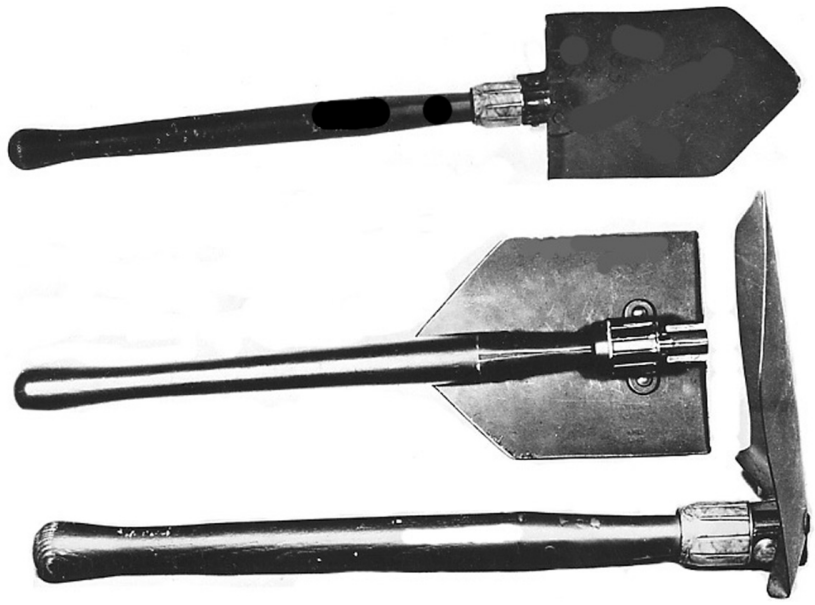


A Mess Kit

K Rations didn't need a mess ket. But we were served meals in this mess kit when we were lucky enough to get hot food. The usual method of serving was to pile all the food into the kit with meat, vegetables, bread, in whatever order the cooks wanted. All of us remember meals when our dessert ended on top. We ate it all regardless of the mess.

FOXHOLES

All Infantrymen were issued an entrenching tool, which was a small metal shovel with a short wooden handle. The canvas cover hung on the web belt with the canteen and first aid kit. All of our vehicles carried a regular shovel.



Entrenching Tool. Top: Open, Center: Folded

New American Field or Entrenchng Shovel, adapted from a captured German shovel, modified and improved by the Quartermaster Corps. The picture shows the implement as a pick; the blade folded back for carrying, and the blade locked in a straight out position for use as a shovel. A knurled nut locks the blade in either of the three positions. 1944. Photo in the National Archives.

The foxhole was usually occupied by two men. It would be eight feet long, over two feet wide, and not over four feet deep. You had to be able to stand up in it and shoot over the mound of dirt around the hole. One man needed to lie down to sleep while the other stood up on guard. If both slept, they could make it wider or sleep sitting up. The longer we stayed in the same hole, the more improvements we made.

The fresh dirt had to be covered with leaves or grass so it wouldn't give away your position. Sometimes, the shelling started before you had a foxhole. Then you had to dig it from the prone position. Individual holes could be smaller, but had to be close to a partner so each could help the other out if necessary. The unit commander had to organize the holes so everyone would have a good field of fire and there wouldn't be any blind spots in the unit's defence.

We left a trail of foxholes from the beach to the area East of St. Lo, France, where we made the breakthrough from Normandy. We dug a lot of foxholes on the First Moselle Crossing, circling around Metz, France, and again in the Battle of the Bulge.

We had to put a cover on the foxhole if it was under a tree. A shell could hit the limbs and explode showering the man in the hole with shell fragments. When we occupied a house, we tried to have two walls between us and the enemy. An armor-piercing shell would go through the first wall and explode on the second.

General Patton didn't believe in digging foxholes. His idea was to keep attacking. A unit would attack until it was exhausted, then a fresh unit would pass through and keep attacking. We did that a lot, but when we did stop, we had to dig-in and prepare for a counterattack.

If I was caught in a mortar or artillery barrage, this slow-moving southerner would run like hell to the nearest ditch or shell hole. One day, I was checking the company who were dug in a defensive position. Some artillery came in and I dove into a foxhole occupied by two men. After awhile, the poor guy on the bottom started to complain. I tried to convince him how lucky he was to have all that protection on top of him--over 300 pounds.

I was hit by a mortar shell near Gravelotte, France in October and by an artillery shell on December 9, 1944 on the Saar River Crossing. In both cases, I was caught in the open. The 90th Division suffered 8,060 casualties from mortar and artillery fire during WW II. Very few of these occurred while the soldier was in a foxhole.

BATTALION COMMANDER

I found that the Battalion CO had an easier job than the Company CO. Battalion had an experienced staff to do a good bit of his work. The company CO had to come back to the battalion headquarters for meetings to plan the next attack. Colonel Bealke started having telephone conferences. All the companies and anyone who might be involved were hooked up to the telephone switchboard. Everyone had the same marked map and we could talk back and forth. This gave the company O an extra hour's sleep.

The Battalion C O had to appoint the company CO. When he was wounded or killed the next in rank, Lieutenant or Sergeant, took over. During the next rest break, the Battalion C O would appoint the permanent CO. I took over L Company from Sergeant Burke. Chaplain Sidoti knew the officers and men better than anyone in the Battalion. He gave me some good advice on this subject.

RELIGION

In the Infantry Regiment, there were three Chaplains: two Protestant and one Roman Catholic. Large installations provided services for all faiths. The few Jewish men in the 176th and the 358th were allowed to observe all of their holidays.

In training and on duty in the States, less than half of the men attended church regularly. When I became company commander, I increased that number by requiring the non-attending members to assemble at church call on Sunday morning and do some minor chores. The closer we

got to combat the bigger the attendance. Some men were baptized on the ship during the Atlantic crossing. The Salvation Army gave out Bibles. The Red Cross Clubmobiles had coffee and doughnuts and small copies of the New Testament. The Chaplains had small Bibles for the men.

The 3rd Battalion had the Roman Catholic Chaplain in the 358th Infantry. Chaplain Esser was wounded in his hand and was replaced by Chaplain Sidoti who was wounded at Tettingen, Germany,. He came back to us in March 1945 after being in England for several months. He could wear the Silver Star, the Bronze Star, and the Purple Heart. He was a great asset to the battalion. When the men had problems at home or in the service, they would go to the Chaplain for guidance and help.

Sergeant Cox, the Communication Sergeant, and I would read our Bible in the foxholes. We read the 23rd Psalm more than anything else. We had the "Green Pastures" and the "Valley of the Shadow of Death." A lot of men learned to pray who had never prayed before. It was said that there were no Atheists in the foxholes. I think that was a very true saying.

One day in hedgerow country we had to attack across a field. We were behind a hedgerow on the other side. I called for an artillery barrage on the German positions. We would charge across the field when it was lifted. We were lying down flat because the shells were coming over so close. In fact, it felt like the shells would pull your shirt off as they went over. There was a lot of noise, no there was a hell of a lot of noise. When it stopped I heard a man praying at the top of his voice. His last sentence was:

And please Lord, Keep those Kraut Bastards down till we get across this field.

A man on the other side of me said: *Amen.*

I then said: *Let's go.*

The Krauts stayed down.

RIVER CROSSINGS

After Metz, the 90th became River Crossing Specialists for the Third Army. We would make a crossing in boats at night and push the Krauts back so the Engineers could start a Bailey Bridge or Pontoon Bridge. We had to push the enemy far enough back so they couldn't shell the bridge. As soon as the bridge was completed, our vehicles that were essential -- medical, communications, and one supply jeep and trailer for each company -- were permitted to cross. Then a Combat Team of an Armored Division would have priority, and we couldn't get the rest of our vehicles until they were through, 12 to 15 hours later.

When a section of a bridge was blown out, but the remainder was strong enough to support traffic, a Bailey Bridge was assembled by the Engineers and pushed across the vacant space. It was built with angle iron and bolted together. This method was the fastest way to repair a bridge and keep the troops moving forward.

The transportation officer for the Battalion would have the battalion vehicles located so he could slip one into the Armored Division column if there was a wide enough gap. Usually, he would work all of our vehicles across before the bridge was open for general traffic. We had to have someone on the other side to signal when to leave the Armored column.

Usually our part took all night and all day, then we went to sleep accompanied by the sound of 2 1/2 ton supply trucks. It was sweet music to our ears, because when it stopped we had to get moving again. Usually, we would receive replacements to take the place of men lost in making the crossing and taking the objective on the other side. After resting all night and reorganizing we would be assigned to clear out a pocket that the Armored Division had by-passed.

The Germans would set up a good road block. If it would take too long to knock it out, the Armored would leave a small force to contain the block and keep going. The mission of these road blocks was to halt the advance or at least to slow it up, When the Germans realized that they couldn't accomplish that they didn't put up too much of a fight. But sometimes they were occupied by fanatics and we had to annihilate them. This kind of action was a sad affair because so many were teenagers, and we also lost some men.

INTERROGATION OF PRISONERS

I heard this story that took place at one of the Regimental Intelligence Sections. They had to interrogate a group of German prisoners. They picked one that they thought was the leader, took him into an adjoining room and closed the door. He was strong-willed and would only give his name, rank, and serial number, which the S-2 had anticipated. They took him out through another door. Then two members of the S-2 carried on a loud, heated discussion in German that ended with a rifle shot. A 100 pound sack of potatoes was dropped on the floor, then dragged out of the room. Everything was clearly heard by the prisoners.

Then the interrogators picked the most nervous prisoner and brought him into the interrogation room. Evidence of the shooting was everywhere, chairs turned over, blood on the floor, the first prisoner's cap on the floor, etc. The interrogator would be very sympathetic and ask questions not related to the war to get the nervous prisoner started talking. Sometimes this worked, and it didn't violate the Geneva Convention. The German officers were very rank conscious, so when dealing with them the interrogator would put on a uniform of equal rank or higher.

HEAVY EQUIPMENT

The illustrations on the next two pages show some of the heavy equipment attached to the Battalion. Our organic transportation for the Battalion was Jeeps and Two and one-half Ton Trucks. The trucks were used to haul men and supplies and could pull a trailer for extra capacity. These were rugged vehicles and seldom let us down. They traveled any road and forded streams.

Tank Destroyers and Half Tracks were armored vehicles that could advance in difficult

terrain even when there were no roads. The TD was armed with a three-inch naval gun and a .50 caliber Machine Gun that could be used as an anti-personnel or even an anti-aircraft weapon. Half Tracks were armed with a .50 caliber and .30 caliber Machine Gun.



A Two and One-Half Ton Truck with Trailer.

George C. Marshall Museum, Lexington, VA

These trucks formed the backbone of an army's transportation in World WW II. When the battalion advanced to take over our sector at the front or moved into reserve, we packed out men and equipment into the trucks and the jeeps in our organic transportation. Every GI in World War II remembers many a ride in the two and one-half during training or overseas.



Two and One-Half Ton Truck with Trailer Crossing River In Germany
George C. Marshall Research Library, Lexington, VA



Pontoon Bridge Built by Engineers Bypassing Bridge Blown up by Germans
George C. Marshall Research Library, Lexington, VA



Half Tracks on Practice Range

George C. Marshall Research Library, Lexington VA



A GI Fueling a Jeep from a Jerry Can

Most Jeeps carried at least two jerry cans, one for water and one for gasoline. The “jerrican” was

a German invention. The British called the Germans “Jerries,” hence the name. Any GI probably remembers the near undrinkable water when an empty gasoline jerry can was filled with water by mistake.

FOOTNOTES

[1]The Purple Heart is awarded to members of the Armed Services who are wounded in a war zone. The award was established by President George Washington on 7 August 1792.

[2]In Europe, whisky means Scotch whixky; to Americans, whiskey means bourbon or even rye. Often, out liquor ration was gin.

[3]The 88 mm. gun has abore of about 3.5 inches; the 75mm. gun of about 3 inches. But the 88s superiority was in more than size. It’s muzzle velocity was higher than the 75 and the projectile packed a greater walloop on impact.

[4]St. Vith, Belgium was a key poijnt in the Battle of the Bulge. Desperately outnumbered Americans held on at the cost of very high casualtiesd. Holding St. Vith prevented the Germans from breaking the Allied lines and rolling back the advances our troops had made in the north.



A .22 Caliber, Single Shot Target Rifle

One of the guns men in my battalion found in Germany and gave to me. The short hexogonal barrel ends before the muzzle, which flares into a wider diameter for about three or four inches.

SOME UNITED STATES ARMY SIGNAL CORPS

PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE

90TH DIVISION IN ACTION

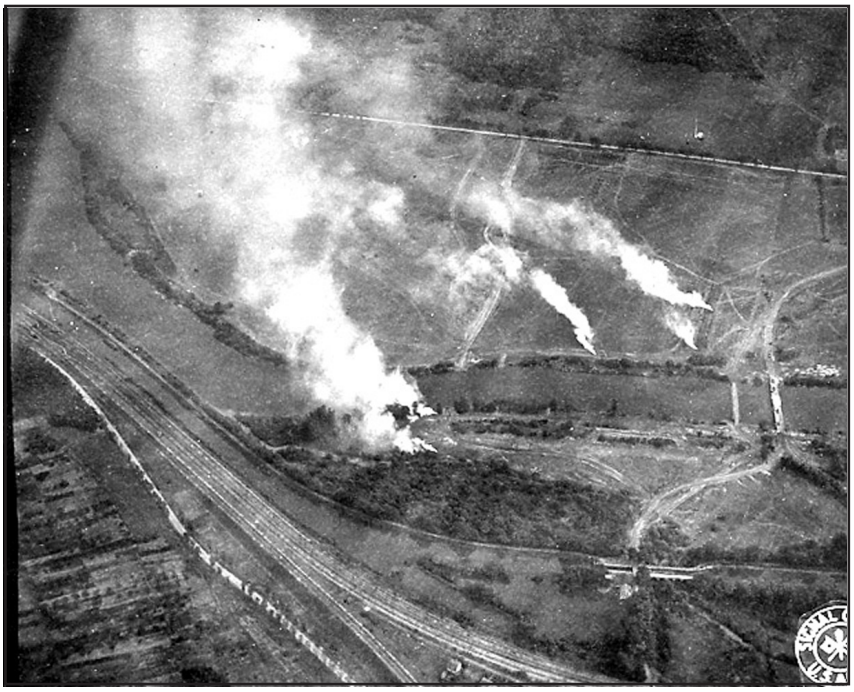
DURING WORLD WAR II

1944-1945

FROM THE STILL PHOTOGRAPH COLLECTION
OF THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES II
COLLEGE PARK, MARYLAND



Infantry moves through the town of Mayenne, France after advanced patrols cleaned it up during the night. As the infantry moved through, the Germans were still shelling the town. Then the people who remained turned out to welcome their liberators. 4 August 1944. USASC.



An Aerial View of the Infantry Bridgehead over the Moselle South of Metz

The unit of the 90th has just crossed the river and are expanding on the enemy shore. 8 October 1944.USASC.



A Polish Soldier

Nieghysav Mrozek, a Pole, who fought with his men for 20 days before being captured by the Nazis tells his experiences to Captain Herbert K. Ochmiche, Keokuk, Iowa, right. of the 358th Regiment, 90th Division. Niegbysav Mrozek was freed when our soldiers released him in the advance toward Metz, and he now aids in the handling of German prisoners. 21 September 1944. USASC.



Left: Tech5 Halbert Due, Williford AK, loaded this Bazooka while Pvt. John Donnelly of Dekalb, IL, **Center**, fired and knocked out a Mark V tank. Right: Pfc. Joe G. Taylor of Artesia, NM with his BAR with which he disabled and knocked out seven Nazi vehicles. USASC. Metz Sector, October 1944. USASC.



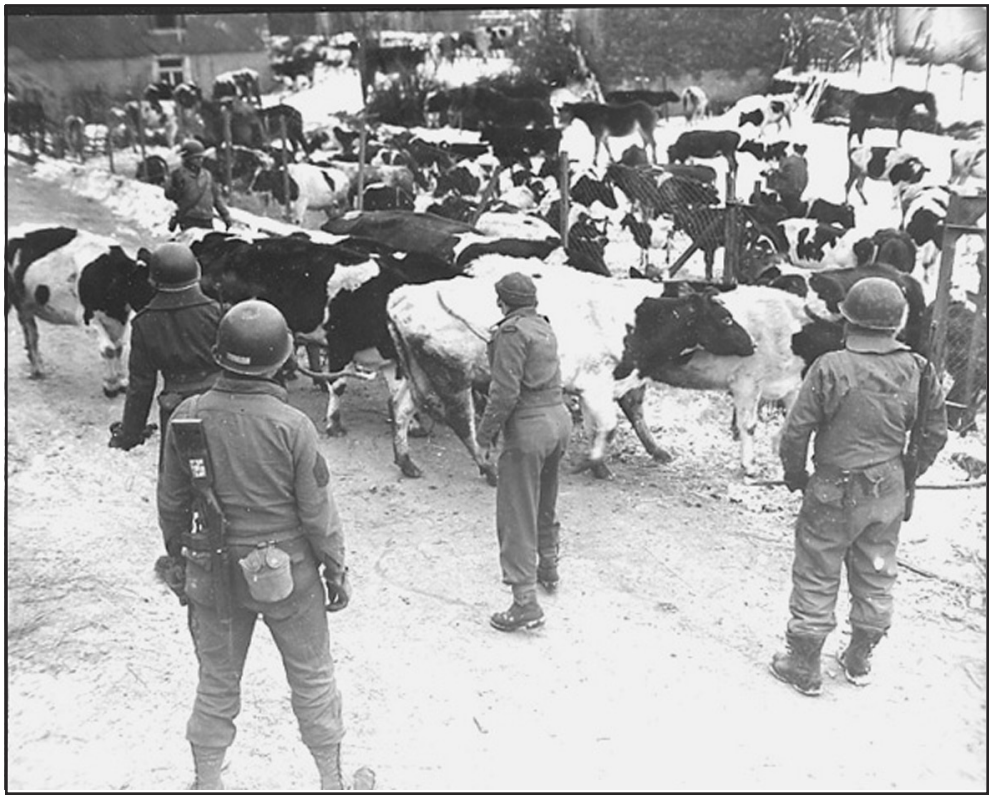
Seven infantry officers and enlisted men received awards ranging from the Distinguished Service Cross to the Silver Star with clusters at a ceremony near Metz, France. They are members of the 358th Regiment, 90th Division. 29 October 1945. USASC. Men unidentified. I am second from the left. USASC.



A tank waits on a section of a pontoon bridge devised and built by combat engineers of the 90th Infantry Division as a ferry to cross the Saar River. 12 December 1945. USASC.



Field artillerymen of the 90th Division dig an emplacement for their 4.5 inch gun near Wilverdange, Luxembourg before firing across the German lines a few miles away. T/5 W. J. Rothenberger. USASC.



Infantrymen of the 90th Division round up and drive cattle into an enclosure to be cared for. Their owners have been evacuated. Harlange, Luxembourg. 16 January 1945. USASC.



His face showing the strain of fighting, Pfc Robert B. McDowell, jr. Richmond, TX, a 90th Division infantryman who was just wounded by a German tank east of Brandscheid, Germany, walks back to an aid station. Lt .M.A. Weber, USASC. February 1945



Infantrymen fight their way through Gottsmangrun, Germany, a town being held by a company of Germans who are holding on to prevent the Americans from crossing the Saal River. April 1945.

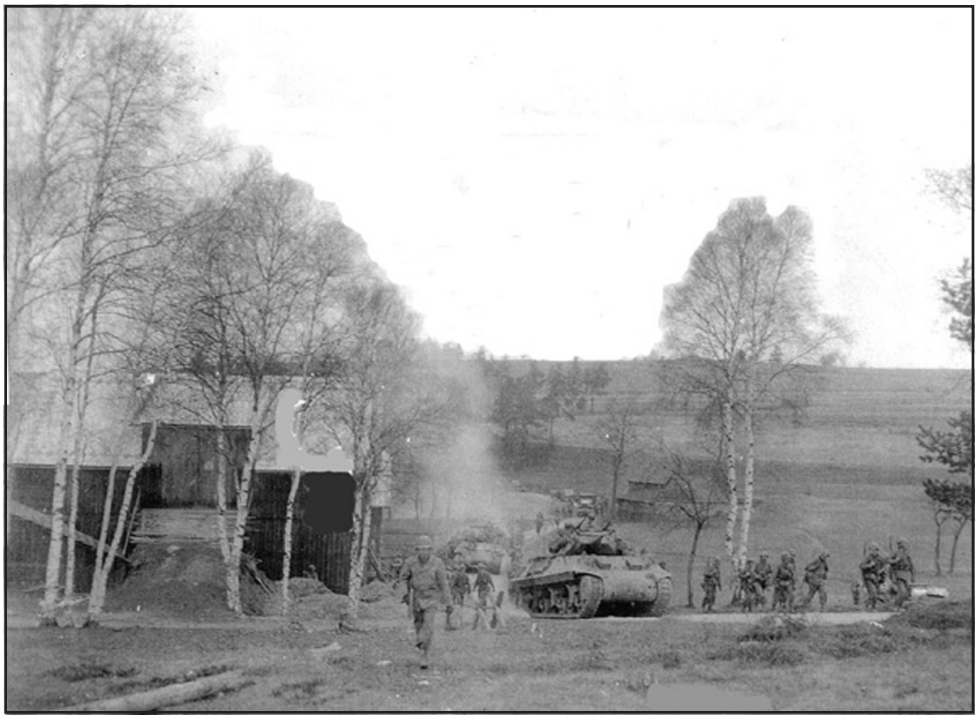


Infantrymen of the 358th Regiment fire (a .30 caliber water-cooled Machine Gun) upon hidden snipers as they take the German town of Hof. T/4 James A. Ryan. USASC.



Infantrymen of 90th Division Walk into the Newly Captured Town of Hof

The fight for Hof was the 3rd Battalion's last major engagement during WWII. Mike Cyzyk, the Polish volunteer and a good soldier, was killed here. USASC. April 1944.



Infantry of the 358th Regiment Crossing the Czech Border

Infantrymen with supporting tanks, cross the Czech border into Gottmansgrun, near Asch, Czechoslovakia. zechoslovakia.



Nazis being sought out in woodland by men of the 358th Regiment near Klened, Czechoslovakia. Lt. J. M. Zinni. USASC. The Third Battalion, 358th Regiment, was the first US Army unit to enter Czechoslovakia.

21

OCCUPATION DUTY

May - July 1945

On May 1st we came through Walmunchen. The S.S. made the people defend the town, so when we fired one round of artillery on the edge of town, they didn't break out the white flags, but old men in WW. I uniforms and boys returned the fire. We lowered the boom on them with artillery and tank fire while the infantry went in firing from the hip. We wounded a good many innocent people and destroyed the buildings before the white flags came out, but we also had some casualties. The S. S. had taken off as soon as it got hot.

Three Catholic nuns set up a temporary hospital for the Germans who had been wounded during our attack. There already was a hospital in a resort hotel in our area but it was crowded. When I inspected their hospital, the nuns were very nervous and uncertain of what this mean looking Yank was going to do. Their supplies of food and medicine were almost nil. Lt. Goodman, Battalion S-4, was with us and he thought he could get some supplies for them that afternoon. Mandel , our interpreter, told them that and also that our doctor would check the patients when he arrived in two days. I don't think they believed him.

Lt. Goodman came through like he usually did and Captain White, Battalion Surgeon, checked all the patients and moved some to a large hospital where they could receive necessary treatment. The sisters were all smiles the next time I inspected their hospital. Someone checked them once a week. They ran out of wood for their cook and heating stoves. I had the Burgermeister (Mayor) turn out all the able-bodied men with axes and saws. We furnished three large trucks with drivers. By the end of the day they cut, hauled, and stacked a year's supply of stove wood.

On May 10, 1945, we moved north 35 miles to take up a blocking position along the Pilzen-Pisek road to keep the White Russians who had been fighting with the Germans, from coming through our lines. They wanted to get away from the Red Russians. We felt very sorry for them, but we had to carry out our orders. We had taken in a good many before receiving these orders. They were horse cavalry, and we had collected about 100 good saddle horses and four draft horses and a large wagon.

Lt. Jones and the A & P platoon were in charge of the horses. When we moved back into Germany it took four days to reach Walmunchen. They had to go through the 4th Armored area, and they, too, had a large collection of horses that they had captured. Our horses bolted from the road and mixed with the 4th's horses. Jones and his men were all ex-cowboys and were able to separate the two groups. The story is that we had a hundred before the mix-up and we had a hundred after, but the latter hundred were a better class of horse.

The Czechs had street dances, band concerts, and we had movies and hot meals. The natives wore very colorful costumes. Fraternizing was now legal and the men really enjoyed the company of the women.

The Battalion received orders to move back into Bavaria, Germany just across the border of Czechoslovakia. On May 13th, I took a reconnaissance party consisting of the five company commanders, several staff officers, and several interpreters.

RUSSIANS

We encountered the White Russians (Anti-Communists who fought with the Germans) first in Normandy. They wanted to liberate their homeland from Stalin and the Red Russians. The Germans sent one unit of White Russians to the Western Front to build fortifications. The White Russians did not want to fight the Americans, but the S.S. forced them to.

In May 1945 we ran into the White Russians again. They were desperate to surrender to us to get away from the advancing Red Russians. They were mostly Horse Cavalry. We took them in until May 10th when we were ordered not to. This was a sad affair. It was a political decision.

The next day a division of Red Russians arrived and that was the end of the White Russian problem. The Russians were motorized with Studebaker trucks. The commander was a colonel. He and his aide were very formal. We had only one man in the Battalion (800 men) who could speak Russian. The Battalion staff and the Russian staff sat in a circle and passed a bottle of cognac around. The interpreter had to stand behind me so he could see the Russian Colonel's mouth.

They took a night and a day to pass by us. They were headed for Pilzen (Pilsen), Czechoslovakia. They had a large motley collection of artillery pieces. Supplying the ammunition must have been a problem.

BLUE COUNTY

We were assigned an area about the size of a county, 200 square kilometers or 77.22 square miles. The area held 25 small villages and three main towns of Waldmunchen, Schonthal, and Rotz. The population, 22,000 people, was triple the normal, because people came from the war torn areas. The area was named "Blue County." The call sign for the 3rd Battalion was blue. The land was agricultural and forest with small timber related industries, furniture, and toys. A small textile mill was in Walmunchen. Most of the factories seem to have been out of operation for some time.

We tried to use only government buildings, because the private houses were full, and we hoped to be going home before they needed the government buildings. The Battalion CP was in the post office in Waldmunchen. The office downstairs and the Enlisted Men's Quarters was in the apartment upstairs. I Company was billeted in the Forestry Buildings on the edge of Waldmunchen. K Company in buildings the Germans had built for unwed mothers to have babies for the Nazi state. It was complete with kitchen, dining room, bed rooms, and a swimming pool. We had to build more sleeping quarters. L Company was in the town of Rotz at the Western end of Blue County. M Company was in Schonthal near the center of Blue County.

During my first day in Walmunchen, I went to the Burgermeister's office to inform him about what we were going to do and what I wanted him to do. I was polite and respected his office as mayor. After we left his office, Mandel, my interpreter, told me that my easy polite approach wouldn't work with the Germans. I told him that we had won the war but didn't need to rub it in. Two days later, the Germans had done very little that I had requested. Mandel was right; he had lived in Germany until he was a teenager.

I sent for the Burgermeister (the mayor) to come to my office, and I laid it on the line. The next morning the whole population turned out at daylight and everything was done quickly and efficiently. I had to change my Southern ways in dealing with the Germans.

There was a furniture factory in Walmunchen, so we had them build double deck bunks. The 2nd Battalion had a mattress factory in their area, so we traded beds for mattresses. We collected musical instruments and radios from the natives and distributed them to the companies. We organized a band with the troops in Walmunchen. Lt Rudes was in charge, but Pfc. Jimmy Wood was the band leader. Lt. Rudes played an instrument. Pfc. Wood was a very good and experienced band director. They started practicing about the middle of June. Pfc. Wood said, "Prospects for organizing a good band look very favorable. All we need is to get the players to concentrate on the same piece at the same time."

The Division Band had stored their instruments in England and were trained to be Medics at the Aid Station. After the war they reorganized the band again and they gave concerts to the Battalion. They would play for a retreat parade, then give a concert in the town square. They were good, but we were very proud of our own band.

MEMORIAL DAY 1945

On May 30th, we wanted to have a ceremony for Memorial Day, but we didn't have an American Flag. In the beginning, we had a trailer with athletic equipment and a flag in it. Somewhere along the way, the trailer was backed over a mine and everything was lost. The Catholic Sister heard about our plight and sent me word that if I could get some material she would have a flag made. I doubted that they could make one in time, but Lt. Goodman came up with the material (I didn't ask any questions). In two days she presented us with a large American Flag. Every star was perfect. She must have had all the seamstresses in town working overtime.

I had the Burgermeister send the woodcutter to the forest for a large flag pole. It was so long, they had trouble bringing it through the narrow, crooked streets to the town square on the timber cart drawn by two cows. When it was erected it was 80 feet tall. We painted a sign dedicating the Flag to the 449 officers and men in the Battalion killed in action.

EASY LIVING

The Battalion formed up on schedule on May 30th. We trucked M and L Companies to Walmunchen. Lt. Crotty wrote a short speech and I delivered it. Everyone enjoyed its brevity. We

raised the flag up and lowered it to half mast and played taps. After the ceremony, we had volleyball games and one company put on a skit. I think the men enjoyed most the visiting with the other companies and seeing old friends. It was a pity we didn't have the band organized as yet. The number of men in the Battalion was growing every day, men coming back from the hospital. The high point men were starting to go home. You received points for each year in service, each campaign, each decoration, and each child. You had to have 60 points to go home. I had 90 points, but had to wait until they could find a replacement (a Lt. Colonel with low points).

How to Find A Good Cook

The kitchen personnel in the rifle company consisted of one mess sergeant, two first cooks, two second cooks, and six K.P. privates. The mess sergeant was the same rank as a staff sergeant. The cooks were technicians. The first cook was the same rank and pay scale as a sergeant. Second cook was the same rank and pay scale as a corporal. The mess sergeant was in charge 24 hours and he set his own schedule. One 1st cook and one 2nd cook came on duty after the noon meal and was on duty for 24 hours, and off 24 hours. The K.P.'s rotated from company Pfc.s and Privates for about 12 hours duty each day.

Most of the company cooks had enough points to go home, so we had to find replacements in a hurry. We called for volunteers but didn't get much response. I had the companies line up the low point men and count off. Then number "5" in each rank stepped forward. I congratulated them for volunteering to try out for company cook. I spoke to the company C. O. in confidence, but loud enough for the men to hear, "If anyone complains they will automatically be the next cook." We picked two for each position. The old cooks worked with them for a week. We were surprised how many worked out okay, very few complaints. The ones who worked out were given promotions. Anyway, there wasn't too much you could do, good or bad, with the rations.

While advancing across Germany, we ate pretty good. The German cellars were well stocked with canned fruit, vegetables, and cured meats. In the rural villages, there was a room next to the kitchen with a live garbage disposal (one or two pigs), the chickens had a small door with a ramp to the outside. The rabbits were kept in cages in the back yard. The farmers had their living quarters and barn all in one building. Livestock on the first floor, people on the second. The manure pile next to the street for accessibility. When artillery shells came in, we learned by experience to have a wall between us and the manure pile.

We were now on the end of a long supply line. The army also had to feed a lot of refugees so sometimes we were short on rations. The stream in our area were well stocked with fish. The infantry method of fishing was to toss a grenade in the stream, then pick up the big ones when they floated to the surface. The concussion kills everything, so it is too wasteful. We had to resort to fishing tackle and bait. We tried hunting deer in the woods. We formed a long skirmish line and advanced through the woods. We killed several this way, but it was too dangerous. There was a lot of lead ricocheting off the trees. It was a miracle that no one was hurt. So we had two men go hunting with a German guide. The fish and venison were a big help. The supplies improved because American units were going home, and the refugees were being shipped by truck and train back to their own countries.

Our 2 1/2 ton trucks with three drivers each were running 24 hours, hauling the Russian refugees back to the Russian Army in Czechoslovakia. The convoy would stop every two hours for a short break. The relief area was ten paces from the trucks. They also used the trains. The people sat on the top of box cars and flat cars. They cut leafy branches for shelter from the sun. The train looked like a live plant coming down the tracks. In the American areas, the medics checked and treated the refugees and most of them were deloused with D. D. T.

Settling In

The communication section in Headquarters Company found a radio station and put it in operation in Walmunchen. When men were given leave in London, we collected money and sent for records for the radio station and sheet music for the band. The radio station soon had a regular schedule of local news and music.

L and M Company were given 25 horses each to take care of and to ride. We had 50 horses in Waldmunchen for Hq., I, and K Companies to ride every third day. The A & P platoon took care of them. Every so often we had horse races and the professional jockey, Bobby Baird, always won no matter what horse he rode. We had riding classes Tuesday evenings 1830 to 2030 and Friday afternoon 1330 to 1700 for the city boys. I taught Captain Sidoti (the Chaplain) and he enjoyed it. He was a quick learner. We also had swimming classes on Monday 1600-1700.

Each company had boxing, wrestling, volleyball, and softball teams. Battalion officers had a volleyball and softball team. Chaplain Sidoti was the referee for the boxing and wrestling. He played on all the other teams and was very good. He was active in college sports.

We organized a Battalion baseball team and 75 men came out, including several minor-league professionals. The coach was Pfc. Marshall, a minor-league pitcher. He had a lot of good material for a team. We had lost all of our athletic equipment during the War. There was an Air Corps Weather and Relay Station near us, and we traded them German army souvenirs for athletic equipment.

The nuns sent word to me that they would make uniforms for the baseball team if we could supply the material. We were not only one of the top teams in the Division but the best dressed, in fact the only team with complete baseball uniforms. We had to make a playing field. There were no pastures, so we had to cut a wheat field. We built a backstop and a few seats. Being a farmer, I hated to cut the wheat prematurely.

Our occupation duties were to man checkpoints on the Czech border and along the main roads. (It was a real chore to work in these duties between all our recreation and sports events). The German soldiers had to be processed before being allowed to go home. The S. S. troops and high ranking Nazis were sent to a special prison compound. The Burgermeister of Walmunchen was a high ranking Nazi. He had destroyed the records here, but we had captured other records that listed him. We didn't have anyone to take his place at first, so we let him stay on. When the German soldiers came home to Walmunchen, we asked the town priest to let us know which one would make

a good Burgemeister. We arrested the Nazi and sent him off. The man the priest picked turned out to be very good.

I appointed Captain C. A. Burnette, Jr. from L Company to head up and organize a temporary MG section for Blue County. He set up offices in the three main towns with German speaking personnel. We had the only telephone and transportation facilities. The 22,000 citizens of Blue County had daily problems that couldn't wait until the permanent MG officers arrived. Captain Burnette's men performed these duties for two months and some transferred to the permanent MG section. The permanent MG officers needed a car. We collected several at our border check points from German Government officials (the only ones who had cars) in Checkoslovakia trying to get back to their homes in Germany. One was a V-12 Mercedes. I drove it and would rate it the best car I have ever ridden in.

A good many ex-soldiers were by-passing our check points and going home without being processed. We planned to raid the whole county at one time. One company was mounted on the horses and one had all the Battalion jeeps. They checked the outlying hamlets. The rest of the Battalion on foot checked the large towns. "H" hour was sunrise. The men on horses had a grand time. We picked up several large truck loads of ex-soldiers in our area. When the horse cavalry approached one farm house a man ran out the back door and across the fields. Five or six horsemen took out after him, whooping and hollering and shooting up in the air. They soon caught him, and the poor fellow was so scared that he soiled his pants. He must have seen too many Western movies.

We had several pictures in the building of people cutting and hauling ice from ponds. An investigation revealed that the town had ice stored in a cave in the hills. We started an ice route to all the kitchens. It was the first ice we had since leaving the States.

The Brewery

We had a small brewery in one of our towns. If we could find the necessary raw materials, it could be put into operation. We sent out scouts and had it going in short order. We couldn't wait for the beer to age. (Probably a good thing, you couldn't drink enough to get drunk). We took over a tavern in Walmunchen for an enlisted men's club. We helped start up one of the first businesses in town and enjoyed their product. Later on American beer and coca cola started coming in, but not enough to go around so there were a lot of complaints. Sometimes cigarettes were in short supply

The Newspaper

We had a print shop in town so we started a Battalion newspaper called *Citation.* The Editor in Chief was Sergeant Bunnell; Associate Editor, Pfc. Gomberg; Sports Editor, Pvt. Eyeman; Illustrator, Sergeant McCann; Typesetter, S/Sergeant Bence; and Photographer, Pfc. Wenzel. Each company had one or two reporters to write a column on their personnel and current events. We didn't have the facilities to reproduce pictures when the first edition came out on May 26, 1945. One of the staff carved my picture on linoleum with a pocket knife. It portrays me as lean and mean. I guess I was in those days. By the third week they could print pictures.

VD

Venereal disease was becoming a problem in the E.T.O. It hadn't affected us yet; we were always on the move. The only time we stopped was when we were exhausted. Just after we moved back into Germany, Chaplain Sidoti and I went to each company to talk directly to all the men. I gave them the history of the battalion; how we had always taken our objective on schedule regardless of the weather and casualties. We were rated one of the best Divisions in the Third Army by General Patton. They owed it to the men killed and wounded not to fraternize with the Germans. I would throw the book at anyone who fraternized. That meant a fine and reduction in rank back to private. Father Sidoti spoke on the religious and moral side and how everyone should go home spiritually and morally clean.

We were soon put to the test when Dr. White reported he had to treat a Sergeant for syphilis. I sent for the Sergeant and asked him the name and location of the girl. I sent for her to be taken to the Aid Station. I told the Sergeant he was fined a month's pay and as of right now he was a private. I told Dr. White to check the girl and treat her if necessary. If she had the disease, then to cut all her hair off. He said he couldn't do that, he didn't have the authority. I said "The hell you don't , I am ordering you to shave her head clean." I probably didn't have the authority either, but no one protested so I got away with it.

We had the lowest rate of venereal disease in the Division. I would like to think that this was the result of our talk to the men. But there were also other reasons. We had a good location in Germany. The men were kept busy with various programs and sports events. The men didn't want to take the chance of catching something. They didn't want to lose their hard-earned rank. The officers set a good example and Father Sidoti's influence was a great help. The German girls didn't want to lose their hair.

DESERTER

Captain Burnette called me one day and stated that a soldier had appeared in L Company with some wild stories of where he had been. No one there could remember him. The man had also told Captain Burnette that he was my right hand man, etc., and was a big help to the First Sergeant and me in running the company.

I remembered him. At the Falaise Gap, I had to get on him for physically abusing prisoners. I had his sergeant take him off that duty. He was Jewish so he felt very strongly against the Germans. On the night that we formed up in the streets of Cattenom, France to pick up the boats for the first Moselle Crossing, he disappeared. He had been hiding in a French home since 9 November 1944. He thought that no one would be left who knew him. When he heard that I was still there, he wanted to volunteer for the Pacific Theater.

I told Captain Burnette to arrest him and I would prefer charges of A.W.O.L. against him. In the army, you have to file charges within 24 hours after the arrest or the prisoner will be set free. We had several officers in the Regiment who were lawyers in civilian life. One of them was

appointed for his defense. Lt. Donahue, a lawyer, was the prosecutor for the Regiment. I was an officer on the court that would try him so I had to disqualify myself. He was sent to prison in the States to serve his sentence.

Another court martial that took place at this time was against a soldier who was fraternizing with a German girl. Her German boy friend was released from a prison camp and came for a visit. The American soldier had too much to drink and shot up the girl's home. Luckily no one was hurt, but he hit the Nurnberg stove, a mirror, and some small items. The Nurnberg stove is a beautiful wood and coal burning stove, made out of cast iron and covered with colorful tile. The bottom section has the fire box then the ovens, and in the top are warming compartments. The stove is six or seven feet high.

During the trial we had a hard time keeping a straight face. The chief witness was an old man who described what happened in broken English and acted out with sound effects everything that happened: the soldier coming in, the gun discharging, the shattered tile, and glass exploding.

During the second week of June I was visiting all the companies. I had been in L Company all afternoon. They had a very good retreat formation and of course I stayed for dinner. I got back to Battalion about 2000. Several of the staff officers spoke at the same time to inform me that I was going home. I asked to see the orders, but they replied that the orders hadn't come through yet. Colonel Bealke had called and said that I could come to Regiment for the night and go with him to the airport early in the morning.

When I finally got Colonel Bealke on the phone, he said that orders had come into Regiment for me to go to London for three days leave. So I could spend tomorrow night with him and go to the airport first thing in the morning in his jeep. Colonel Bealke was going to the States to go around the country making speeches at rallies to sell war bonds.

LEAVE IN LONDON

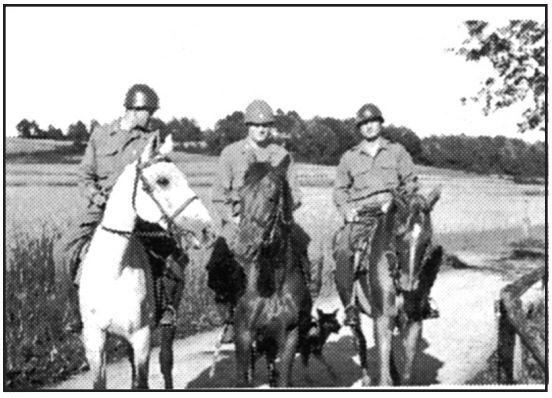
When we arrived at the airport, we learned that Colonel Bealke's flight to Paris, his first leg to the States, was on schedule but all flights to London were shut down because of the weather. There was a crowd of hopeful passengers and more coming in all the time. Most of the buildings at the airport had been destroyed during the war, so there weren't any waiting rooms.

There were two other officers from the 90th there, a Major and a Lt. Colonel. A nurse came from the Field Hospital about ten miles away to catch a flight to visit her boy friend. Her flight was cancelled also. The hospital had transferred all its patients and was waiting to go back to the States.

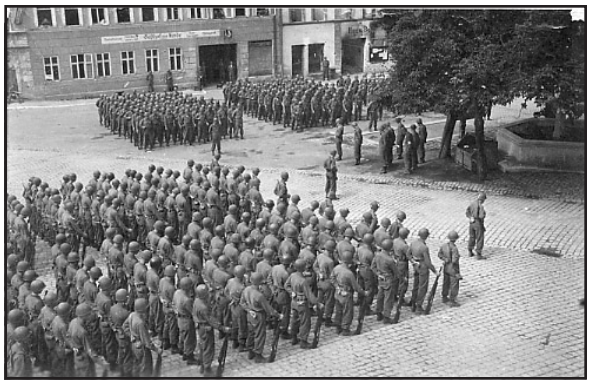
We went back to the hospital with the little nurse, a 1st Lt., in the front seat, and two Lt. Colonels and a Major crowded in the back. We were thankful for the good meals and cots. The next morning the nurse's flight was on go but the London flight was still out.



Lt. Colonel Charles Bryan on his Horse



Officers on Horseback



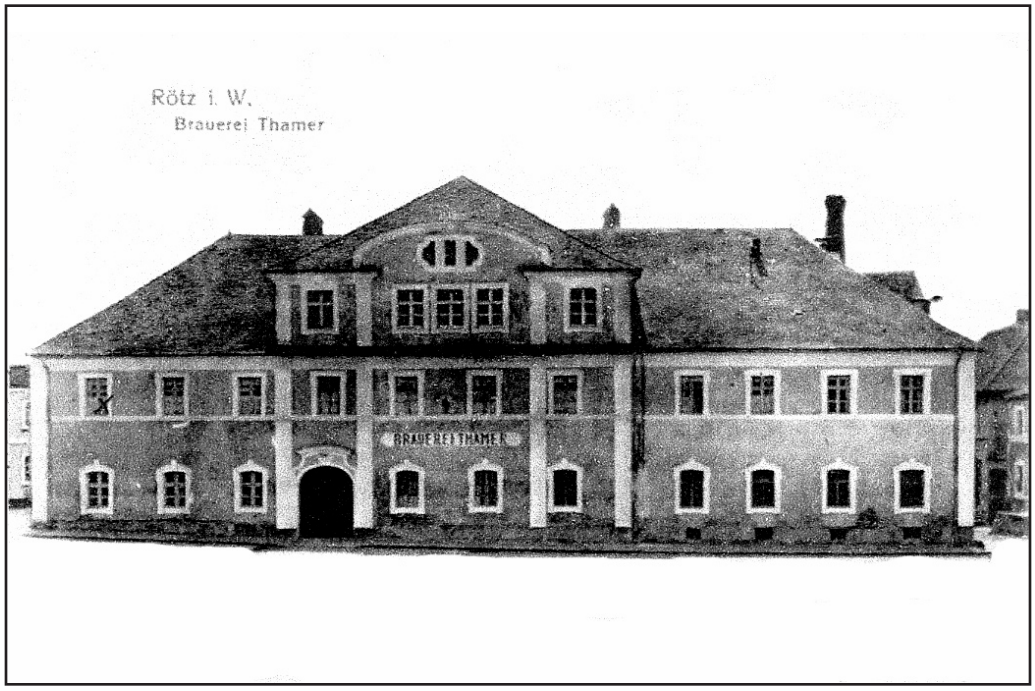
Memorial Day Parade



Flagpole, Dedicated Memorial Day 1945
Waldmunchen, Germany



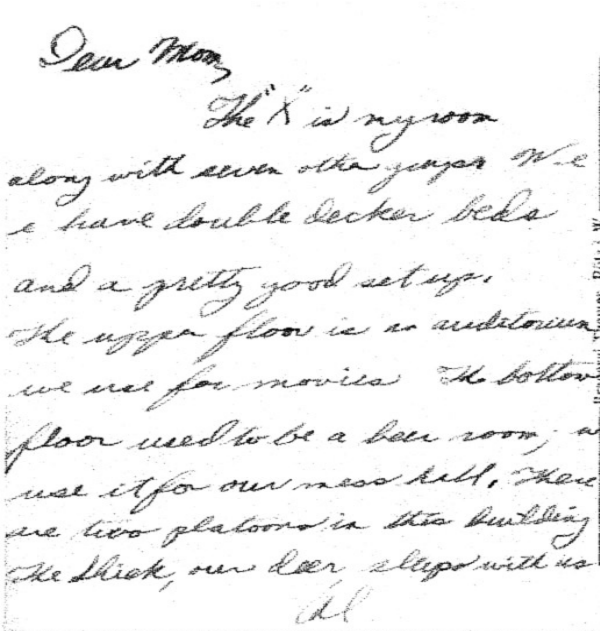
Waldmunchen, Blue County Seat



The Brewery in Blue County
Courtesy of Daniel Sheridan



Company L Quarters in Blue County
Courtesy of Daniel Sheridan


Dear Mom,
The "X" is my room along with seven other guys. We have double decker beds and a pretty good set up. The upper floor is an auditorium we use for movies. The bottom floor used to be a beer room, we use it for our mess hall. There are two platoons in this building. The Sheik, our deer, sleeps with us.
Al

Dear Mom:

The X is my room along with seven other guys. We have double decker beds and a pretty good set up. The upper floor is an auditorium we use for movies. The bottom floor used to be a beer room. We use it for our mess hall. There are two platoons in this building. The Sheik, our deer, sleeps with us.*

Al

*The X doesn't show up very well in the photograph.

Transcription of A GI's Postcard Home
September 1945

Postcard from Pfc. Alfred Sheridan to His Mother from Blue County
Infantryman in my Old Command, L Company
Courtesy of Daniel Sheridan



Bambi (the Dog) and Sheik (the Deer), Mascots of L Company
On occupation duty in Germany. Courtesy of Daniel Sheridan

An old C-47 that looked like it had been through the war came in from London. There was just the pilot and co-pilot (both teenagers). They were delivering emergency medical supplies. We asked if we could ride back to London with them. They said, sure, but they had several stops in Germany, France, then Ireland, before returning to London. There are a lot of rivers in Europe and we crossed most of them that morning. We found out why most flights were cancelled. When we passed over a river valley the plane would shoot up or drop down. Either way was hard on the stomach. We had to hold on for dear life. The throttle was wide open and the old plane was complaining. We went across the English Channel so low that I had a tendency to pick my feet up.

We were put up in a fine hotel (anything with a roof was fine at this stage in my life, but there was also a mattress and sheets and hot water). There was a very large cafeteria about a block away for all allied troops visiting London. Food was still rationed in England. We would go early to meals and wait around to greet people we had known at Clemson or in the four years of service. I met one or two friends at each meal.

I met Lloyd Bull, nicknamed "Ferdinand[4]," from Cameron, S.C. He and I had stayed in the same tent at R.O.T.C. camp, Fort McClellan, Alabama. He was a Captain in the Infantry. He had been wounded and captured, and spent several months in a German hospital. He had amnesia and couldn't remember anything before being wounded. He was identified by his dog-tags, a metal I.D. tag with name and blood type worn on a chain around the neck of every serviceman. He was flying home when the weather cleared. He had corresponded with his wife and had requested that she send a picture so he would know her when he arrived in the States.

Another classmate from Clemson couldn't understand why most of our class were Captains, Majors, or Lt. Colonels, and he was still a 1st Lieutenant. He had sat out the war on an island in the English Channel at an Air Force weather station. I told him there were times when I would have gladly changed places with him.

Lt. Colonel Herlong, of the 90th Division who came with us, had gone to school for a year in England. He had roomed with an Englishman. He went by train to his roommate's home to visit whoever was there. The next day he came back with his roommate's sister. She was a 1st Lieutenant, a British Army Nurse. The roommate was still in North Africa. She invited all three of us to a dinner dance. It was a formal affair. Officers from most of the British regiments and the allies were represented. Our host, the nurse, could identify most of them. Her three escorts kept her on the dance floor all evening. At the end we all stood up and sang "God Save the King." She went home by train right after the dance.

We met a British marine captain and a navy commander. They had spent several months in Charleston when their ship was being repaired at the Navy Yard. They took us to several night clubs. There was a curfew still on and all public establishments had to close by 2000. The night clubs became private clubs so they could stay open later. I ended up joining three private clubs.

The flights to Germany were still out and I was broke. I went to the Finance Department, and they gave me two months pay in advance. I was sending most of my paycheck home through

allotment. We couldn't go to Germany by plane, so we went to Edinburgh, Scotland by double-decker bus. The roads were narrow and crooked and I never did get used to driving on the left side.

The British had done a super job of cleaning up the bombed areas. Any spots that were eyesores were sealed off by wooden fences or walls. The taxi drivers had to pass a test in the history of the area they worked in addition to a driving test. They made the ride very interesting. Since we were in uniform, they added a war story or two. The French cities still had rubble in the streets. The citizens had to climb over it to get to their homes. The Germans had cleaned up their streets and filled the shell holes, but it would be a long time rebuilding all the destroyed buildings and bridges.

BACK TO GERMANY

The weather cleared and I flew back to Nurnberg. I phoned the Battalion and they sent Sherman, my jeep driver, for me. Due to the weather I had been away for a week.

At least once a year in the peace-time Army, the Adjutant General's office sends an officer to each company. They set up an office so anyone can file a complaint. An enlisted man in L Company told the inspecting officer that 1st Sergeant Russo had shot a machine gun at German civilians just because they were breaking the curfew. The inspector had never been in any combat, and he was horrified by this action. He was thinking of charging the 1st. Sergeant with criminal action. The Sergeant had a very good reputation. He had joined L Company after I had left, so I had not worked with him, but I knew he was a good soldier.

In one of L Company's towns, the natives refused to observe the curfew and kept working in the gardens near their homes. These Germans were farmers and used to working from sunup to sundown. This was their busy season and they needed to work until dark. L Company had tried everything to get them to obey regulations.

One day Sergeant Russo mounted a machine gun on the jeep. He parked on a hill looking down the street into the town. He shouted to the people to go into their homes. They waved back but disregarded his orders. He gave one burst of fire over their heads into a wall. When the noise died down, the area was clear of people. After that there was no more trouble about the curfew.

L Company Commander Captain Burnette testified for the Sergeant. I spoke on his behalf, and also stated that he had solved the problem. He had control of the gun and the danger to the civilians was exaggerated. The army needed to change the curfew to 2100 or 2200. Sergeant Russo and I had run under enemy MG fire during the war. If you shoot at the MG emplacement the gunner will duck down but reach up and fire the gun. The barrel of the MG will automatically climb up if it is not held down. It takes one hand to hold it down and one to pull the trigger.

Several enlisted men in L Company testified for the Sergeant. Sergeant Russo planned to stay in the army so he didn't need a court martial on his record. We were successful in getting the instor to drop the charges.

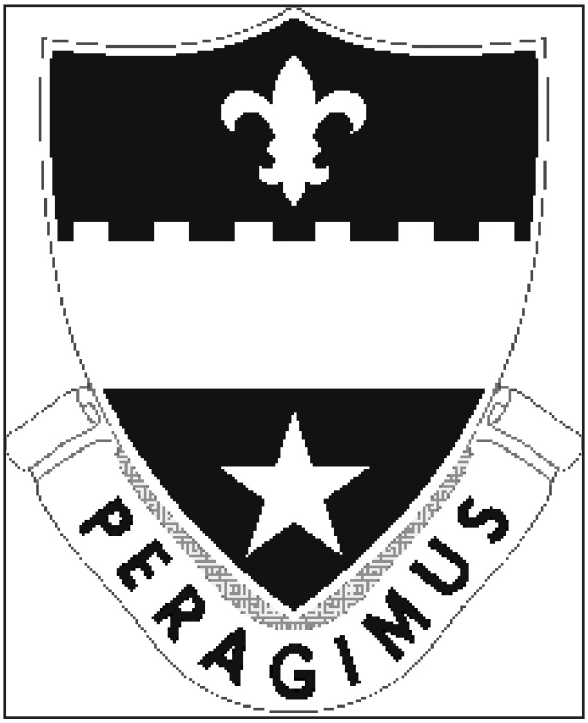
FOOTNOTES

[1]Our German interpreter for S-2 Intelligence.

[2]KP + Kitchen Police.

[3]The C-47 was the work horse of WW II aviation. This plane was the same as the famed DC-3. Many pilots claim that this was the best plane ever built. Hundreds are still flying.

[4]Leaf, Munro. *The Story of Ferdinand*. New York: Viking Press. 1936. This children's story was very popular while I was in college. It was also made into a movie short by Disney.



The shoulder patch of the 358th Regiment. The Latin motto reads: *We accomplish.*

22

HOMEWARD BOUND

July - October 1945

On July 15th, my replacement came in. He was regular army, but had seen little combat. He had participated in one attack. I spent the next two days introducing him to the Battalion. He was shocked when he saw my jeep. We had put a rack around the side and back of most of our jeeps. It contained an extra five gallon can of gasoline, a five gallon can of treated water, several leather saddle-bags containing ammunition, K rations, bread, and cognac. We also had a civilian car radio so we could get the B.B.C. news. The worst or best thing that we, Sherman and I, had done was the aluminum doors on each side. The aluminum doors were taken from a downed plane. They were a great comfort during the winter. My replacement said they would have to come off.

I transferred to the 99th Division on July 18, 1945. They were located in a tent camp near Frankfurt, Germany. The 99th had come over late in the game and most of their personnel were low pointers. They were transferred to regular Army Divisions staying in Europe for Occupation Duty and divisions going to the Pacific. The high point men who were to be discharged were transferred to the 99th for shipment to the States.

The World War II Point System.

Criteria	Points Earned
Months in Service	One point per month
Overseas Service	One point per month
Battle participation	Five points per campaign
Decorations`	Five points each
Dependents	Twelve points per child up to three children

WAITING

There wasn't much to do here but sit around and greet people who came in everyday. The men from the 1st Infantry Division known as "The Big Red One" or "The Bloody One" had eight campaigns. Most of us had four or five. You can imagine the war stories that were told here. I had a Battalion and it was overstaffed with officers. I had a captive audience with all these Captains and Lieutenants, but I was very generous. I would give them time to tell a story because that always gave me an opening (that reminds me of the time " Company L was taking," or the "3rd Battalion was attacking," etc.). They had to listen to the old man. I was 26 years old then.

About the middle of August I got three days leave to go back to the 90th. I sent word to some of the high point enlisted men from the 90th that I could take a couple with me. Everyone wanted to go but I could only take nine, three in the back of the jeep and six in the trailer. Everything was fine until the first big town with MP's directing traffic.

We were stopped and given a ticket. I told the M.P. that these men in combat had ridden anything that rolled, even the front hoods of jeeps. He said he was sorry but these were his orders. The men started to give him a hard time, but I stopped them. The men in the trailers could start walking and I would send the jeep back to shuttle them through the town. It took three trips. I got out my map and took a route avoiding all towns large enough to have MP's. Germany had lots of good roads.

That night the Battalion had a big boxing match. I had a chance to see a lot of old friends. I got up and said a few words. The main thing was that they should never forget that the 3rd Battalion was one of the best and they were the ones that made it that way. I rode my favorite horse with some of the other officers. All the men who came with me said they were glad they had come back, but they missed the ones that were not there. We went back to the 99th via back roads.

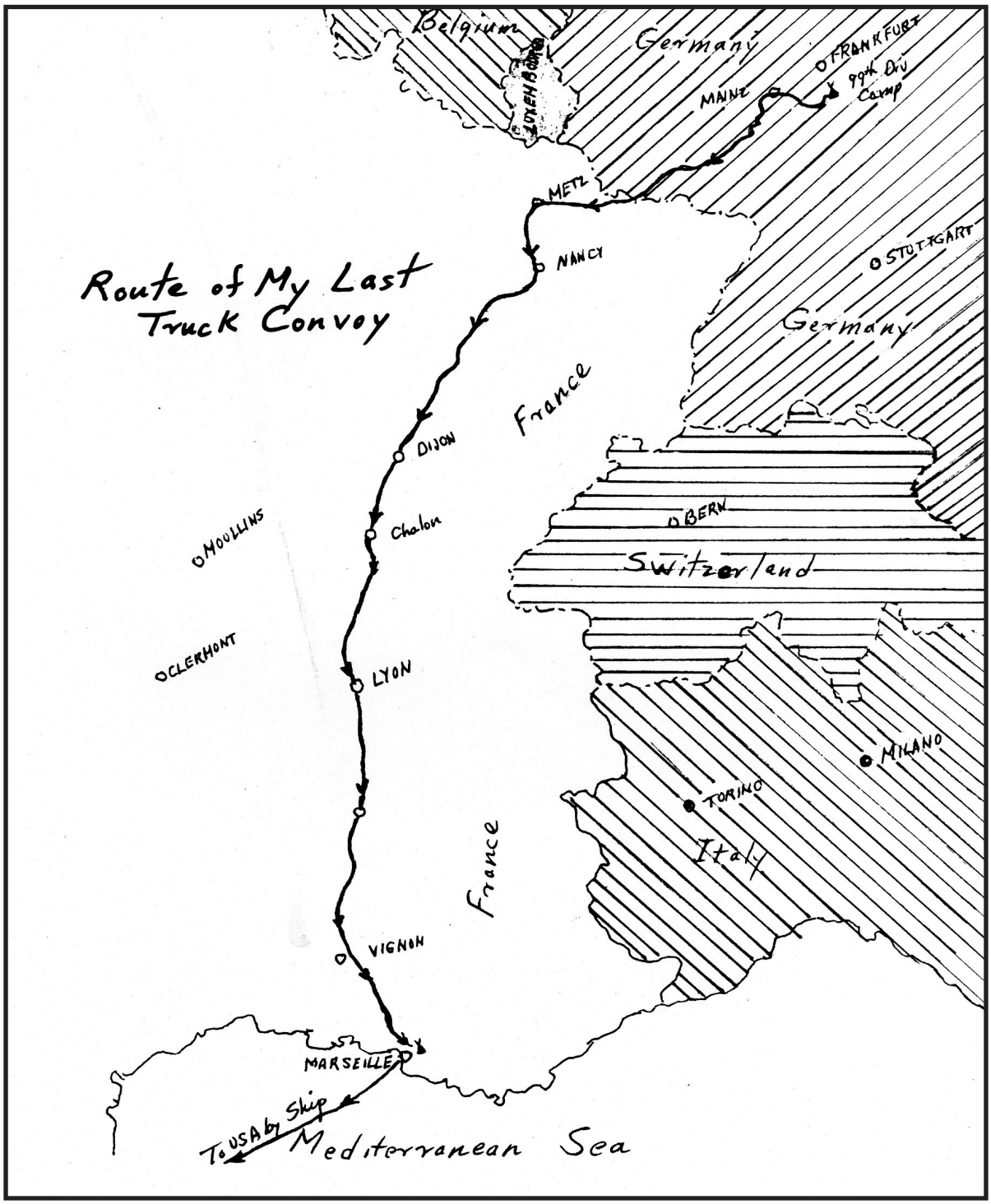
TRUCK CONVOY TO THE MED

The next leg of our journey home was by truck convoy to the Mediterranean Sea. We crossed the Rhine River at Mainz, then headed Southeast across the Saar and Moselle Rivers where the 90th had given so much blood. From Metz, we headed south to Nancy, Dijon, Chalon, Lyon, to Marseille, France.

The Army organized this route. If you started on schedule you would arrive on time at the rest areas they had set up. Attendants would rush out and check the trucks for gas, oil, water, and tires. Other attendants would serve drinks and sandwiches. There were rest rooms in tents. The Army was trying to acclimate us to civilization or at least send us home "house-broken." About halfway, we stopped at an Army Motel (pyramid tents with cots and blankets) and a hot dinner and breakfast. Most all of the attendants were German ex-soldiers. They were still wearing part of their uniforms. We arrived at a tent camp on a high plateau outside of Marseille, France.

The Red Cross had a large canteen here staffed by five or six girls. They played records, served coffee and cokes and talked to the men. Part of our training for civilian life. Word came down that no dogs would be allowed on the ship. We suspected that there were dogs in camp, but they were kept out of sight.

When 5,000 men arrived, we started loading the ship. We had to turn into the supply section all cots and blankets and had to roll up the side of the tents. I was checking on my area for cleanliness when I heard a scuffling noise ahead. I looked under the tents and three tents away two men were trying to put a large dog into a duffel bag . They were having enough trouble without an inspecting officer showing up. I went the other way.



Route of my Last Truck Convoy
Frankfort to the Mediterranean - August 1945

EMBARKATION

We were transported to the docks in large flat trailers--trucks with five foot sides. The men stood up. The road wound along a deep ravine. On a sharp curve the trailer came loose from the truck and started to go over into the ravine. When the air line broke, the brakes were automatically applied and the trailer with 75 men in it stopped, hanging over the brink. Men from the following truck rushed up and opened the tailgate. The passengers silently scrambled out. When they were safely on the road they let the driver know what they thought about him. He had not locked the trailer hitch.

When we went up the gang plank to board ship, there was a Coast Guard officer on each side checking everyone. I thought they will never get any dogs on this ship. About three hours after leaving the dock, the address system blared out, "Now hear this! Now hear this! Bring all dogs to the fan-tail." The fan-tail is the overhang at the stern of the ship. I learned the next day that they had about 40 dogs on the fan-tail. The Coast Guard had prepared a place for the forbidden dogs. That's not so many when you consider that there were 5,000 troops on board. The ingenuity of the G.I.s was amazing. I think that's one of the reasons we won the war.

My cousin, Major Ben Legare, was on this ship. He crawled into his bunk when we were still in the Mediterranean and stayed there until we entered Chesapeake Bay. I would go by his bunk before dinner to cheer him up. I'd tell him they were serving greasy pork chops and collard greens for dinner and that usually roused him up enough to throw something at me. We were on the ship for eleven days coming home. We went over in seven days in June 1944 on a shorter route and greater speed because of the German submarines.

BACK IN THE STATES

We unloaded at a port near Norfolk, Virginia in September 1945. The first person to come down the gangplank was an enlisted man who had been awarded The Congressional Medal of Honor. He marched down by himself with the appropriate music from a band on the dock. The General, followed by his staff, marched down next with the appropriate music. Then they started to unload by several gang-planks and the band played on. Any happy tune would be appropriate.

When my Battalion unloaded, I would have liked to have a picture of Captain Jones coming down the gang-plank. He had shot a large stag in the forest near Frankfort. He had the antlers in his backpack and they stuck up at least a foot above his head. I had twelve pistols in my pack that I had taken from prisoners I had captured.

The men from other regions were sent directly by rail to posts near their home to be processed there. The Army was very efficient and it didn't take long to dispose of 5,000 troops.

I was transferred to the Home Reserve on September 24, 1945 and allowed to go home. I came to Charleston by rail and hired a taxi to take me to the Veronee's on Johns Island. I arrived in the middle of the night and woke everyone up. This was the first time since he was born (11 months) that Keith and I had met. Even though I woke him up, he didn't cry, but looked this stranger over critically.

I had about three months accumulated leave with pay from the Army. The Engineering Corps and the Navy Yard at Charleston were laying off engineers so there was little hope there. Mr. Rivers of the U.S. Corps of Engineers told me that the Arundel Corporation was looking for a civil engineer. They had a dredging contract with the Corps in Charleston harbor. So I went to work for them three weeks after returning home.

I was placed on the inactive reserve September 24, 1945. On December 3, 1953, I received an Honorable Discharge from the Army, which ended my military career.

FOOTNOTE

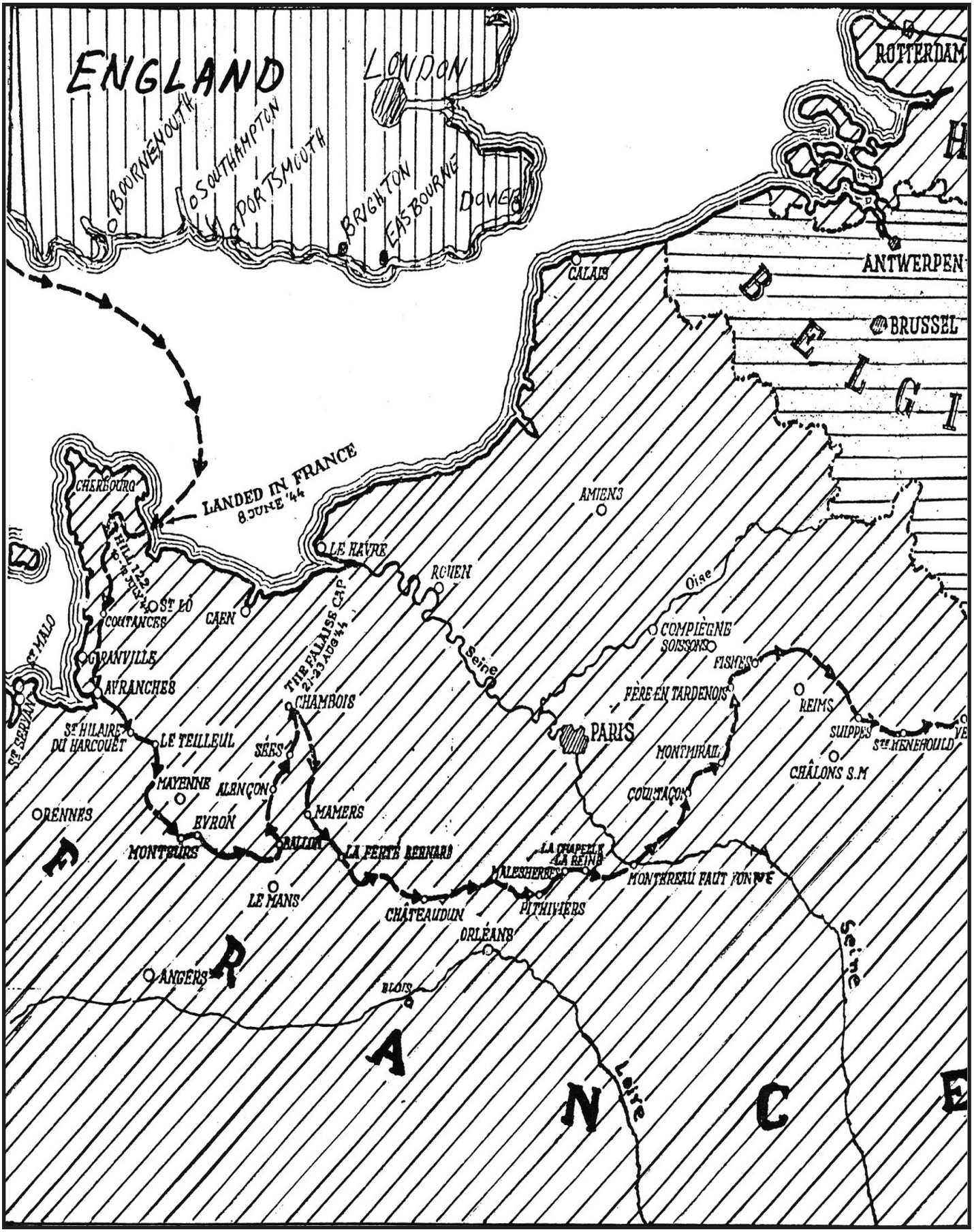
[1]The Duffel Bag was the GI's suitcase when traveling (not in combat). Duffel bags with personal gear were left in England when men went into combat. Some men got them back, some did not.



A Mine Detector

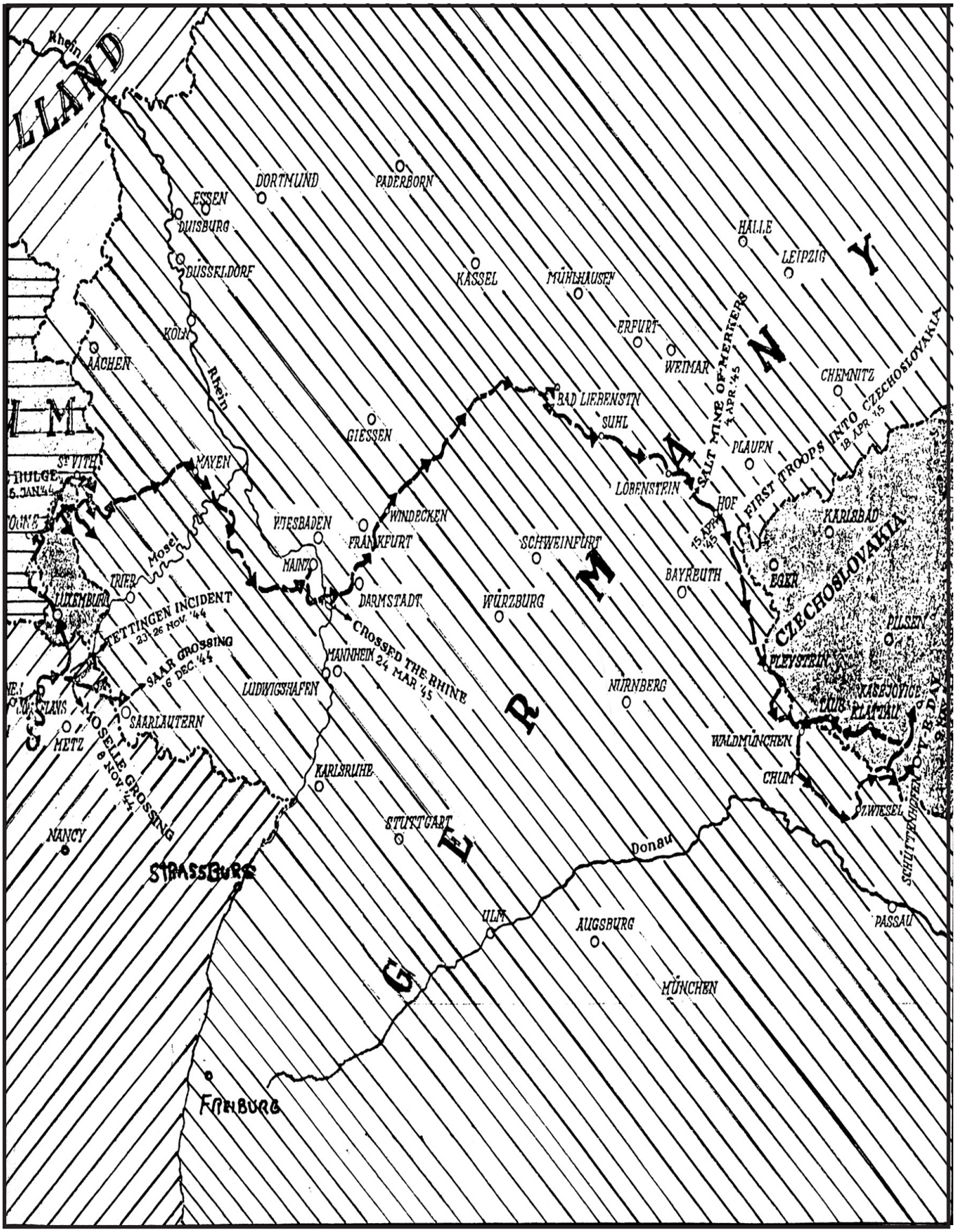
41. AWARDS, DECORATIONS, AND CITATIONS

TYPE	AUTHORITY AND DATE	PRESENTED (Yes or No)
Croix de Guerre	GO 22 Hq 358 Inf 24 Nov 44	
Silver Star Med	GO 515 Hq 90 Inf Div 6 Jul 45	
OLC to SS	AR 600-45	
Purple Heart	GO 33 Hq 358 Inf 15 May 45	
OLC to PH	AR 600-45	
Dist Suc[1] Cross	Sec I, GO 60 Hq 3rd A 18 Mar 45	
EAMET Med	AR 600-65	
CI Badge	AR 600-70	
2 OS Bars	AR 600-40	



Battle Route of the Third Battalion, 358th Infantry

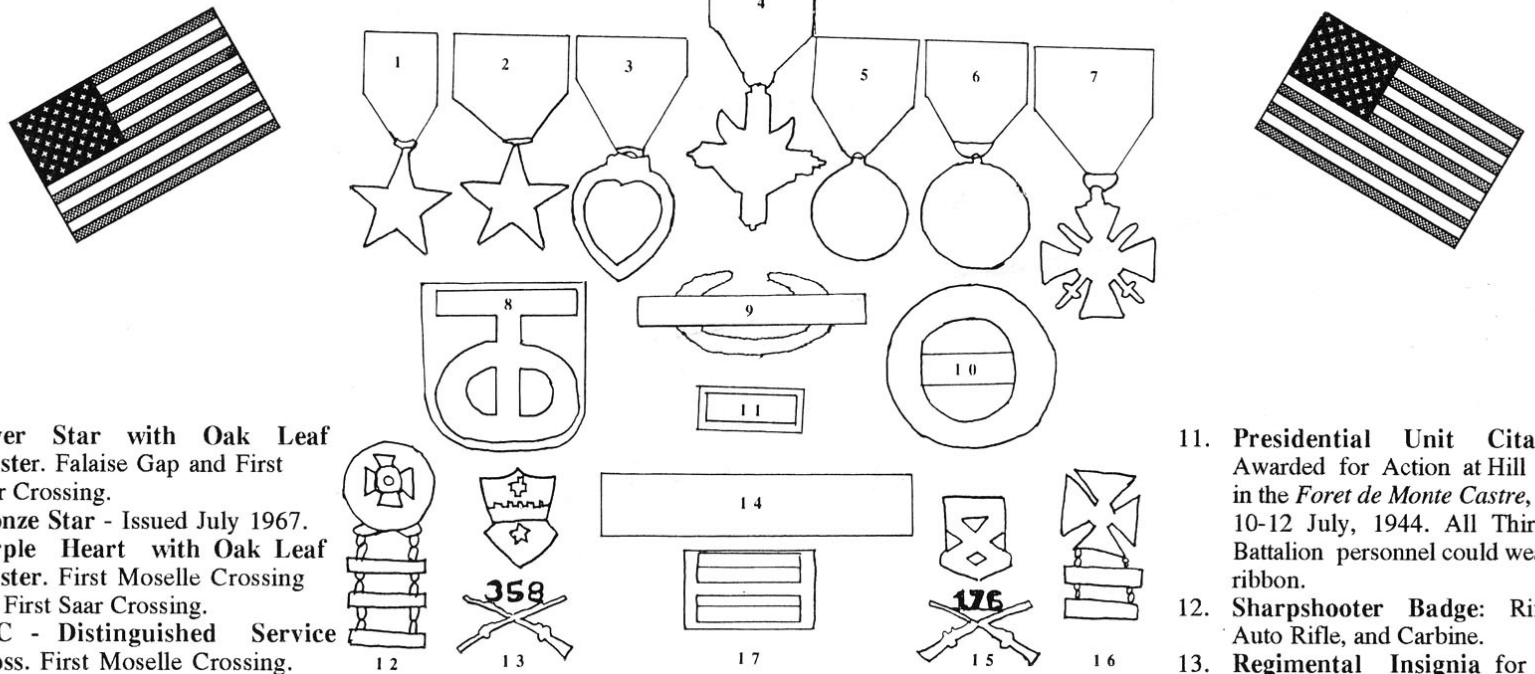
8 June 1944 - VE Day 1945



Battle Route of the Third Battalion, 358th Infantry

8 June 1944 - VE Day 1945


LT. COL. CHARLES B. BRYAN
3rd BN 358th INF 90th DIV
WORLD WAR II
PISTOL-D
MACHINE GUN
AUTO RIFLE
RIFLE
CARBINE



1. **Silver Star with Oak Leaf Cluster.** Falaise Gap and First Saar Crossing.
2. **Bronze Star** - Issued July 1967.
3. **Purple Heart with Oak Leaf Cluster.** First Moselle Crossing and First Saar Crossing.
4. **DSC - Distinguished Service Cross.** First Moselle Crossing.
5. **Campaign Medal for European Theater of Operations** with Silver Star for Five Campaigns.
6. **Victory Medal** for World War II.
7. **Croix de Guerre.** Liberation of Metz, November 9-18, 1944.
8. **Shoulder Patch of 90th Division.** T = Texas. O = Oklahoma, or Tough (H)ombres.
9. **Combat Infantryman's Badge.**
10. **Shoulder Patch.** Troops Training and Serving in the United States.
11. **Presidential Unit Citation** Awarded for Action at Hill 122 in the *Foret de Monte Castre*, France 10-12 July, 1944. All Third Battalion personnel could wear this ribbon.
12. **Sharpshooter Badge:** Rifle, Auto Rifle, and Carbine.
13. **Regimental Insignia** for 358th Infantry, 90th Division
14. **Brass Plate:** Lt. Col. Charles B. Bryan, Third Battalion, 358th Infantry, 90th Division
15. **Regimental Insignia** for 176th Infantry, George Washington's Regiment. Virginia National Guard.
16. **Marksman's Badge:** Pistol and Machine Gun.
17. **Oversea's Bar.** Each Bar Represents One Year or Portion Thereof.

Key to Photograph of Awards and Decorations



THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

TO ALL WHO SHALL SEE THESE PRESENTS, GREETING:

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT
THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
HAS AWARDED THE

PURPLE HEART

ESTABLISHED BY GENERAL GEORGE WASHINGTON
AT NEWBURGH, NEW YORK, AUGUST 7, 1782
TO

LIEUTENANT COLONEL CHARLES B. BRYAN, UNITED STATES ARMY

FOR WOUNDS RECEIVED
IN ACTION
EUROPEAN THEATER 17 NOVEMBER 1944
GIVEN UNDER MY HAND IN THE CITY OF WASHINGTON
THIS 27th DAY OF July 1987

THE ADJUTANT GENERAL

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
WAR OFFICE

SECRETARY OF THE ARMY

GENERAL ORDERS
Volume 106, Number 3 January - February 1997
LEGION OF VALOR
OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, INC.
FOUNDED AS MEDAL OF HONOR LEGION — 1890
CHARTERED BY ACT OF CONGRESS — 1955



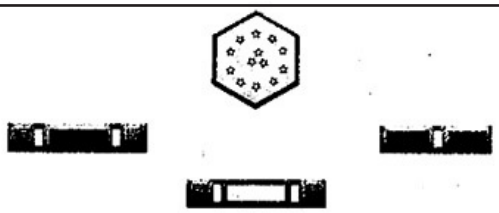
Distinguished Service Cross

WE ARE PROUD TO WELCOME THE FOLLOWING RECIPIENTS OF THE DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CROSS TO THE ROLLS OF THE LEGION OF VALOR.



LT. COL. CHARLES B. BRYAN, (then Captain) Infantry, Company L, 358th Infantry Regiment, 90th Infantry Division, United States Army. For extraordinary heroism in connection with military operations against an armed enemy in France. On 10 November 1944, Captain Bryan fearlessly led his company in a bold assault on a strong enemy position near Inglange, France, inspiring his men by his conspicuous, heroic leadership. Following his example, the company assaulted with bayonets and grenades and killed and captured nearly a hundred of the enemy. On 11 November, Captain Bryan again distinguished himself by personally leading his company against another strong enemy position, again inspiring his men to take the objective and inflict tremendous losses of men and materiel upon the enemy. His heroic determination and courageous devotion to duty reflect great credit upon himself and are in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service.

General Orders for the Legion of Valor



LEGION OF VALOR

OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, INC.

FOUNDED AS MEDAL OF HONOR LEGION-1890
CHARTERED BY ACT OF CONGRESS 1955

December 8, 1996

LTC Charles B. Bryan, DSC
2576 Bryan Dary Road
Johns Island, SC 29455

Dear Colonel Bryan:

Welcome to the Legion of Valor.

We are happy to add your name to the roll of the Legion of Valor. We take pride in the fact that the Legion of Valor is one of our nation's oldest veterans' organizations. Its members are history makers; many have gone on to contribute even more to society. It is my personal belief that each and every American should take an active interest in his community, his nation. Joining the Legion of Valor is one way to reach out. Share with me an enthusiasm for our programs. Be an ACTIVE member.

Enclosed you will find your membership card. In a forthcoming issue of our news bulletin General Orders, an announcement will be made regarding your membership. At some future time you may want to consider a life membership. A life membership is a one-time fee of $150.00 as opposed to $20.00 per year.

Organizations such as the Legion of Valor depend on its current members to recommend others who are eligible. Enclosed is a copy of our pamphlet with a membership application. Keep it handy. Should you know of another who is qualified or meet someone who is candidate for membership, share it with them.

Sincerely,

M. G. Worley
Adjutant
92 Oak Leaf Lane
Chapel Hill, NC 27516
Phone: (919) 933-0989

APPENDIX

***Citation*s**

Newspaper of the Third Battalion in Waldmunchen, Germany

May 26, 1945

June 2, 1945

June 2, 1945

June 13, 1945

July 7, 1945

July 14, 1945

July 21, 1945

The *Sniper*

General Patton's Speech. July 13, 1945

90th on the Air!

The 90th Division in World War II

Awards and Decorations

Casualties

Prisoner of War Report

Enemy Materiel Destroyed or Captured

Organization of an Infantry Division

Division and Regiment

Battalion and Rifle Company

Citation

VOL. 1 NO. 1 WEEKLY PUBLICATION OF 3RD BN., 358 INF. WALDMUNCHEN, GERMANY MAY 26, 194

P. F. C. WENZEL STARTS PHOTO SERVICE

Pfc. Gordon R. Wenzel assisted by Pfc. William McGuan, and Pfc. George W. Brown, has started a photo developing and printing service for members of this battalion. Realizing the difficulty camera fans have had in the past in getting their films developed and printed, Wenzel, a former professional photographer, collected together enough materials to offer this service to us. All shutter bugs, I know, will greatly appreciate his efforts.

Shortage of necessary materials naturally rears its ugly head, so that only one print of each picture is allowed at this time. Prices will be 6 cents per rool for developing and 3 cents for each print. All money collected goes into a battalion fund to buy more materials.

Our photographer is also making an attempt to collect together enough rolls of film to ration them among the members of the battalion who own cameras. When his studio is fixed up and running smoothly, Wenzel also plans starting a portrait studio where you can have your picture taken to send to your Mom 'sweetheart, or wife.

Pfc. Wenzel also stated that as soon as the educational program starts, he will take a few men at a time and demonstrate to them the processes of developing and printing. When sporting events and other activities get going full swing, he also plans to take pictures of various events and make up prints for those members of the battalion who would like one.

HERE IT IS FELLOWS!

You are now reading the first issue of our our Battalion newspaper CITATION, and we sincerely hope you enjoy it. Beset with numerous printing difficulties and an under-manned staff, we have endeavoured to do our best. In the future we hope to improve with each edition, but so much depends upon the help and cooperation of the members of our Battalion. Send any and all items, you think would be of interest, to office in Bn. Hdqs. or give them to any member of the staff. They will be greatly appreciated. In addition, we offer a plea for more volunteers to assist in the printing of the paper, in writing columns and articles, in reporting, etc. If you think you can help, and you would like to get into some interesting and enjoyable work, contact us and we will have a job for you. So what do you say fellows?--give us a hand and in no time we will have a newspaper that will be hard to beat.



LIEUT.—COLONEL CHARLES B. BRYAN

The present commanding officer of this Battalion was born in Charleston South Carolina on 5 April 1919. He spent the usual eventful childhood, acquiring a fondness for riding horses and sailing boats in historic Charleston Bay.

After completing high school, he entered Clemson Military School in 1936. Following a busy four years, he graduated receiving a Second Lieutenant's commission in the United States Army Reserve.

In March of '42, the then Lieutenant Bryan was called to active duty and assigned to the 176th Infantry Regiment. While with this unit, he was promoted to the grade of Captain. Tour of duty here lasted well over one year and included Capital Guard duty, maneuvers and acting as Demonstration Troops for the OCS classes at Fort Benning, Georgia.

When the Regiment was inactivated in the Spring of '44, Captain Bryan reported to Fort Meade for POMing. Next stop was Camp Miles Standish. It was from here that he left the States on 6 June 1944, D Day. After a brief seven day trip, the boat docked in England. From here Capt. Bryan crossed over to France and joined this Battalion on 16 July 1944 while the Battalion was at Gores recovering from the bitter Foret de Mont Castre fight. Captain Bryan was given command of Company L.

It was with L Company that he participated in the dash across France, the storming of the Moselle and Saar rivers, and the "Tettingen Incident". For his outstanding bravery in these actions, he received the Freuch Croix de Guerre at a presentation in Metz.

On 16 December 1944, Captain Bryan wa transferred to Battalion Headpuarters as Battalio Executive Officer. He served in this capacit untill 18 February 1945 when he assumed com mand of the Battalion. Promotion followed ra pidly with a Majority coming through 4 Marc and a Lieutenant Colonelcy on 28 April 194

Lieutenant-Colonel Bryan has been awarde the DSC, Silver Star, Croix de Guerre' Purpl Heart, and ETO bar with two campaign star His family currently resides in John's Island South Carolina and includes 24 points worth o boys -- aged 3 years and 6 months.

BIG PLANS FOR BLUE COUNTY

Our own Third Battalion ae well as a units in tho ETO are planning and putting unde way the most extensive and well--rounded ath letic and educational program in the history o our Army.

In the realm of athletics and recreation her in our own county area, we have our ridin stable for the use of all members of the bat talion, consisting of some 40 horses, all bein fattened up after their liberation from the Wehr macht, two tile swimming pools, a large baseba diamond under construction, and a gymnasiur with many kinds of equipment. Construction o

cont. on page

Citation

VOL. 1 NO. 2 WEEKLY PUBLICATION OF 3RD BN, 358 INF WALDMUNCHEN, GERMANY JUNE 2, 1945

MEMORIAL DAY — 1945

BATTALION PERSONALITIES

Captain Clive P. Jaffray Jr.

Our Battalion Executive Officer and Col. Bryan's right hand man was born in Minneapolis, Minn. on the 20 April 1918. He graduated from Shattuck Military School, Farbault, Minn., in 1936. While at this school, he attended the ROTC course at Fort Snelling, Minn.

He continued his studies at Yale University, majoring in Economics, and received a B. A. degree in 1940. It was in 1939, while attending Yale, that he received a Second Lieutenant's commission in the U. S. Army Reserve. For three years he was an active member of the Yale swim ming team and an ardent golfer, playing as frequently as possible.

On September 1, 1940, impelled by a desire to serve his county, he volunteered for active duty with the 3rd Infantry at Fort Snelling, Minn. After a tour of duty here, his next stop was with the 63rd Infantry at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo. From here, in January of 1942, he went to Fort Benning, Ga. to attend an Officer's Cadre Refresher Course. Following completion of this course, he was assigned to the 90 U S Infantry Division at Camp Barkley, Texas in February of '42, thereby becoming one of the original members of the division.

When the division was officially activated in April, 1942, Lt. Jaffray was assigned to the 3rd Bn., 358 Inf. as Detachment Commander, Headquarters Detachment. During the month of August, he became Battalion S-2 and exchanged his gold bars for silver ones. He remained in this position until May of '43, when he became Commanding Officer of Headquarters Co. After one month's service as CO of Hdqs. Co., he received his captaincy.

Capt. Jaffray left the States with the 90th Division in March, 1944. Then came England, Wales, Normandy, Northern France, the Moselle and Saar River crossings, the Bulge, and the final campaign for Germany. For his work during these actions, Capt. Jaffray has been awarded the Bronze Star with Oak Leaf Cluster, the Order of the Purple Heart, and the ETO ribbon ith — we hope — 5 battle stars.

In March, 1945, he became Battalion Executive Officer and is at present serving in this capacity.

Post-war plans are mainly centered around his fiance Miss Virginia Schley of New York City. An important boat sailing ran competition with an engagement party held in their honor, so that Capt. Jaffray missed the party. The business world offers the most attraction to the Captain so his civilian pursuits will probably be in this field.

THE BLUE COUNTY COURT OF GOOD WILL

So, you think you've got troubles? We recommend a visit to the Military Government of Blue County if you want to see people with real problems. Chief Justice of the Court is Captain Connor A. Burnette, Jr., Battalion MG Officer. Acting as Ass't. MGO is Lt. Robert L. Milk, while Pfc. Vernon Rockamann serves as clerk and Pfc Ed Mandell does the interpreting.

The cases that pass before the Court range from the truly pathetic problem of DPs trying to get back home, through the impossible problems like that of one woman who wanted to know where her daughter was that she had not seen for six months. And then the ridiculous ones like the frau that was wondering at what temperature to heat her baby's milk.

Occasionally these complaints lead to curious results. One farmer said he knew where the German soldiers had buried some silver. Investigation disclosed a sizable hoard of silver bullion which finnally totalled 1320 pounds, some machine tools and numerous spare parts for engines.

The jurisdiction of our Military Government extends over some 22,000 people and covers an area of approximately 200 square kilometers. It includes the towns of Waldmunchen, Schonthal, Ast, Rotz, Tiefenbach and about 25 smaller towns. Within this area are three hospitals, one brewery, a printing shop, some lumber mills and numerous small factories making everything from candles to toys.

To govern all this area, the MG Detachment is split up into three groups. Group One is situated in Waldmunchen and includes the MGO, the Ass't. MGO, one clerk and one interpreter. Group Two covers the southern part of the ation area and is composed of Sgt. Irwin Radel and Cpl. Frank Eisenrauch, while Group Three has charge of the Northern section and is made up of Staff Sgt. Alvin Kramer and Pfc. Richard Sann.

HELP WANTED ! ! !

The staff of CITATION again sends forth a plea to the members of the 3rd Bn. for help in the publication of our newspaper.

We need more volunteers to assist in the printing of the paper, in writing columns, articles and reporters for both general and sporting news. If you think you can help, contact us and we will have a job for you. In addition send in any and all items you think would be of interest, to our office in Bn. Hdqs. or give them to a member of the staff. They will be greatly appreciated.

If we plan to keep up publication of the CITATION and to improve with every issue, we must have more help.

3RD BN HOLDS IMPRESSIVE CEREMONY IN TOWN SQUARE

Waldmunchen, May 30.—Favored with a warm, sunny day, the Companies of the 3rd Bn. marched smartly into the town square and in a series of well executed maneuvers, they formed around the newly dedicated flag pole to begin the first Memorial Day services ever held in Waldmunchen, Germany. After the companies reported to Lt. Col. Bryan, Chaplain (Capt.) Edgar Stohler began the services with an excellently composed Memorial Day prayer, which was followed by one minute of silent prayer, to the memory of fallen comarades. Following the Chaplain's prayer, Lt. Col. Bryan delivered a short but very impressive speech. The main theme of his address centered around the fact that the war was only two-thirds won, and that we still must carry on the fight—the war in the Pacific is yet to be won and here in Germany we must win the peace.

At the conclusion of Lt. Col. Bryan's address, and while the battalion stood at parade rest, the Bn. Adjutant, 1st. Lt. John W. Crotty, read the complete list of all members of the 3rd Battalion, who had been killed in action or died of wounds. Following the reading of this list, the battalion bugler played Taps and the battalion was dismissed.

The new 88 foot flag pole, around which the services were conducted, was erected by the civilians of Waldmunchen under the supervision of Pfc. Mandell of the Military Government staff. At the base of the flag pole stone pavement was removed and, after filling in with earth a well arranged flower bed was planted. A neat, low fence was then built around the bed to add the finishing touch.

The flag pole was dedicated on Memorial Day at Reveille, at which time the flag was raised to full mast and then lowered to half.

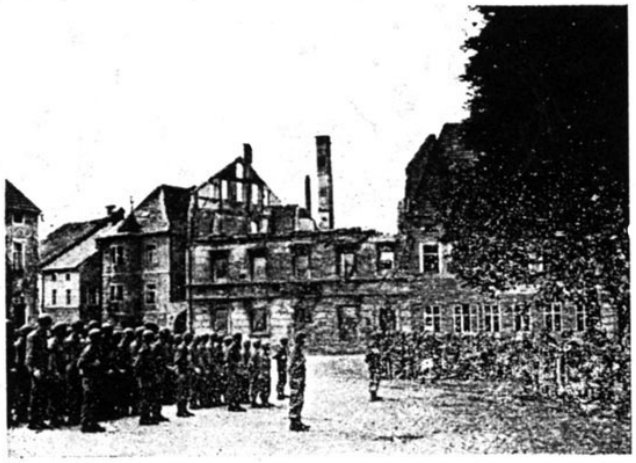
Numerous pictures were taken of the event and the CITATION plans to feature several of them in next week's issue.

BUY WAR BONDS

REMEMBER FELLOWS THERE IS STILL THE JAPS TO LICK - SO PUT MORE OF YOUR MONEY IN WAR BONDS BY ALLOTMENT QR DIRECT PURCHASE

HELP BOOST THE WAR LOAN DRIVE

..." that we here highly resolve that thes dead shall not have died in vain



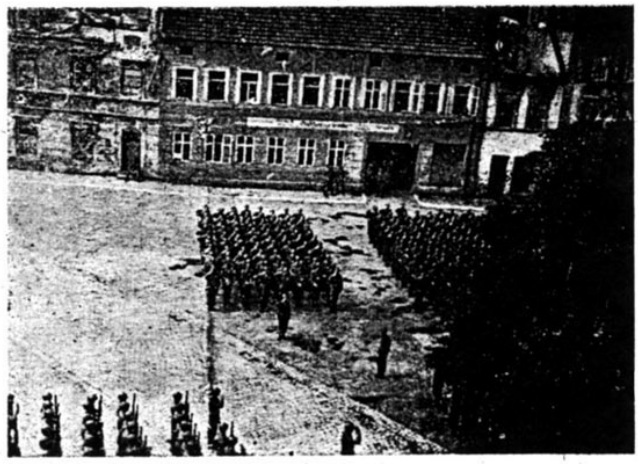
Ruined building adds grim reminder, as Lt. Col. Bryan addresses battalion.



Proud heads bowed--in prayer led by Chaplain E. Stohler.



Lt. Col. Bryan addresses 3rd Battalion (attention there, pooch)



Present arms!



Another view of Lt. Col. Bryan addressing troops.

Photos Taken by Pfc Gordon Wenzel and Pfc Mandel Gomberg

KORN-KOLUMN

"Of course I love you Tom" and she took off her stockings. "We will have the sweetest little bungalow" and she took off her sports sweater. "We will have a lot of little flower beds," and she took off her skirt. "Tom, dear, why can't we be married in the spring when all the world is filled with laughter?" and she took off her camisole. "If you prefer the fall I prefer it too, because we are as one, sweetheart" and she took off her petticoat because she was an old-fashioned girl. "Tom dear, tell me once more that you love me" and she removed her last vestige of clothing. "Tom, honey, I better say good-night for I have to get up early in the morning". And she hung up the receiver.

We spent the morning on our new book. It's to be a biography of Errol Flynn and Charley Chaplin and we're going to call it: "On Whom the Gals Told."

A young lady with a touch of hay fever took with her to a dinner party two handkerchiefs, one of which she stuck in her bosom. At dinner she began rummaging in her bosom for the fresh handker hief. Engrossed in her search, she sudenly realized that conversation had ceased and people were watching her, fasinated. In confusion she murmured "I know I had two when I came."

Conductor: "How many in this berth?"
Passenger: "Just one. Here's our ticket."

Submitted by 3rd Bn. Personnel Cl

Citation

VOL. 1 NO. 5 WEEKLY PUBLICATION OF 3RD BN, 358 INF WALDMUNCHEN, GERMANY JUNE 23, 1945

CLUBMOBILE "MEMPHIS" VISITS BLUE COUNTY

Last Friday, when we heard the strains of some good old American jive coming from down in the town square, we immediately thought of a Red Cross Clubmobile passing out coffee and sinkers. Investigation confirmed our suspicions, because there she was parked in front of the Hq. Co. kitchen. Like every one else we scrambled around to find a cup and then took off to get in line. As usual the coffee and donuts were "sehr gut".

It was certainly a treat to see some nice looking American girls again. In fact the fellows seemed to enjoy talking to them more than they did eating the donuts, and that is something for a GI! Determined to learn a little more about these rare creatures who were dispensing the coffee, we ventured inside. While we went from one corner to the other trying to keep out of their way, we learned that their names were Miss Aileen Anderson and Miss Eleanor D. Hood. Miss Anderson hails from Kansas City, Kans. and she has served with the Red Cross for three years, 11 months of which were overseas. Miss Hood makes her home in Providence R. I. 13 of her 15 months in the Red Cross have been overseas, and she has been in England, Scotland, France, Belgium, Luxemberg, Germany, and Czechoslovakia. She is 31 years old and likes to jitterbug.

The Clubmobile "Memphis" also boasts another name. The girls picked the name of "Impulse". All that we hope is that they get another impulse real soon to pay us another visit.

BATTALION ORCHESTRA STARTS PRACTICE SESSIONS

Amid the conglamoration of squeaking saxaphones, blaring trumpets and off-key piano the 3rd Battalion orchestra formally opened its first practice session in Waldmunchen last Tuesday.

Since the drummer turned out to be the only musican who could play entirely by ear, the first attempt of "Dina" gave strange resemblance of a tin roof collapsing over a boiler factory. However, all these minor wrinkles are expected to be ironed out once various emissaries return from trips canvassing the continent for sheet music.

During the absence of Lt. Rudes all rehearsals will be under supervision of Pfc. Jimmy Wool. Instruments have been purchased at "give-away" prices from a music factory in Czechoslovakia. At present the orchestra is made up of only nine pieces, but anyone in the Battalion interested in joining up is urged to do so by informing your first sergeant or contacting Pfc. Wool in Waldmunchen.

"Prospects for organizing a good band look very favorable", Wool said. "All we need is to get the players to concentrate on the same piece at the same time".

BATTALION PERSONALITIES



CHAPLAIN (CAPTAIN) ANTHONY SIDOTI

Our own Chaplain "Tony" Sidoti was born in Brooklyn, N. Y. on June 14, 1912. He attended Brooklyn Polytechnical Prep. School and also St. Francis, Prep., but he finally graduated from St. Mary's High School in Amsterdam, New York in 1930. College life commenced at Notre Dame University, but he transferred later to Niagara University in Buffalo, N.Y. and graduated in 1936, receiving a B.A. degree. While at college, the chaplain played football, basketball, and took part in boxing. He held down the guard position on the football team, and played at Notre Dame as well as Niagara. Major studies while at the university, were languages and mathematics. In between N.D. and Niagara, our chaplain learned something about military life at Manalius Military Academy in Syracuse, N.Y.

Winning out in a competitive examination, Chaplain Sidoti was chosen to be sent to Rome, Italy to study for the priesthood. After completing studies in Rome, he spent a year in Louvain, Belgium studying philosophy and theology. His studies there were interrupted by the outbreak of war in Europe, and he was sent to Our Lady of Angels Seminary at Niagara Falls, N.Y. On May 18, 1940, Chaplain Sidoti was ordained in the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Albany N.Y.

During the years from 1940-42, Father Sidoti busied himself in the fields of criminology and juvenile delinquency (or "boyology" as he calls it). This work took him to various prisons where he acted as chaplain. The roster of prisons include Sing Sing, Alcatraz, and Chino, California. During this time he also held the directorship of the Catholic Youth Organization in northern New York State.

Volunteering for the Army in Oct. 1942, he was commissioned a first lieutenant and assigned to the 303rd Ord. Depot in North Carolina. After a tour of duty with several different outfits, Chaplain Sidoti left for England and joined the staff of the 32nd Evacuation Hospital in Feb. 1944. In July, 1944 he was transferred to the 8th Armored Group in France, remaining with this outfit until his transfer to his present post as Chaplain of our own 3rd Battalion in Sept. 1944.

Chaplain Sidoti has held a captaincy since

cont. on page 4

CIRCUS COMES TO TOWN

A fast-moving, two hour performance by troupers of the Konrad circus is entertaining members of the 358 Inf. Regiment in Waldmunchen this week. Famous artists of the European "big tops" some of whom have relatives with Ringling Bros. in the States, put on a show equal in poise and ability to top ranking acts at home.

Generous applause and calls for encore showed GI appreciation towards the acts of Trude, shapely 17 year old acrobat, Schobel the rubber man, performer of impossible feats, and Mrs. Yensen, Czechoslovakian slack wire artist.

Ring stunts by Mr. and Mrs. Elkins, tumbling turns of the Clauson Brothers, a trapeze balancing act of Mr. and Mrs. Andree and the highly trained horses of Mr. Supka and Mrs. Konrad all joined to provide an evening of delightful entertainment.

Adept handling of the Master of Ceremonies job by our own Pfc. Billy Wolfram of special service kept the show moving along smoothly with his introduction of acts and "stooging" for the hilarious antics of the clowns, Alphonse and Joe.

A challenge for GIs to participate in the entertainment by attempting to circle the ring three times, standing on the back of a loping horse received plenty of applicants. Although the attempts usually were unsuccessful the act paid big dividends in amusement for the audience,

BLUE BN HOST TO 90th DIV BAND

Last Tuesday the boys of the 3rd Bn. strutted their stuff in a retreat parade up on the ball diamond. The visiting 90th Div. band furnished the music that "makes you wanta march", and an excellently executed parade and review was the result.

That evening the band let down their hair and gave a real swing session down in the town square, and the Blue county boys really enjoyed the music. Everyone got a big laugh out of the orchestra's own rendition of "Alice Kaputt". It was particularly amusing because the curious German onlookers did not know quite what to make of it.

There was only one thing wrong with the concert and that was, that it did not last long enough. We could have listened to them all evening.

DON'T FORGET THAT SHORT STORY

In the way of a reminder, there is still a trip to Paris waiting for the lucky winner of the CITATION Short Story Contest. So let's get those pens and pencils going and get those stories in to us! There are only eight days left!

BUY WAR BONDS

Citation

VOL. 1 NO. 7 WEEKLY PUBLICATION OF 3RD BN, 358 INF WALDMUNCHEN, GERMANY JULY 7, 1945

INCLEMENT WEATHER LIMITS HOLIDAY PLANS

Elaborate plans for a big Fourth of July celebration this week failed to receive the "green light" from old Mother Nature. Cool, rainy weather brought about cancellation of ball games, the horse derby, wrestling and boxing bouts.

For most GIs the 169th anniversary of America's Independence turned out to be a quiet day of rest. Usual reveille formations in the morning were excused. A brief checkup of the companies by this reporter found most men enjoying the holiday with the soldiers favorite pastime-- sleep, cards, letter writing and the usual bull sessions. A few men motored to the Sportsplatz in Nurnberg to see the Jack Benny USO show with Ingrid Bergman, Martha Tilton and Larry Adler

In the evening a special retreat formation was held in the town square of Waldmunchen. A twelve round salute was fired by Anti-Tank platoon. A short concert by the Battalion orchestra followed with the show "The Great Patrick" officially closing festivities for the day. All in all the peaceful Fourth of July this year was greatly enjoyed, especially by old men of the outfit who remember only too well the "hot time" experienced on this date last year.

CONSTRUCTION WORK STARTED ON RECREATIONAL BUILDING

Under the watchful eye of Pfc. E. D. Mandell work was started this week to remodel the beer hall building in Waldmunchen square. Both Polish and German labor will be used on this job.

In order to repair the roof it was necessary to knock out broken wall structure facing the street. According to Pfc. Mandell, the downstairs, or beer parlor, will be rebuilt for use as a Service Club. When it is completed, radios, phonograph, books and magazines, games and writing tables will all be available for use by the men.

Capt. Chester L. Thornton, former laison officer with this Battalion and now in command of Charlie Battery of 344 Field Artillery, visited friends here Tuesday afternoon. Glad to see you again Captain--drop in more often.



As a scientific fighter, the Jap can't measure up to the German. But his fanaticism compensates for many shortcomings. After you lick him tactically, you often spend weeks and months rooting him out and killing him.

SOME REAL OLD TIMERS



Nine men are all that still remain in Headquarters Company out of the original company as it was activated in 1942. They stayed with the company during basic training, maneuvers, POMing, and all five campaigns in the ETO. At present the entire group is sweating out discharges as they all have either over or nearley 85 points.

The group includes in the front row T/4 Edward N Neuman, T/Sgt Hugh F Campbell, T/5 Carl C Osgood, and Sgt Andrew K. Brones. Behind them are Pfc Russel N Olson, Sgt Carl D Thayer, Capt Clive P Jaffray, S Sgt Elbert L Stone and T/5 Joseph A Shermen.

PERMANENT DETACHMENT TAKES OVER MG OFFICES

An entire new staff of specially trained officers and enlisted men arrived at Battalion last week to assume duties of the Military Government office in Waldmunchen county. All the men are former combat soldiers pulled out of the front lines near the end of the war and trained at Darmstad, Germany.

Headed by Capt. John E. Hudson, this permanent party, known as detachment number 114D3, includes three officers and six enlisted men. One more officer is expected to arrive in the near future.

Serving as interpreters and stenographers are two young ladies who have been working with the group for some time. In next weeks' issue the CITATION hopes to feature a story on these English-speaking ladies.

Functions of the office will be the same as originally started under Capt. C. A. Burnette, Jr., who has taken over the duties of laison officer for this Battalion. A branch office has been set up in Rotz, under 1st Lt. Turk which will handle problems relating to refugees and displaced personnel in that area.

Members of the CITATION staff hope this six page paper will meet with your approval. However, additional typesetters are needed to handle the increase in composition. Anyone with experience along this line is urged to contact us at the CITATION office in Battalion Headquarters.

RUDE'S RHYTHM ROCKERS BEAT OUT HOT JIVE

After almost a week of continuous rehearsals, the 3rd Battalion 11-piece dance band led by Lt. Rudes, sallied forth with their debut in the Waldmunchen auditorium Wednesday evening.

Generous applause by the GI audience following each number assured the band it had made a "hit." Latest tunes now popular in the States were handled well by the boys, some of whom haven't played their instrument for eight years. The orchestra plans to continue daily rehearsals, perfecting new numbers for future entertainment.

A need has been expressed by Lt. Rudes for additional musicians. There appears to be a shortage of Clarinet players who are necessary to successfully handle certain numbers. Some of the present members have high service scores and additional players will be needed to replace these men, who may leave soon for discharge. All interested musicans in the Battalion are urged to contact Lt. Rudes or any band member immediately. Good working hours, high pay, fine chow, excellent quarters are included with the job.

IT COULD HAPPEN TO ANYONE! OFFICERS UPSET HEADQUARTERS

The biggest scoop of the war and probably a flash for Ripley was witnessed on the ball field here Thursday when the softball league's cellar team, the Battalion Officers, came through to win their first game against the strong, high riding Headquarters club.

Stellar playing by all the Officers is reported to be their excuse for winning, although a spectacular running catch by Burnette in center field and expert handling of many plays by Goodman were contributing factors toward holding the hard-hitting Headquarters team down.

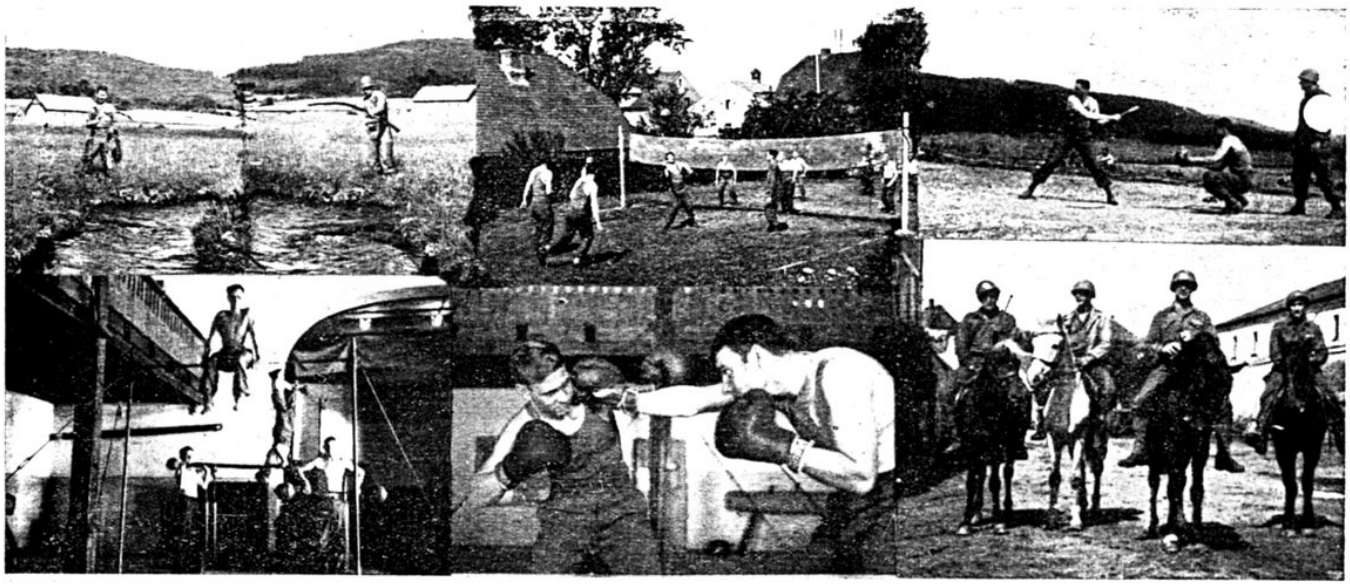
An interview of officers following the classic found many of them still stunned and speechless from unexpected shock, but upon recovery they were able to come out with this statement, "We have hit our stride. From now on we will go right ahead and continue to upset the whole schedule."

TWENTY-FOUR DECORATIONS AWARDED MEN OF BATTALION

Seven officers and seventeen enlisted men of this Battalion were presented Bronze Star awards by Lt. Col. J. O. Boswell, Regimental Commander, in a ceremony held in the Auditorium at Waldmunchen Friday, July 6.

Those who received the decorations from Hdqs. Co. are: T/4 Neuman, T/4 Williams, T/5 Volatile, T/5 Wolfe, Pfc. Beuntemeier, Pfc. J T Brown, Cpl. Zeman; Co. I Capt. Parrish, Lt. Graf, S/Sgt. Oscar, and Lt. Snodgrass (hosp.): Co. K: Lt. Dutcher, Pfc. Cherry, Lt. Falkenstein: Co. L: Capt. Burnette, S/Sgt Bence, S/Sgt. Clossen, S/Sgt. Garner; Co. M: Pfc. Leyman, Pfc. Morrone, Pfc. Pendley, Pfc Reza, Pfc. Rovenhagen; Med. Det.: Lt. Reinel.

— Camera Clicks of Blue County Sports —



Photos by Pfc Gordon Wenzel

HQS. COMPANY

While we are still sweating out the point system and CBI, life on this continent goes along very peacefully. We are enjoying our stay here by going on tours and passes. Six men from Headquarters Company were on the tour to Regensburg, which proved very interesting. They saw the famous cathedral, which took over 300 years to complete. Camera sharks took some good pictures of the solid silver alter in the cathedral. They also saw that "talked and sung about" Blue Danube river. Tht last exhibit was a German temple containing busts of all Germany's famous and great men.

The Red Cross clubmobile payed us a visit and all were treated to coffee and doughnuts. The men are now singing, "Why Don't They Do This More Often."

Pfc. Gordon Wenzel had his first class Friday on "How to take better pictures". It proved to be very interesting and instructive. Attendance was good. Classes will be held on Fridays, if possible. Everyone interested in photography is welcome to enroll in the class.

Hdqs Co. men like the laundry service very much, but can't seem to get their own clothes back. Can this error be corrected?

A beer parlor for Hdqs Co. was officially opened Saturday, June 16. Customer are served from 6 o'clock to 9:30 on week days from 1 o'clock until 9:30 on Saturday and Sunday, providing the supply holds out. There will be better beer in the near future as we hope to get some of that good old U.S.A. beer.

Ten members of Hdqs Co. saw the famous band of Maj. Glenn Miller of the A.C.F. at the town of Schwarzenfeld. Forty top notch performers, including The Crew Chiefs, a quartet of famous singers, and the crooning of Ray McKinley, Powell and Desmonds.

That pass fever caught three more lucky members of Hdqs Co. who have left for Paris. They are Pfc. Archie Welch, Pfc. Michael Pocalyko, and Cpl. Rudolph Dobesh.

CORRECTION: It was T/5 John Dean and not Pfc. John Dean who visited Paris.

Our CO, 1st Lt. John W. Crotty did not have a good time on his long-planned three day visit to Paris last week. After making elaborate plans to meet his wife there, he arrived to find the little misses, an army nurse, had departed two days earlier for the States. (Lt. Crotty is expecting to add 12 points to his service score.)

MEDICAL DETACHMENT

Capt. White and Lt. Reinel spend the majority of their time trout fishing. They have been catching some dandy trout, too. We are just wondering when theyr'e going to invite us to a fish fry. It must be understood that the fish must be ready for eating before we come, because we want no part in the cleaning of them.

We Medics are on the ball when chow time rolls around. Everyday at the head of the line you will find Pfcs. Milligan, Hensley, McCormick, and Villareal.

The pill-rollers have a pretty fair basketball team, consisting of Cpl. Holiday, Sgt. Breedlove, and Pfcs. Hensley, Paterson, Kolbasnick, and Milligan. Although they have been beaten three times by the Officers, they still think they have a better team. They say they are a little rusty yet, because they have not played ball for so long a time. Good excuse, isn't it?

Yesterday, the aid station was filled with men on sick call. Sgts. Hughes, Haywood, and Breedlove and Cpl. Skar seemed to be stumped as to the cure of these men. White examined each of the patients and then called the boys into a conference. He finally reached a solution to the problem. Aspirin had again saved the day!

COMPANY M

Chow hounds come and chow hounds go, but Sgt. Horvat, the notorius section sergeant of the 2nd Platoon, will live on forever. He not only eats early chow as Sergeant of the Guard, but as soon as he is finished, he scrambles into the regular chow line for seconds! He claims to be going to Paris in a few days, so maybe he needs the extra nourishment for the coming ordeal.

Lt. Reynolds, 2nd Plat. Leader, is with us again, which means we are in for some fast orders and snappy drill. Glad to see ya, Lt.

"Mike" Astrella of the 1st Plat. is getting the cooks on the ball with the familar phrase--"I'm da inspectin' officer today, so let's feed dees guys. I'm gonna stand here till ya do!',

COMPANY I

Blue Item welcomes back two of its former scrappers who have returned to the fold after convalescing from wounds received in action. One is T/Sgt. Paul L. Baldassare who hails from Walla Walla, Washington. He was slightly wounded in November. On January 14 during the Bulge he was hospitalized for frost bite. The 19 year old T/Sgt, will be platoon Sgt. of the 2nd Platoon. The other is Pfc. Charles E. Phillips who was wounded in the battle for Hof.

Steven J. Tomko, Vance Nichols, Earl Kelly, Doris G. Hutchinson and Casper Klafta should have some interesting tales to relate from their recent sight seeing trip which took them to Regensburg.

Today Gerald W. Oliver, James Houghton Henry J. Strakos, Joseph Juricak and Louis J. Guerriero are the lucky fellows to go to Pilsen. How was the fraternizing there fellows?

The fellows are all anxious to know how and when Joe Ford received his shiner. What about it Ford??

Pfc. Kelly must have thought the war had started all over again when the guard-booth in which he was standing was turned over by a passing haywagon. How "boot" that Kelly?

Chaplain Anthony Sidoti

cont. from page 1

Nov. 25, 1943. He was wounded at Tettingen on Nov. 25, 1944 and was evacuated to England, rejoining the 90th, after recovery, in March 1945.

When asked about his post war plans, the chaplain replied that he wanted to go back with "his boys" in prison, and thus carry on his work in criminology and juvenile delinquency. At the present time, however, he is on the anxious seat wairing for his transfer to the CBI, for which he has applied.

Chaplain Sidoti wears the Purple Heart, the Bronze Star, and the Silver Star.

CAMERA CATCHES OF GI ENTERTAINERS IN ORTATION

KONRAD CIRCUS



Highly trained horse of Mrs. Konrad believes two legs just as good as four.



Mrs. Yensen, slack wire artist makes a hard trick look easy.



We knew this picture of Trude, shapely 17 year old acrobat would be welcomed

KORN KOLUMN

First Jap Officer: "What do we do now? Retreat?"

Second Jap Officer: "Retreat? You must be mad. Japanese never retreat. We must advance in the direction from which we came.

"Sorry Soldier sez the fraulein, but I never go out with perfect strangers."

Undaunted, sez I, "That's okay, babe I ain't perfect."

A young lawyer pleading his first case, had been retained by a farmer to prosecute a railroad company for killing twenty-four hogs. He wanted to impress the jury with the magnitude of the injury.

"Twenty-four hogs, gentlemen! Twenty-four! Twice the number there are in the jury box.

Abie (moaning): "Oiy, Gevalt, I'm dying. Send for me a priest."

Son: "But, papa, for you a rabbi should come."

Abie: "Do as I'm telling you. Do you vant that I should be giving our goo rabbi small-pox?"

The regiment was treking through the desert; it was arid and parched and not a drop of water was to be found. One recruit sat sadly on a stone, his head in his hands.

"What's the matter with him?" asked the sergeant.

"Homesickness," said Pvt. Smith.

"We've all got that."

"Yes, but his is worse than ours. His father owns a saloon."

"Are you keeping a hope chest?"

"With a chest like mine, there is no hope."

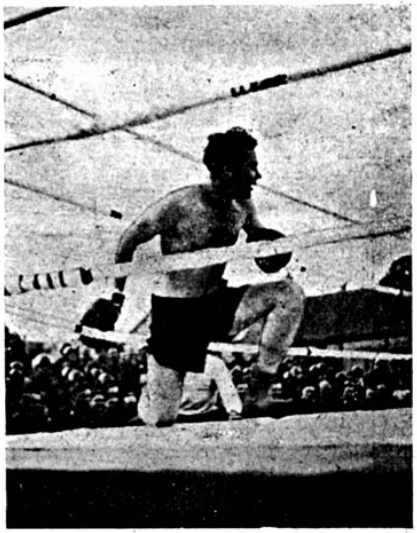


Thrilling trapeze balancing act of Mr. and Mrs. Andree.

BOXING



Item Co's. Mitchell and Hdqs Co's. Fosmire battling it out. Chaplain Sidoti, refereeing.



Fosmire slips as he backs away from one of Mitchell's hard lefts.



K Co's. Tomichael looked pretty happy after taking the decision from Williams, of I Co.

Citation

VOL. 1 NO. 8 WEEKLY PUBLICATION OF 3RD BN, 358 INF WALDMUNCHEN, GERMANY JULY 14, 1945

PIN-UP GIRL CONTEST STARTED IN BATTALION

So, you think YOUR girl is the prettiest one? Well, here's your chance to prove it. Under sponsorship of the CITATION, each company will run a contest to pick the Company Queen. Pictures of the Five Queens will then be submitted to Battalion where final choice will be made by a board of three en listed men. The winning girl in each company will have her picture published in the July 28th issue of CITATION. The final winner will then be written up in the August 4th issue. Rules for the contest are:

1. Any type of picture will do. It may be either full length or merely a facial view.
2. Company Queens must be chosen by the 18th of July and the pictures submitted to the CITATION office at Battalion CP before midnight of the 18th.
3. All pictures will be returned as soon as cuts can be made of them.
4. The choosing of each of the Company Queens will be made by a board set up in each company.

Come on, fellows, let's turn in those pictures and see who is the prettiest girl of the Third Battalion men.

HIGH POINTED VETERANS LEAVE FOR 76TH DIV.

Redeployment of personnel got underway this week as ten high point men eligible for discharge or non-combat duty left the Battalion Monday morning to join the 76th Infantry Division.

Five officers and five enlisted men, all possessing 85 or more points, comprise the first group to leave. In the next few days it is expected that more of the high point men will be leaving in ever increasing numbers.

Those who left Monday are: Service Company, Lt. Goodman; Headquarters Company, Lt. Burke, Pfc. Cox, T/4 Williams; Company K, Lt. Falkenstein, Lt. Haggerness, Pfc. Mollizone, T/5 Miller; Company M, Lt. Gatewood, T/5 Bill.

FOURTEEN SILVER STARS PRESENTED TO 3RD BN. MEN

In a brief ceremony at Oberviechtach last Monday men of the 358 Regiment were presented Silver Star decorations by Brig. Gen. Joseph M. Tully, assistant divisional commander.

Eight officers and six enlisted men from the third battalion who received the coveted decoration for gallantry in action include, Company K: Lt. Wall, Pfc. Reno; Company I: Capt. Parrish, Lt. Rogers, Lt. Arnold; Company L: Capt. Mateyko, Pfc. Samer, S/Sgt. Reichle; Bn. Hqs.: Lt. Col. Bryan, Chaplain Sidoti, Lt. Clark, S/Sgt. Reluga, T/Sgt. Campell, T/3 Haywood.



Miss Elizabeth Petzold

"We can't get back to the United States soon enough", was the opinion two American-born girls expressed in an interview with a CITATION reporter this week. The two lovely girls who have been the center of attraction at the Waldmunchen theatre lately are nineteen year old Elizabeth and sixteen year old Helen Petzold.

When their parents first entered the States in 1925 under the immigration quota, they took out first citizenship papers but failed to follow through and obtain full citizenship status. Both girls were born in Brooklyn but spent most of their time in Long Island where the family settled.

Although Elizabeth and Helen were considered citizens by right of their birth in the States, they felt obliged to remain with their parents when the latter were deported early in 1944. Arriving in Germany in March, the family went to Mr Petzold's former home in Glauchau, Germany. When the Germans wanted to put Elizabeth to work in a defense plant she protested and was given farm work instead. Helen was kept busy attending school. During the remainder of the war the girls kept abreast of the news by listening to BBC broadcasts from England.

When the anxiously awaited Americans first arrived in Glauchau Elizabeth obtained work as secretary with the Military Government. When the Detachment was transferred to Waldmunchen, the two Petzold girls and their mother were also transferred. At present they are billeted in a small apartment here in town. Their father remained in Glauchau. Both girls have applied through channels to claim their necessary citizenship papers.

A third English speaking girl, also acting as secretary and interpreter with the local Military Government is Bulgarian-born nineteen year old Marina Jahn. When her parents moved

(cont. on page 6)

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM HALTED, MILITARY TRAINING TO BEGIN

Opportunity for men of this Battalion to obtain College credit for overseas schooling and to receive specialized training under the I and E program was curtailed, at least temporarily, this week. Planned educational courses, under direction of Lt. McElroy, Battalion S-3 officer, were almost ready to open when directives from higher headquarters cancelled the courses. Time previously allotted to the educational program will be replaced with a new military training schedule.

This training has priority over the I and E-program. In effect this means formal schooling is cancelled but every aid will be extended to men who wish to prepare for their vocational future or continue their education in spare time. A priorty list will be made up for the university training centers in case this division might receive a future quota.

Textbooks on the 27 unit school subjects will be made available for free time study. These texts along with a selection of fiction books will be contained in a Battalion library. Details of this library will be released at a later date.

Voluntary classes in these subjects will be taught in the evening if there is sufficient demand. Hobby courses, such as Pfc. Wenzel's photography classes will be encouraged. Finally, applicants for the USAFI self teaching courses will be welcomed. The USAFI offers a wide range of courses acceptable for school credit. There is a two dollar registration fee for the course. An answer to an application for this course is received in 14 to 16 days.

LOST---A gold identification bracelet was lost somewhere between the Auditorium and Company K Thursday evening after the show. Contains name of owner, Pfc. Allan L. Franks engraved inside. Bracelet is gift from wife and owner would appreciate its return.

The Jack Benny show with Ingrid Bergman, Martha Tilton and Larry Adler will play for 90th Divisional men Sunday at Weiden. Weather conditions will determine how many men from each Battalion can see the show. If the weather is fair the troupe will perform in the town square.



Another Japanese ally in jungle fighting is boredom and homesickness. Much of the fighting is done in inconspicuous actions which nobody hears about—"mopping up." The Japs are counting heavily on the boredom and homesickness of our troops to rob us of full victory.

Citation

VOL. 1 NO. 9 WEEKLY PUBLICATION OF 3RD BN, 358 INF WALDMUNCHEN, GERMANY JULY 21, 1945

BATTALION PIN-UP GIRL SELECTED, CASUALITIES LIGHT

Sponsoring a Battalion Pin-up Girl Contest didn't turn out to be exactly the easy, pleasant task CITATION staff members anticipated. It was originally planned to select three judges who in turn would choose the Battalion Queen from the five company entries. An attempt to do this Wednesday afternoon brought on unanimous disagreement between judges that started phones ringing in the MG office for disturbing the peace. The judges finally compromised on a picture that turned out to be a third choice sent in by one company.

In view of such violent disunanimity it became necessary to look further into qualifications of prospective judges. Eyesight was checked, present and past association with femininity considered and freedom from political obligations to the Company 1st Sergeants thoroughly investigated. After long deliberations three volunteers were obtained and a final choice accepted. For security reasons names of judges will be kept anonymous.

GI's may like to study full length bathing beauty pin-ups in magazines, but it became apparent from the winning pictures of each company that most men here prefer to carry only facial views of their favorite lady in their wallet. Four company winners will appear on the back page of next week's CITATION while the Battalion winner and write-up will be on page one. The final choice was difficult as all the entries are exceedingly pleasing to hungry eyes. Next week CITATION readers can select their personal choice and doubtlessly there will be few agreements. The judges and this editor have requested permission to leave town over the weekend -- just in case of betrayal.

REGIMENT RECREATION CENTER SET UP IN RESORT HOTEL

A 358 Intantry Regimental Recreational Center for GI's is being set up in the luxurious hospital at Herzogau. Swimming, volleyball, riding stables, dancing are a few of the entertainment features planned. Evacuation of the premises by German hospital staff and patients has been underway for some time. It is hoped the Center may be opened in the very near future.

Accommodations are expected to be available for approximately one-hundred soldiers, in addition to a special operational staff. Passes, possibly for three days, will be issued to men throughout the Regiment when final preparations are completed.

OFFICERS LEAVE FOR 99TH DIVISION

Seven veteran officers left the Battalion last Monday for redeployment with the 99th division.

Those who departed are Lt. C[illegible] Bird of Hqs. Co.; Capt. Mateyke Wall of Co. K; Lt. Graf, Lt. Parrish of Co. I; Cpl Olen C[illegible] with Co. L, left Saturday to j[illegible]



This dejected expression of Pfc. Wool illustrates the strain incurred from arising continually at 6:43 a. m. to blow the bugle for 6:45 reveille.

LT. COL. CHARLES BRYAN BIDS BN. FAREWELL

When Lt. Col. Charles Bryan stepped into his jeep Wednesday morning for redeployment to the States with the 99th division, 3rd Battalion regretfully gave up one of it's most beloved and respected leaders.

At reveille Tuesday morning Lt. Col. Bryan made his farewell address to Headquarters company. He requested the CITATION publish it to the rest of the Battalion. Following is the text of his speech:

"There is a song that says, 'To go away is to die a little.' The author knew what he was talking about when he wrote those words. There is little I can say to you men that you do not already know. You are good and everyone knows that. However, I do want to say 'Thank You' for the manner in which you have accepted and worked for me during the past, both in combat and during our present semi-garrision duty. Long speeches are not in my make-up. Therefore, just keep the good name of the 3rd Battalion, 358 Infantry foremost in your thoughts and in your actions as it has been during our five campaigns together. I am very proud to have served with you and I know that I always shall remain proud of it. I never did like good-byes so I'll just say so-long until we meet again. Thank You."

The short, simple address was delivered in the quiet manner so characteristic of Lt. Col. Bryan. But it was not bearing alone which has so endeared him in the eyes of all his men. If we were to attempt a descriptive analysis of his attributes for success, the words of courage, confidence, and consideration for his men would come foremost to mind. Men who [illegible] with him from Normandy through Ger[illegible] recall the har[illegible] suffered [illegible]

NEW COMMANDING OFFICER ARRIVES IN BLUE COUNTY

Welcomes were extended this week to Lt. Col. E. Schmierer, who arrived Tuesday to assume command of 3rd Battalion.

Our new C. O. is a regular army officer with five years of service. As commanding officer of the 3rd Battalion, 393 Regiment of the 99th division, he first entered combat on November 10, 1944 He participated in the Bulge campaign, the Remagen bridgehead and the Ruhr poeket battles. A complete summary of his career will appear in the CITATION soon as a picture is developed.

In a statement to the officers and men, Lt Col. Schmierer said:

"I am very pleased to join this Battalion, particularly because it already has such an outstanding record. Your fine spirit is very evident and has deeply impressed me. It is my hope to get to know the men and officers quickly as possible. I'll do my best to lead this Battalion in such a manner that you will all continue to be rightfully proud of it."

CLEANING, PRESSING SHOP OPENS IN WALDMUNCHEN

With its motto "3rd Bn., sharpest shaped soldiers in the ETO" a new washing, pressing and alteration shop opened last Tuesday to serve the entire 3rd Bn. Located on the right hand corner of the street one block east of the Officers' Quarters, the shop will attempt to give 24--36 hour service. Facilities are limited but there is experienced German help.

Pfc Milton Garr is in charge of the shop, ably assisted by Pfc's Ed McGuire and Joe Taurisano. Garr has considerable experience in the cleaning business, having set up tailor shops and cleaning establishments in the States. One of his shops is still in operation handling army work.

Business hours are 1100--1300 and 1700 --1900 Monday through Saturday. For a list of what you can send and the prices see your company bulletin board.

COMPANY "L" NAMES PARK IN HONOR OF COMRADE

It's going to be a big day today out Liquidator way when Cycyk Park is formally dedicated. At 2 o'clock this afternoon the Liquidators will turn out to the new race course to honor gallant "Little Mike" Cycyk, Polish patriot, who died in Hof while fighting with his L Company comrades.

M company has accepted the challenge to match the best of their horse flesh with the vaunted Liquidator stable entries for the competitive part of the afternoon. Chaplain Sidoti will be on hand to speak a few words in commemoration of "Little Mike". Music will be [illegible]d by the Battalion orchestra under the [illegible]of Lt. Rudes. It's "open house" and [illegible]sted is invited to "come on out

SCENES OF HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES ON FOURTH OF JULY



"...Today is a quiet one for us here in Germany. Next year at this time..."



Those three empty looking bottles are probably the biggest "bluff" in this game.



Dinner plates piled high for Independence day. The menu: steak, string beans, mashed potatoes, gravy, bread, peanut butter, cake and coffee.

Some soldiers had to work. Here two company L guards check civilian papers on out post along Czech. border.



AT THE BALL PARK



(EDITORS NOTE: Here is the text of a speech delivered Tuesday by Lt. Col. Charles B. Bryan, 3rd Battalion Commander, dedicating the new ball field in Waldmunchen to the memory of a beloved leader--Captain Robert B. McHolland.)

The flagpole located in the town square of Waldmunchen was dedicated on May 30, 1945 to the memory of those men from our Battalion who paid the full price for God and Country. Today, we are again gathered for the purpose of making a dedication to honor a great man, a great fighter, and a great soldier.

This war has produced many great men that will never cover the pages of history because they were starring in one of the many "little pictures" playing all over the continent. We, however, will never forget those men distinguishing themselves before our eyes in battle. Each of us knows one who was, in our opinion superior to the average fighter, and his memory will never fade from our mind.

One such man, was Captain Robert B. McHolland, Company Commander of our own Co. K. Capt. Mac led his men through many great battles during the many months he was with us. Then one day, he answered the call--he died the way he had lived--a soldier's way. Those of you who soldiered and fought with him need no reminders to keep his name alive within your memories

And so, today, July 10, 1945, we shall dedicate this ball field to that man. The inhabitants of this County may never understand why and we have no way of knowing how long it will stand after we leave, but nevertheless, this Battalion will never forget Captain Robert McHolland--The Original Kraut Killer.

THREE ENGLISH SPEAKING GIRLS...

(cont. from page 1)

to Holland before the outbreak of war, Marina went to Germany to secure an education. With the coming of hostilities she was unable to leave the country. At present she is living here with her mother in a civilian home.

Recreational facilities are more limited for these girls than for GI's. They are permitted to attend all special service events such as movies, USO shows, etc., but horseback riding is strictly taboo. The two secretaries, Elizabeth and Marina, will wear an identifying AMG band on their left arm. When asked how they felt at the movies, Elizabeth good-naturedly replied, "A lone girl feels very conspicuous at a movie with a couple hundred homesick boys. A fellow would probably feel the same way in roomful of women." (Editor's Note: Just give me the roomful of women.)

BUY WAR BONDS

R-E-S-T-R-I-C-T-E-D

FEATURE PAGE

GEN. PATTON'S SPEECH

Text of General George S. Patton's speech given this morning at Fieldcamp Barracks:-

"You men have won a great war. This Division has had as much or more to do with winning this war as any division I know of. You men are better disciplined, better led, better trained and, ****, better men- that is why we won.

"The theory that disarmament will stop war is the seme as saying to remove the fire department will stop fire. Unfortunately, it won't. Taking the fire department more seriously, the firemen have two jobs. They give instructions and supervision in the prevention of fires and they have the job of putting the fire out when it starts. You will be firemen when you go home. I don't say there will be another war but I do say that the chances of there not being another one will be much greater if we are so strong as to be able to knock the hell out of any ***** quick who tries to start another war. You all know that the strong boy at school gets into relatively few fights. The other boys respect his fighting ability and he respects his own. The sonofagun is the little fat boy who is always telling the other boys what to do. We don't want to be little fat boys. You might explain it even further. When I went to school, which was many years ago, all the students were taught how to march in and out of the buildings in an orderly manner in order to protect themselves against fire.

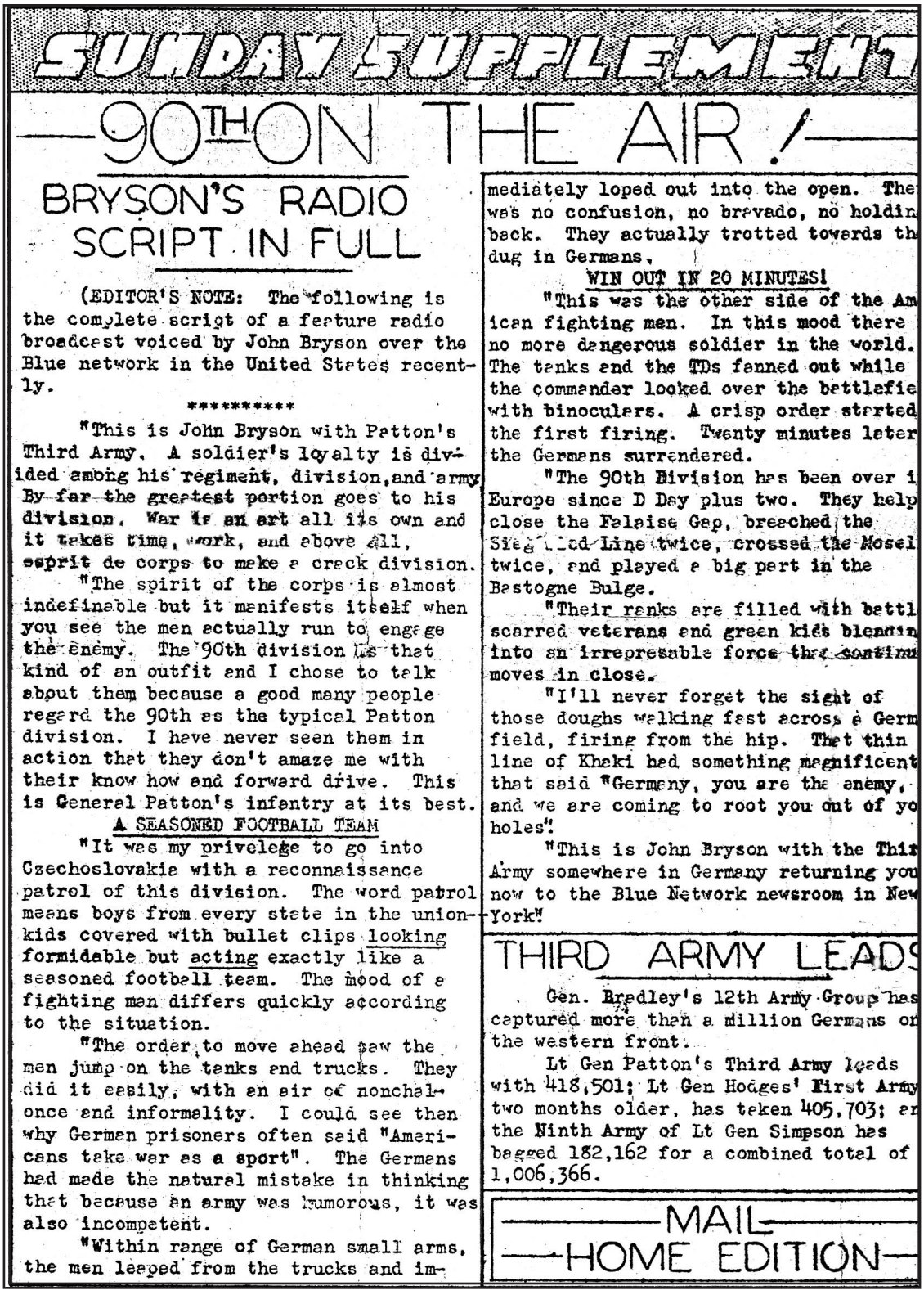
"Many of you young men were brought up to believe there would be no more wars and it was hard to adjust yourselves to the gentle art of murder. But you damn well did it. More people must know that the possibilities of another war exist and that if we are prepared the possibilities are much reduced. As I have told you, I have been in two World Wars, and have been hit twice, and I don't like it. I am not saying this to you as a commanding officer, I am saying this to you as an old man to a young man. I hope that the Almighty God will see to it that we don't have another war. I would feel that I had not done my duty if I failed to remind you of the words of General Washington, "In times of peace, prepare for war!"

"Sometimes I think you don't know how **** good you are. You are the best soldiers in the world. It was a great honor to command you."

WAR-ROUND-UP

OVER 500 Superforts yesterday continued the air blitz on Japan...ADVANCE HEADQUARTERS of the Far Eastern Air Forces have been moved to Okinawa... ALLIED TROOPS have made a new landing on British North Borneo...THEY LANDED unopposed between Brunei Bay and Jesselton... AUSTRALIAN TROOPS HAVE driven eight miles north of Balik Papan...JAPANESE TROOPS have captured the China coast town of Tiniak, about 170 miles south of Canton ...IN SOUTH BURMA, the Japs are making desperate efforts to consolidate recent local gains on the Sittang river, but are being harried by British patrols...PRESIDENT TRUMAN IS expected at Antwerp Sunday on his way to Amsterdam...THE BIG THREE talks are expected to begin early next week...IN BERLIN YESTERDAY Field Marshal Montgomery decorated Marshals Zhukov and Rokossovsky and other high ranking Russian officers with British orders...SHAEF WILL cease to exist tonight...GENERAL EISENHOWER was the guest of British Staff chiefs at a farewell dinner held last night...IN THE BATTLE of the Atlantic, 574 merchant ships were sunk...THAT'S one out of every 131 ships that crossed the Atlantic...GERMANY'S LARGEST chemical works, the I.G. Farben plants are to be controlled by an American board of experts...THE PLANTS will be destroyed with the exception of those needed by the United Nations...THE JAP AIRFORCE is betreating into Manchuria.

The Sniper
July 1945



SUNDAY SUPPLEMENT

—90TH ON THE AIR!—

BRYSON'S RADIO SCRIPT IN FULL

(EDITOR'S NOTE: The following is the complete script of a feature radio broadcast voiced by John Bryson over the Blue network in the United States recently.

****

"This is John Bryson with Patton's Third Army. A soldier's loyalty is divided among his regiment, division, and army. By far the greatest portion goes to his division. War is an art all its own and it takes time, work, and above all, esprit de corps to make a crack division.

"The spirit of the corps is almost indefinable but it manifests itself when you see the men actually run to engage the enemy. The 90th division is that kind of an outfit and I chose to talk about them because a good many people regard the 90th as the typical Patton division. I have never seen them in action that they don't amaze me with their know how and forward drive. This is General Patton's infantry at its best.

A SEASONED FOOTBALL TEAM

"It was my privelege to go into Czechoslovakia with a reconnaissance patrol of this division. The word patrol means boys from every state in the union—kids covered with bullet clips looking formidable but acting exactly like a seasoned football team. The mood of a fighting man differs quickly according to the situation.

"The order to move ahead saw the men jump on the tanks and trucks. They did it easily, with an air of nonchalance and informality. I could see then why German prisoners often said "Americans take war as a sport". The Germans had made the natural mistake in thinking that because an army was humorous, it was also incompetent.

"Within range of German small arms, the men leaped from the trucks and immediately loped out into the open. The was no confusion, no bravado, no holdin back. They actually trotted towards th dug in Germans.

WIN OUT IN 20 MINUTES!

"This was the other side of the Am ican fighting men. In this mood there no more dangerous soldier in the world. The tanks and the TDs fanned out while the commander looked over the battlefie with binoculars. A crisp order started the first firing. Twenty minutes later the Germans surrendered.

"The 90th Division has been over i Europe since D Day plus two. They help close the Falaise Gap, breached the Siegfried Line twice, crossed the Mosel twice, and played a big part in the Bastogne Bulge.

"Their ranks are filled with battl scarred veterans and green kids blendin into an irrepressable force that continu moves in close.

"I'll never forget the sight of those doughs walking fast across a Germ field, firing from the hip. That thin line of Khaki had something magnificent that said "Germany, you are the enemy, and we are coming to root you out of yo holes".

"This is John Bryson with the Thir Army somewhere in Germany returning you now to the Blue Network newsroom in New York".

THIRD ARMY LEADS

Gen. Bradley's 12th Army Group has captured more than a million Germans on the western front.

Lt Gen Patton's Third Army leads with 418,501; Lt Gen Hodges' First Army two months older, has taken 405,703; an the Ninth Army of Lt Gen Simpson has bagged 182,162 for a combined total of 1,006,366.

—MAIL—
—HOME EDITION—

The Sniper
Sunday Supplement, March 1945

AWARDS AND DECORATIONS

MEDAL OF HONOR	DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CROSS	LEGION OF MERIT	DISTINGUISHED FYING CROSS	SILVER STAR	SODIER'S MEDAL	BRONZE STAR HEROIC	BRONZE STAR MERIT	AIR MEDAL
2	78	6	4	1311	40	3526	1531	115
			Attached Units					
	7			82		433	256	

CASUALTIES

6 June 1944 — 9 May 1945

1944	*KIA O	*KIA EM	*DOW O	*DOW EM	*DOI O	*DOI EM	*SWA O	*SWA EM	*SIA O	*SIA EM	*LWA O	*LWA EM	*LIA O	*LIA EM	*MIA O	*MIA EM	TOTAL O	TOTAL EM
June	34	351	1	22	0	0	59	1,033	4	29	45	730	1	76	6	74	150	2,315
July	68	909	12	146	1	5	54	1,076	0	14	147	2,222	10	187	18	629	310	5,188
Aug.	25	251	7	84	0	1	22	385	2	21	17	360	0	95	20	406	93	1,559
Sept.	9	147	2	44	0	1	27	397	0	10	16	272	3	93	1	69	58	1,033
Oct.	5	80	2	18	0	0	10	162	0	6	4	178	0	40	1	60	22	544
Nov.	22	287	1	36	6	2	22	346	0	4	43	874	8	171	12	289	108	2,004
Dec.	9	194	1	35	0	0	15	207	0	5	37	665	8	150	16	424	86	1,680
1945																		
Jan.	12	258	2	49	0	0	18	415	11	676	43	693	13	242	7	248	106	2,581
Feb.	16	245	1	28	0	1	13	296	0	65	22	629	1	186	7	188	60	1,638
Mar.	9	236	1	25	0	0	14	145	1	4	17	330	1	57	3	131	46	929
April	7	121	1	12	0	0	9	14	0	4	13	316	2	252	1	40	33	659
May	0	45	0	1	0	1	0	25	0	0	5	60	0	11	1	14	6	157
Total	216	3,124	31	500	7	11	263	4,602	18	838	409	7,287	47	1,360	93	2,567	1,078	20,293

*KIA - - - Killed in Action
DOW - - - Died of Wounds
DOI - - - Died of Injuries
SWA - - - Seriously Wounded in Action
LWA - - - Seriously Injured in Action
SIA - - - Lightly Wounded in Action
LIA - - - Lightly Injured in Action
MIA - - - Missing in Action

CASUALTY BREAKDOWN

8 June 1944 — 9 May 1945

TOTAL NUMBER TREATED BY ALL MEDICAL UNITS

25,988

NON-BATTLE INJURIES	MISCELLANEOUS DISEASES AND INJURIES	TOTAL NUMBERS OF BATTLE WOUNDS
976	9936	15,076

RESPIRATORY	TRENCH FOOT
2046	1201

MINES AND BOOBY TRAPS	SMALL ARMS	SHELL AND MORTAR	BAYONET	HAND GRENADES	BOMB FRAGMENT	BATTLE EXHAUSTION	BATTLE INJURY
131	3121	8060	13	51	95	1830	1770

PRISONER OF WAR REPORT

6 June 1944 — 9 May 1945

MONTH	OFFICERS	ENLISTED MEN	TOTAL
1944			
June	15	952	967
July	33	1217	1250
August	360	15732	16092
September	26	1820	1846
October	1	3741	3742
November	40	2604	2644
December	13	6741	6754
1945			
January	28	4060	4088
February	51	2964	3015
March	360	13219	13579
April	499	14443	14942
May	500	14018	14518
TOTAL	1926	81511	83437

ENEMY MATERIAL DESTROYED OR CAPTURED

Tanks, All Types	501
Self Propelled Guns	195
Artillery Pieces, All Types	1228
Vehicles, All Types	5572
Locomotives	82
Airplanes	134
Steamboats	3
Ammunition Dumps	32
Ordnance Depot, Complete	1
Ration Dump	2
Supply Train	1
German Garrison, Complete	1
Ammunition Rehabilitation Plant	1

With approximately 1,000,000 rounds artillery ammunition, all calibers and large numbers of aerial bombs.

Large numbers Small Arms

Machine Guns, Mortars, Individual

Equipment, Food and Medical Stores

An Infantry Battalion Organization
1944-1945
Commanding Officer: Lt. Colonel
Executive Officer: Major

Chaplain: Captain
Battalion Surgeon: Captain

Headquarters Section
Ammunition & Pioneer Platoon
Communications Platoon
Anti-Tank Platoon
Medical Detachment

Three Rifle Companies

One Heavy Weapons Co.
Headquarters Section
Two Machine Gun Platoons
One 81mm. Mortar Platoon

Battalion strength is 35 Officers and 836 Enlisted Men

An Infantry Rifle Company Organization
1944-1945
Commanding Officer: Captain
Executive Officer: 1st. Lieutenant

Headquarters Section
First Sgt. & Company Clerk
Communication Sgt. & Six Runners
Supply Sgt.- One Artificer

Two Drivers
Mess Sgt. Two First Cooks
Two Second Cooks
Three Medics: One Cpl., Two Pfc.'s

Three Rifle Platoons
C.O. 2nd Lieutenant
Three Rifle Squads
(12 Men Each - C.O. Sgt.)

One Weapons Platoon
C.O. 1st Lieutnenat
Two Machine Gun Squads
Three 60mm. Mortar Squads

Company Strength is Six Officers and 172 Enlisted Men

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1944-1945
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Medical Detachment

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Mess Sgt. Two First Cooks
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(12 Men Each - C.O. Sgt.)

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C.O. 1st Lieutnenat
Two Machine Gun Squads
Three 60mm. Mortar Squads

Company Strength is Six Officers and 172 Enlisted Men

Honorable Discharge



from the Armed Forces of the United States of America

This is to certify that

CHARLES BERNISE BRYAN O 390 490
LIEUTENANT COLONEL, INFANTRY, UNITED STATES ARMY RESERVE

was Honorably Discharged from the

Army of the United States

on the 3rd *day of* December 1953 *This certificate is awarded as a testimonial of Honest and Faithful Service*

John C. Geddings

JOHN C. GEDDINGS
Major, Adjutant General's Corps

WD AGO FORM 55
1 JUL 1947

The Combat Infantryman's Badge

The infantry is the "Queen of Battle" and the badge best symbolizes the mission of the infantryman, the only soldier whose daily mission is to close with and destroy the enemy and to seize and hold terrain. According to Army Regulation 600-8-22 (Military Awards) of 25 February 1995, the award was established by the War Department on 27 Otober 1943 (later made retroactive to 7 December 1941). Lt. General Lesley J. McNair then Commanding General of the Army Ground Forces who helped get the award created wanted to name it the "fighter's badge."

On 16 August 1944, along with 112 men of L Company, Third Battalion, 358th Infantry, I was awarded the Combat Infantryman's Badge. I am proud to have commanded an infantry company and a battalion whose men earned this accolade as fighters for their country.

My grandaughter, Julie, scanned the badge I was awarded in 1944 for the design of the back cover.