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Report date: October 1944 to September 1945

Title: GI stories of the ground, air and service forces in the European Theater of Operations, World War II

Abstract: Information gathered from page 6 titled "The List". "Only the first (Title 48) and the second (Title 43) issues were numbered. The other issues were designated, "One of a series of GI Stories..." The first issue was dated, "Printed 29 October 1944." The other issues appeared from October, 1944, to September, 1945. The format is uniform: 32 pages including covers; 13-13 ½ centimeters; title on cover; text or illustrations on p. 2, 3, and 4 of cover. Printed in Paris, the issues are listed here by the printing firm. For reference, the titles have been numbered.

The stories are about several airborne, infantry and armored divisions to include the 8th Armored Division, 3rd Infantry Division, 29th Infantry Division, 35th Infantry Division, 36th Infantry Division, 45th Division, 66th Infantry Division, 75th Infantry Division, 87th Infantry Division, 90th Infantry Division, 101st Airborne Division, and Army Air Force, IX and XXIX Tactical Air Commands, Story of the Corps of Military Police, Medical Service, and others.

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was to have a functional value. Months after he became a civilian, Sgt. Fluchere decided to paint his living room. The flag served as a drop-cloth for the drippings from his brush.

That our publications had succeeded in nurturing the morale of the G. I. was evidenced in the fact that their format was duplicated in Chungking to cover the vast CBI Theatre of Operations.

Towards the close of 1945, our unit was de-activated. Some of the personnel were eligible for discharge, while others were reassigned to other sections of the Orientation Branch, which, along with the I & E Division, was moving into Germany.

THE LIST

G. I. STORIES OF THE GROUND, AIR AND SERVICE FORCES IN THE EUROPEAN THEATER OF OPERATIONS...

Only the first (Title 48) and the second (Title 49) issues were numbered. The other issues were designated, "One of a series of G. I. Stories..." The first issue was dated, "Printed 29 October 1944." The other issues appeared from October, 1944, to September, 1945. The format is uniform: 32 pages including covers; 13-13½ centimeters; title on cover; text or illustrations on p. 2, 3, and 4 of cover. Printed in Paris, the issues are listed here by the printing firm. For reference, the titles have been numbered.

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THIS book is the story of our part in the world's greatest drama. The curtain has fallen on the first act, and we can pause and survey our work. It is made up of the countless acts of individual heroism and devotion to duty that represent the spirit of the 8th Armored Division and make ultimate victory inevitable.



I congratulate you all for a job well done and for the part you played in speeding the arrival of V-E Day.

For me it has been a pleasure and an honor to lead in battle such a body of men as the soldiers of the 8th Armored Division. Now as we march forward to new tasks together I wish to each and every one of you, from the bottom of my heart: Good Luck.

John M. Huine

Major General, Commanding

The Story of the 8th ARMORED DIVISION

JAN. 18, 1945: Bitter cold stung their faces as men of the 8th Armored Division's Combat Command A crunched over icy roads towards Berg. Their mission: to drive an armored wedge into the Nazi defenses for the 94th Inf. Div.—a tough job for untried troops, one

that took guts, ingenuity and luck. CC A had all three. Ahead of Berg lay the formidable Siegfried Line fortifications of the Saar-Moselle triangle.

Kicking off under the command of Brig. Gen. Charles F. Colson, tankers, doughs and artillerymen who made up the combat command weren't long in receiving their baptism under fire.

In an initial action two 7th Armd. Inf. Bn. men, Pfc Wilfred L. Murray, Jr., Rockford, Ill., and Pfc Joseph L. Bisch, St. Louis, Mo., crawled behind enemy lines, dodged constant sniper fire, crept close to an enemy pillbox. Unable to open the ammunition box with cold-numbed fingers, they ripped off the cover with their teeth. Steadying their bazooka long enough to take careful aim, they fired, knocked out the pillbox, captured 15 prisoners, enabled their platoon to advance.



His own tank immobilized by a mine, Lt. Robert C. Cox, Las Cruces, N. M., 18th Tank Bn., knocked out two enemy tanks and an anti-aircraft gun. "After that," he said, "we didn't want to sit still and not do anything. The whole company was jammed up behind us, and we didn't like the idea of them shagging into the mines." Lt. Cox dismounted, guided the company safely through the mine field, earned a Silver Star.

For three days and nights, T/5 Robert A. Shapiro, Cleveland, 7th, made countless trips in his half-track to evacuate wounded, continued even after a shell had blasted him from his vehicle. "It was just one of those things," he commented. "I was most scared afterwards when I stopped to look at my half-track. Boy, was it banged up!"

By late afternoon, Jan. 24, Lt. Col. A. D. Poinier's 7th Armd. Inf. Bn., supported by Lt. Col. G. B. Goodrich's 18th Tank Bn. and Lt. Col. R. H. Dawson's 398th Armd. FA Bn., had taken Berg. Troop A, 88th Cav. Recon Sqdn., and batteries of 476th AAA (AW SP) Bn., also were in on the assault.

T/Sgt. Henry B. Schmidt, Chicago, 7th, won a Silver Star and the division's first battlefield commission in the action. With two bullet holes through his sleeve, Schmidt took command of two platoons. Maj. Gen. John M. Devine, 8th CG, in pinning the gold bars on Schmidt, said: "A man is a leader if he has the guts to step out in front when the going is the hardest."

Another Silver Star went to T/5 Carl Hinton, Pela-

hatchie, Miss., who played a triple role—mechanic, driver, medic. Carried on the T/O of the 7th as a mechanic, Hinton made more than 50 trips to evacuate wounded in his peep. Four tires were shot from under him, but he didn't quit until the shrapnel-pocked peep did.

With Berg captured, CC A aimed for Sinz, defended by anti-tank ditch and fortifications manned by determined, battle-ried Nazis. Co. A, 53rd Armd. Engr. Bn., sloughed through the snow on the night of Jan. 25, threw a bridge across the ditch. Next day, the remainder of CC A lunged across the span, began a fierce, toe-to-toe slugging assault on Sinz.

Battle lines were formless. Once, 30 Tornado men dug in on the side of a hill with Krauts on the crest and on both flanks. Eight hours later 48 more Germans were flushed from a chateau to their rear.



Another platoon bedded down in a barn for the night. Five minutes after the men crawled out in the morning a sniper fired at them from the same barn.

Fighting in the outskirts of Sinz was bloody, bitter. Lt. Nathan Jaret, 18th surgeon, and his team evacuated more than 25 wounded when Yanks occupied only three houses in the town. Braving intense fire to bring out the wounded were Lt. Raymond R. St. Germain, Fall River, Mass.; T/5 James H. Morrison, Staten Island, N. Y.; T/5 Elbert Ackley, McFall, Mo.; T/5 Howard Propst, Monmouth, Ia.; Pvt. J. C. R. Miller, Jr., Dallas, Tex.; and Pfc John Hicks, Meadville, Mo.

Under heavy fire, Sgt. Vincent A. Troiana, Corona, N. Y., an 18th tank driver, dismounted to help a wounded gunner, later drove two disabled tanks off the road to let the rest of the company pass. He replaced an injured tank commander to join in the attack. "It was the luckiest day of my life," he said. "Five were in my tank—one was killed, three were wounded, and I escaped without a scratch." Troiana was awarded the Bronze Star.

With the tip of the Saar-Moselle salient blunted at Sinz, CC A was relieved on Jan. 28, rejoined the remainder of the division near Pont a Mousson. It had been a grueling 10 days but Tornado men had proved their mettle, had given warning to the beleaguered enemy that another well-trained armored division had arrived to crack the Wehrmacht wide open.

Training PAYS DIVIDENDS IN BATTLE

THE 8th knew how to prepare for war. Activated at Fort Knox, Ky., April 1, 1942, it had trained 50,000 officers and men for eight other armored divisions, became known as the "Show Horse" division. A year later, on moving to Camp Polk, La., it became a combat outfit.

Three months' maneuvers and a 21-day "D-Series"—which old-timers insist were tougher than subsequent battles—forged a smooth, confident fighting machine. The sweat-and-chill Louisiana climate hardened the men to withstand varying weather conditions.

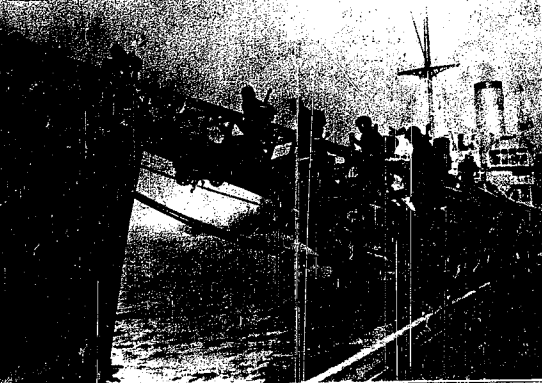
First units of the 8th left chigger-choked bivouac sites and Louisiana's pine woods, Oct. 29, 1944, for Camp Kilmer, N. J. Time whipped by as men and equipment were processed and duffle bags were packed.

The division sailed Election Day, Nov. 7, 1944, following a short train and ferry ride to the Staten Island docks. A band played in the Port of Embarkation shed as Red Cross girls dispensed coffee, doughnuts and candy bars. A roll call of last names was answered with first names as men labored up the gangplank, to be compressed into quarters for the two-week voyage.

The crossing was uneventful save for a submarine alert

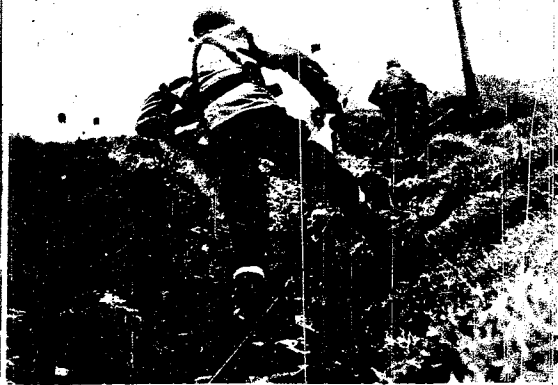
three days from Britain when a destroyer escort vessel picked up suspicious noises, dropped two depth charges. The soundings never were confirmed.

After disembarking Nov. 22 at Plymouth, Liverpool and Southampton, the division encamped at Tidworth Barracks, prepared equipment during the next six weeks for the great test to come. Soon after the new year, Thunderers piled ashore in France, stayed a few days near Bacqueville, made a night march over ice-covered roads in a blinding snowstorm to Rheims where the division was assigned to the then secret Fifteenth Army. While the 148th Sig. Co. still was aboard craft in Channel ports, the 8th Arm'd. Div. skidded across winter-bound France, arriving three days later, Jan. 12, at Pont a Mousson, launching point of its initial engagement.



Feb. 19, 1945: The Tornado rushed north secretly to join Ninth Army, relieving the famed "Desert Rats," British 7th Armd. Div., in a sector south of Roermond, Holland. The 8th was to make a feint, strike a body blow to distract the enemy from the main Roer crossing in the south.

CC B and CC R saw their first action on numerous patrols. Col. Robert J. Wallace's CC R lashed out Feb. 26 in a two-day battle south of Roermond, blasting its way yard by yard against mines, booby traps, small arms, machine gun and mortar fire. The enemy made a determined stand in his prepared defenses, calling down heavy mortar and artillery fire. By Feb. 27, enemy lines had been pushed back to a factory, then southeast to the north edge of Heide woods and east to the Roer River.



The Germans opposing CC R were identified as a Para Lehr (Training) Regt., under control of the 8th Para Div.

Their platoon cut off all day, with both enemy and friendly artillery working them over, S/Sgt. William McClain, Pittsburgh, and Pfc Napoleon L. Bourget, Fitchburg, Mass., 58th Armd. Inf. Bn., made a tortuous 400-yard dash across a field erupting with all types of fire to get a radio with which to call American artillery and loose it on the Germans.

Pfc Alex Urbanisk, Coleman, Mich.; Pfc Donald M. Gibson, Warsham, Mass., and Pfc Rocco Cuteri, Corapolis, Pa., Co. C, 58th, unknowingly walked a quarter of a mile into Nazi lines and back; later two platoons spent five hours clearing out the area through which they'd gone.

S/Sgt. Warren Samet, Freeport, N. Y., 58th, leading his mortar squad into its first action, knocked out an 88, captured five Germans. In the squad were Pfc John B. George, Beloit, Wisc.; Pfc John Ondeck, Duquesne, Pa.; Pvt. Clifford Ramsey, Eva, Okla.; Pvt. Rolland J. Messenheimer, Alliance, Ohio, and T/5 Harry G. Wible, Philadelphia.

Forty hellish minutes were spent entangled in concertina wire only 20 yards from a German machine gun by S/Sgt. Fred W. Hamel, Hollis, L. I., Co. C, 58th. Hamel's CO, Capt. Paul J. Malarkey, Cleveland, spotting him, called down fire from the 405th Armd. FA Bn. Some rounds landed only 75 yards from the trap, killed the enemy gunners, enabled Hamel to escape unscathed.



German oldsters were found by the 8th near Symonds manning dummy factories built to lure Allied aircraft away from important targets. They said they were alive because airmen had not been duped.

A bridge-laying tank, perfected by the 53rd Engr. Bn. and 130th Ord. Maint. Bn., made its maiden run successfully under fire. When a platoon from Co. C, 53rd, led by 2nd Lt. Richard J. Symonds, Melrose, Mass., was faced with spanning a 22-foot crater, S/Sgt. Dudley A. Gerry, Gardner, Mass., guided the T-32 tank-retriever under fire, dropped treadways into position. Medium tanks crossed the bridge the T-32 had laid, immediately took care of a pillbox which had held up the advance. An artillery observer with 105s zeroed in on the pillbox, had tried to call his battery but his line had been cut by the weird monster.

Tornado WHIRLS FROM ROER TO RHINE

THE Rhine was the goal. The kick-off came Feb. 27. CC A ran interference across the Roer, followed by fast-stepping CC B and CC R. Little resistance was encountered, quickly smothered. The Tornado rushed on to the outskirts of Merbeck, east of the Roer, found a road block covered by small arms fire. Tanks from the 18th rumbled forward, wiped out enemy gunners while Co. A, 53rd, cleared the road. Then the 7th, under Lt. Col. Mossman, with the 398th in support, took the town, moved in at 0820, Feb. 28.

The 53rd learned how to clear road blocks from a town quickly. "We put an extra big charge on the first obstacle," explained the engineers, "big enough to shatter the windows of neighboring houses. Then the civilians all would rush out and remove the rest."

Carrying a message back for badly-needed artillery support to Co. A, 53rd, which was spearheading the attack at Merbeck, Pfc Michael Paparo, Philadelphia, and Pvt. John Diaz, Jr., Providence, R. I., ran into an 88 position. One grenade was enough to convince the Krauts to surrender.

Tetelrath was tough. An anti-tank ditch, covered by enemy artillery and a mine field limited maneuver while 15 pillboxes covered the only possible approach. Well

dug-in German anti-tank guns and heavy mortars plagued the attackers. All available artillery went into position to support the northwesterly push. Under cover of both artillery and tank fire, the engineers, led by Lt. Col. E. T. Podufaly, paved the way for the advance. Lt. Warren H. Baker, Wilderville, Ore.; Sgt. Joseph F. O'Neill, Philadelphia, and Cpl. Peter T. Certo, Staten Island, N. Y., cleared mines, sometimes lifting them to one side and detonating them after the troops had passed. They returned sniper fire, using tracers to point out targets to tankers. Tanks poured through the gap, taking the pillboxes under direct fire. Tetelrath fell Feb. 28 at 0600.

CC B captured Arsbeck, by-passed small resistance, took Ober Kruchten Feb. 28. Roaring ahead on CC A's right flank, Maj. A. E. Walker's 80th Tank Bn. seized Grefrath March 2 without opposition.

Lt. Col. Tracy B. Harrington's 88th Cav. Recon Sqdn. (Mech.) paved the way to the Niers Canal which Co. C, 53rd, bridged under cover of darkness. Maj. George Artman's 58th led off next morning, March 3, followed by the 80th, spurred eastward until the attack was halted south of Tonnisberg at 1500 by Corps order. The command had been pinched off by the 35th Inf. Div. on the north and the XIII Corps on the south. The division was ordered to assemble in Corps reserve, to be prepared to move north and northeast.

Box score of the whirlwind Roer-to-Rhine drive was: 15 sizeable towns overrun; 1300 prisoners, including deaf mutes; epileptics, an OCS platoon and two old men re-

splendent in gold braid and shako caps who had charge of a railway station.

Add unique captures: Lt. Edward S. Klaniecki, Pittsburgh, and Lt. Col. Carl Colozzi, Cranston, R. I., artillery liaison pilots, circled low over 20 Krauts, signaled them toward an 8th Armd. unit. Pvt. Vincent Willan, Providence, R. I., Co. B, 7th, surprised three German noncoms sitting down to breakfast with their girl friends. A Kraut surrendered to Pvt. Richard Besoyan, Alameda, Calif., Special Service projectionist, who was on his way to show a movie, "The Uninvited."

The 8th Armd. claimed to be the first outfit to unveil the sinister Werewolf organization. Several underground hideaways were discovered, their entrances ingeniously concealed. Each cell was stocked with three months' provisions for two or three men.



Troopers from the 88th captured a German warehouse, made battlefield distribution of Wehrmacht sardines, cheese, cigarettes and candy as enemy shells fell nearby. Troop D nabbed 10 freight cars of baby buzz bombs. Pvt. Leslie R. Kenny, Johnstown, N. Y., captured three Krauts at a machine gun, later found the firing pin of his own gun was broken.

An armored car squad from Troop D dismounted to investigate 15 Germans flying a white flag, flattened as a concealed Nazi machine gun opened up. Radio Operator T/5 Anthony P. Pavan, Ben Argyle, Pa., alone in the car, loaded and fired the 37mm, sprayed two machine guns, managed to send a radio SOS to the first platoon. "It was just like the movies," said Lt. William P. Terry, Buffalo, N. Y. "We rolled into the town at full speed with every gun blazing. There was Pavan, practically surrounded by Krauts howling for his scalp, playing his machine guns like a pipe organ."

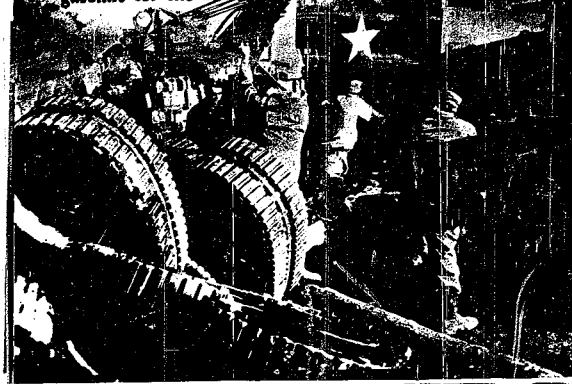
Lt. Mike P. Cokinos, Beaumont, Tex., was chagrined when several rounds from his 105 failed to knock out an enemy gun position and Germans added insult to injury by openly thumbing their noses at 398th artillerymen. Cpl. Thomas Colligan, Bradford, Pa., and Pfc Samuel Coleman, Brooklyn, N. Y., angered, scored a direct hit on the jeering Krauts.

A "traveling foxhole—safe, quiet and warm"—was invented by CC B's Cpl. Ludovice Farkas, New York City, and T/4 John E. Scholts, Rochester, N. Y. They filled their radio half-track with "liberated" German mattresses.

Much credit for the speed of the Rhineward dash went to service company truck drivers who braved shells, snipers and mines to bring their highly inflammable and explosive loads to the front.

"We violated every supply rule in the book," said 1st/Sgt. Robert G. Marcum, Dayton, Ohio, Service Co., 18th Tank Bn. "As soon as a truck was empty it would hightail for another load instead of waiting for a convoy. It took a lot of nerve for two men to drive a single truck through territory infested with snipers, knowing one shell could send their load skyhigh."

M-25 tank transporters of the 130th Ord. Bn. were used as mobile gas dumps. Loaded with 8000 gallons in jerricans, a dozen of these vehicles could carry enough gasoline for the 8th to roll all day.



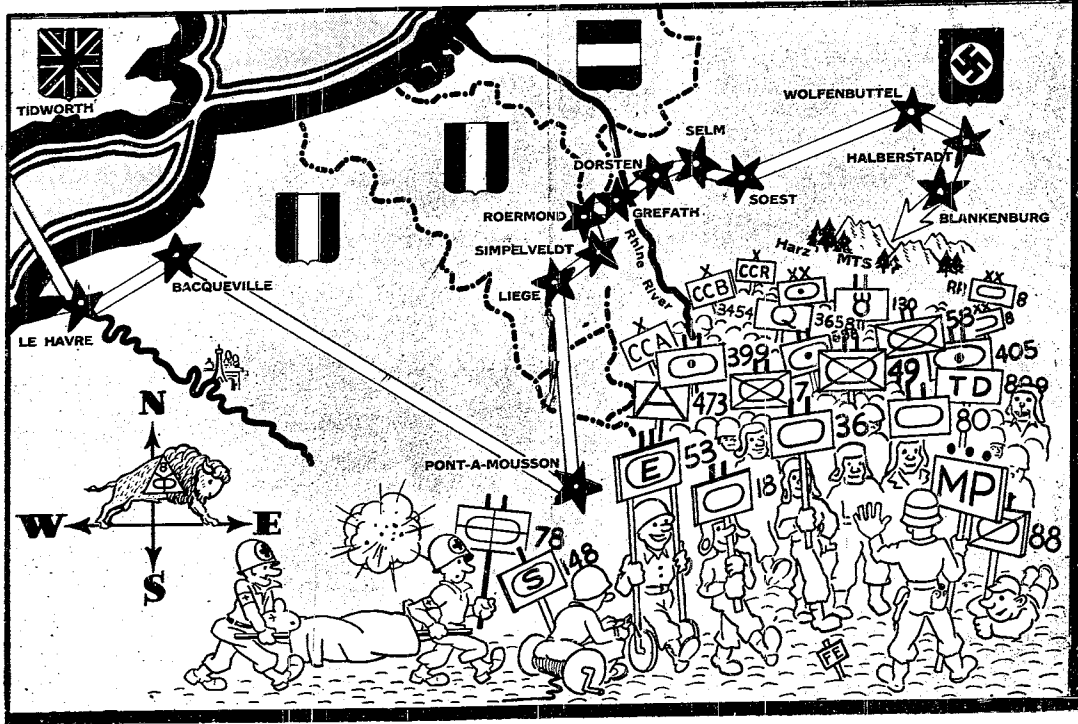
A traveling service station in a 130th peep reduced tire and maintenance troubles. S/Sgt. Virgil Crawford, Buena Vista, Va., salvaged American and enemy parts throughout France, Holland and Germany, built an air compressor on the peep.

The 53rd played a key role in the Rhine drive. Men from Co. C mopped up a mined road like a football team racing goalward on a series of pass plays. Sgt. Theodore J. J. Bielfeldt, Grand Island, Nebr., placed and set off the charges. T/5 Angelo J. Manzo, Bridgeport, Conn., covered him against snipers while Pvt. Edgar A. Shiring, Pittsburgh, carried a bucketful of TNT blocks. Setting one charge sputtering, Bielfeldt ran ahead, lit another, darted to light a third as the first one went off 60 yards behind him. Behind the three-man team came a half-track in which the charges were prepared. Within 15 minutes, this leapfrogging team cleaned out 200 yards of road. Tanks, crawling behind, spurted into the clear.

Engineers had to contend with tricky German booby traps. They found British and American dud bombs placed beneath bridges and culverts, rigged to be set off by pull igniters or primacord. There also were roadside ammo dumps wired to nets of primacord—in one case half a mile long—which could have wiped out part of a convoy.

Incidents of heroism were legion. With a painful shrapnel wound in his leg, Pfc Roy S. Doan, St. Joseph, Mo., 49th Armd. Inf. Bn., crawled forward under heavy artillery and mortar fire as an observer. Aided by Pfc William A. Gillchrist, Boston, he pulled two men from a







burning half-track; later, two more from a burning tank, helped other wounded to the rear, then stayed up all night guarding prisoners. Eighteen hours after he was wounded, Doan went to an aid station.

T/5 Raymond Kurtz, Philadelphia, a 49th medic, suffered a compound fracture from shrapnel while rescuing an injured tanker. Despite intense pain, he treated the tanker and several others before dosing himself with morphine.

"Irresistible 8th - A THUNDERING SERPENT"

MARCH 5, 1945: Smashing out of Sevelen northeast toward Rheinberg, CC B resumed the drive to the Rhine. With the 35th Inf. Div., Col. Edward A. Kimball's men planned to capture a bridge at Wesel, cross it and establish a bridgehead on the east bank.

A task force under command of Lt. Col. M. G. Roseborough, 49th Armd. Inf. Bn. CO, shoved off at 0830, quickly took Lintfort. Co. A, 49th, and Co. A, 36th Tank Bn., fought to the south bank of the Fossa Canal above Ratschenhof. Meanwhile, Co. B, 36th, roared toward Rheinberg without supporting infantry. As the column came under heavy enemy interlocking fire in the

outskirts of the town, Co. A, 49th, joined the fight. The southern edge was secured.

Doughs from the 35th Inf. Div. moved up, inched forward into Rheinberg. Cos. A and D, 36th, with infantry reinforcements, attacked from the southwest along the Fossa Canal. Resistance was fanatical as Germans tried to hold the town to allow their main body of troops to withdraw across the Wesel Bridge. Panzerfausts every five yards, 88s at every curve, 40mm flak guns, mortars, burp guns—the Krauts made doughs and tankers pay for every yard. But the Germans fell back under added pressure, and finally, by 2200 the battered town was cleared.

"All we could do was sit there and sweat," remembers Tank Commander Sgt. Vernon McLean, Towson, Md., of the Rheinberg battle. "We were hemmed in. We couldn't turn." Despite their exposed position, Cpl. William Grote, Long Island, N. Y., gunner, knocked out four AT guns, a truck, a scout car and a Mark IV tank. After an 88 had ricocheted off their armor, knocked McLean's tommy gun out of his hand, they wiggled to safety.

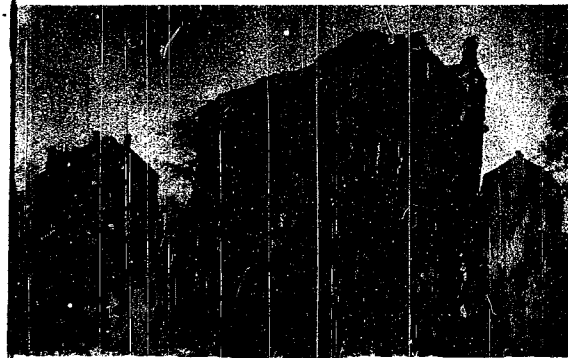
Pfc Edward Murray, Chicago, gun loader in the tank of Lt. Col. John H. Van Houten, Detroit, Mich., 36th CO, hopped out in the midst of cross fire to extinguish a blaze on the rear deck.

His tank knocked out, Lt. Wesley S. Buller, Brookshire, Tex., 36th, crawled out on the rear deck, blazed away with a .50 caliber machine gun to cover his crew's

escape, sprayed houses concealing machine gun nests. He later entered a fortified house, killed 15 enemy snipers.

There were men like the captain who died shortly after radioing: "I just got a Mark IV tank. Having a hell of a good time killing Krauts."

There was no rest for CC B, which at 0700, March 6, pushed toward the Wesel Bridge. Immediate resistance by small arms and artillery pinned down the advance all day. That night artillery softened enemy positions. Next day, CC B attacked in the vicinity of Grunthal where, on the 8th, the Solvoy Works was secured. Osenberg, village of many church steeples offering perfect OPs for German observers, fell March 9. Weary doughs and tankers punched into Broth and Wallach.



Although wounded in the face, Lt. Herbert L. Erickson, Bruce, S. D., Co. B, 36th, single-handedly killed the six-man crew of an enemy gun which had knocked out his tank. When he was fired upon by six more Krauts, he threw away his empty carbine, grabbed a grease gun and killed them. He mounted another tank, continued the fight. The tank later was found burned out. Lt. Erickson was listed as missing.

Driving his ration truck to the front, Sgt. Wesley B. Barringer, Columbus, O., Service Co., 18th, saw white flags waving from a woods. He stopped the truck, captured 34 prisoners, marched them to the nearest MP.

After what seemed interminable fighting, the command was relieved at midnight, March 9, and sent to Venlo, Holland, for a rest. Battle-grimed veterans returned with a commendation from the 35th's CG.

While at Venlo, the 8th was host to Queen Wilhelmina of Holland, who paid a surprise visit to the war-torn town. She was greeted by Gen. Devine and Col. Kimball.

"D-For-Dog" was the first tank across the Rhine in the Ninth Army sector. Under command of a Pearl Harbor veteran, Lt. Tommie W. Yeargan, Colorado Springs, Colo., Co. D, 18th, the new M-24 was ferried across in a 30th Inf. Div. assault wave. Spellem, first town in the Ninth Army's zone east of the Rhine, fell to the light tankers.

Col. Henry W. Holt's forces—the 398th, 399th and 405th Armd. FA Bns.—joined the Ninth Army artillery preparation for the crossing. Following the barrage,

the remainder of the Tornado crossed March 27 under the protective cover of the 473rd AAA (AW SP) Bn., first Ninth Army armored unit to hit the east bank.

In the misty dawn of March 28, Ninth Army attacked. Spearhead was, in the words of *Newsweek*, "the irresistible 8th—a giant ironclad snake—a thundering serpent more than 22 miles long."

A decisive battle was fought at Zweckel, eight miles north of Essen, where the Tornado pushed back the tough 116th Panzer Div., shook Lt. Gen. William H. Simpson's columns loose after overcoming an estimated 350 artillery batteries and hundreds of depressed 88mm ack-ack guns.

A 15-minute artillery barrage—1000 rounds a minute—preceded CC A's tank-infantry assault on Dorsten.



CC R rolled up the flank from the south. CC A swept on, took Polsum; CC R crushed Kirchellen, Zweckel, Scholven, Buer Hassel, Kol Berlich.

The Show Horse Division met tough resistance. Wrote the *Christian Science Monitor* correspondent: "It has been a tantalizing experience for those of us with the Ninth Army to see on the briefing maps the big black arrows and darting salients which have marked the whirlwind progress of other American armies while our forward troops were being held down by the stiffest resistance encountered on the east bank of the Rhine."

The 8th was credited by *The New York Times* with "amphibious operations in reverse when its tanks overran U-boat pens at Ruhrort, near Duisburg, and captured three midget submarines brought up the Rhine for safety. No army has won this sort of victory over a navy since Napoleon's cavalry galloped across the ice to capture the ice-locked Dutch fleet."

Thunderers overran a concentration camp near Paderborn, discovered a huge pile of bodies and 1,000 living corpses. Surviving inmates told of the appalling terrors of the camp.



ARMORED MIGHT *Blasts* RUHR POCKET

APRIL 1st found 20 German divisions—327,000 men—pocketed between the First and Ninth U. S. Armies with only a narrow escape route through Neuhaus still open. The 116th Panzer Div. tried to exploit a break, but the division plunged southwest to plug the gap. During the night of April 2-3, a tank-infantry counter-attack was hurled back by the 8th as the jaws of the trap closed. Neuhaus surrendered after Lt. John A. Streed, Moline, Ill., held prisoner for two days, convinced his captors escape was hopeless.

The trapped Germans retreated west toward Soest with the intention of forcing a breakthrough near Bielefeld. Enemy forces were further whittled down by the 8th on April 4 at Erwitte, Berge, Stirpe, Vollinghausen, Nordorf and Ebbinhausen. In Erwitte, doughs overran a graduate school of Nazi ideological and political indoctrination. Continuous pressure and threatened encirclement of Soest from the south made the panzer division withdraw from the only suitable springboard for an escape attack. The Soest sector was cleaned out April 6 by CC B, working with the 95th Inf. Div.

Six miles south of Soest, three German heavy tanks lay in ambush to smash the advance of Co. C, 36th.

Spying the Kraut armor, Capt. Stanley A. Baldwin, Franklin, La., sent one platoon of Shermans to the edge of a woods, while the remainder of the company raced down the road. The Germans opened up; so did the Shermans. All three enemy tanks were knocked out. Co. C went on to knock out two trains, capture six enemy vehicles.

While the enemy was withdrawing, CC A employed the attached 194th Glider Inf. Regt. to sweep the mountainous wooded terrain south and southeast of Mohntalispere. Resistance there was only moderate until 1500, April 6, in the locale of Kallenhardt when a



hastily organized enemy counter-attack was repulsed. Among the prisoners taken were Nazi diplomat Franz Von Papen and his son.

The Schaller burgomeister tried to surrender but SS troopers rushed in to organize defenses which had to be overrun by tankers. Doughs, told by a PW that Mawicke was clear, were greeted by a hail of rifle and machine gun fire.

Sgt. Walter Anderson, Chandler, Okla., pitted his 473rd ack-ack half-track against a Tiger tank and won. Anderson depressed his 40mm gun, fired three rounds into the ground 50 yards ahead of his own thin-skinned vehicle. Behind the resulting screen of dust, he escaped, then dismounted with other ack-ack men and fired bazookas. The Tiger turned tail.

Pfc Leroy F. Stone drove Maj. Robert L. Wick, Philadelphia, CC R S-2, into a by-passed town. When they captured four Germans who wanted to surrender, 150 more Krauts emerged from nearby houses. Stone dismounted and routed out 100 more, including a major who was sorely vexed when told he couldn't bring his chow wagon with him. Stone formed his prisoners into a column of three's, marched them back.

Acrobatics of a 23-man patrol from Troop A, 88th, prevented the enemy from blowing up the famed Mohne Talsperre Dam which would have flooded the Mohne Valley and delayed for weeks the job of clearing out the Ruhr Pocket. Led by Sgt. Roman H. Woods, St. Louis, Mo., and Sgt. Emil Dragosita, Allentown, Pa., the men

reached the dam at 0100 April 7 under cover of a howitzer barrage from Troop E. Climbing out on an eight-inch ledge, they crept to the spillway and out on a plank 30 feet above the roaring water to another narrow ledge. They then lowered themselves on a 20-foot cable, leaped across a six-foot creek, overpowered the guards to capture the dam. Only once did they draw fire.

Communications Chief Sgt. Donald R. Hayes, Baltimore, Co. A, 80th, returning to the rear area after fighting all day and night, mounted a driverless tank without waiting for orders, drove back to battle, fought continuously for two days and a night.



His tank knocked out the first day by an 88, Hayes changed tanks, continued fighting. He automatically became platoon leader when his lieutenant, platoon sergeant and section leader were wounded by the same round while standing together. Still acting without orders, he reorganized the platoon and slashed five miles forward. Once a shell knocked him from the rear deck of his tank—a man inside was wounded—but Hayes escaped unhurt. After 10 days of fighting, his platoon was the first to reach the division's objective. Hayes was given a battlefield commission.

CC B telephoned the burgomeister of Werl to surrender the town. Capt. William E. Hensel, Buffalo, N. Y., and T/5 Frederick W. Deschermeier, Petosky, Mich., found the burgomeister willing but the military commandant not. To convince the latter, the 8th pressed the attack April 9 by shelling Werl, took it the same day. When the 8th marched in, a German hausfrau approached an MP crying, "The most important Nazi in town has committed suicide! What shall I do?" Replied the souvenir-conscious MP, "Bring me his gun." He got it.

The ghost of the 116th Panzer Div., which once had been one of Germany's proudest, continued to haunt the 8th with delaying detachments at all important road junctions. In its death throes, the 116th put up its last resistance at Unna which was taken April 11 by CC A.

Recovered from the enemy were four Tornado men, among whom was CC R CO, Col. Robert J. Wallace.

8th Armored HAS A PROUD RECORD

RELIEVED April 13-15 by the 95th Inf. Div., the 8th marched 100 miles to an assembly area near Wolfebuttel, went into reserve.

While in reserve the division captured at Halberstadt a 75-wagon, 150-horse train, all that remained of the 116th Panzer Div. The hayburning convoy was such a startling contrast to the mobility of the Americans that Lt. Gen. Simpson came to inspect it. Krauts lined up for a formal inspection by Gen. Simpson, Gen. Devine and Chief of Staff Col. Charles G. Dodge.

When the 8th freed 840 Allied soldiers near Halberstadt, men heard the story of an estimated 80,000 American and British captives who suffered treatment similar to that of the infamous Jap "death march." Released PWs were thin and worn after as long as three months on the road where food consisted of cattle fodder and winter beets.

Armored might of the 8th struck its last major blow at Blankenberg, nestling at the foot of the Harz Mountains. Aircraft hammered the city April 20, but officials failed to surrender. Artillery opened up in late afternoon, and the city was overpowered by dusk after a lightning assault by Lt. Col. E. H. Burba's CC B.

Col. Gen. Walter Lucht, supreme commander of German Armies in the west, who told his troops to "go home," surrendered the city to Capt. Henry I. Tragle, Richmond, Va., Service Co., 36th, and Pfc Frank Fox, Philadelphia, CC B interpreter, in the Blankenberg forest outside Michaelstein. Lucht had taken command from Field Marshal von Kesselring when the latter assumed command of German forces in the south.

When CC A moved into nearby Wernigerode a PW enclosure was established in a swimming pool. First PW was the man who had designed it.

Germanic legend has the Harz Mountains crowded with elves, fairies, gnomes, trolls. Thunderers found SS, Werewolves and Hitler Jugend. Between April 19-22, the 1st Panzer Army, which had defended the



Harz Mountain redoubt, was smashed. Remnants of this force had fled to the wild Harz region for a last-ditch stand. They had been engaged there successively by the 1st, 9th and 83rd Inf. Divs.; now it was the 8th Armd. Div. which took over the tree-to-tree clean-up. Crews from the 148th Signal Co. fought a winning battle against saboteurs to keep their lines intact.

The forests also were alive with rumors, chief of which concerned a phantom train which was said to have entered the woods from Blankenberg, never to emerge. It was ascertained, however, that a train with two luxury coaches and protected by flak cars did leave Blankenberg, presumably carrying von Kesselring and other tarnished Nazi brass. Some Germans, according to Capt. Carroll M. Wood, Roxbury, Mass., S-2, CC B, believed Hitler, Himmler and Goering were aboard.

Painstakingly sweeping the dense woods, the division uncovered several large caves, believed to be Werewolf hideouts. Discovered were six more generals, including Lt. Gen. Hermann Florke, a corps commander; Brig. Gen. Heinz Kokott, a division commander who claimed the dubious honor of being a brother-in-law of Gestapo Chief Heinrich Himmler. Lt. John Sunman, Plainfield, N. J., and Sgt. Ray Westerdale, Irvington, N. J., bagged three-star Admiral Hermann Mootz, friend of Admiral Doenitz. Kaiser Wilhelm's son-in-law, the Duke of Brunswick, one-time provincial king of Hannover, was routed from a castle overlooking Blankenberg. The PW bag reached 32,000.

Alert troops seized German foreign office documents of

such vast importance that the Nazis had previously riaked two divisions in an attempt to keep them from falling into Allied hands. A Ninth Army staff officer declared them to be worth a "far greater expenditure of manpower."

The 8th found Wehrmacht hospitals and rest centers in the pleasant picturesque towns of the Harz. Despite their peaceful appearance, exploding mines and Hitler Jugend often reminded the division that the war wasn't over. Cpl. Frank Kolb, New York City, found a trio of Hitler youths, the oldest 17, armed with rifles, waiting for American soldiers to turn their backs.

Just before V-E Day came the order: "Occupy and govern." Dispersed in the Harz Mountains, the 8th

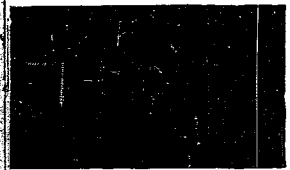


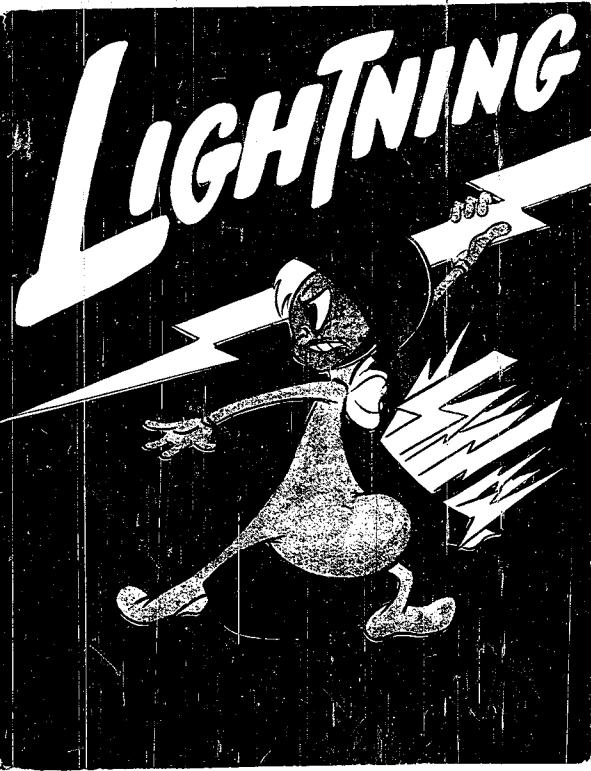
now had time to take stock, recall the hard-working, unheralded units that had helped make the division's record a proud one. There were Lt. Col. P. D. Marx's 78th Medical Bn., the 130th Ordnance Bn., under Lt. Col. E. O. Drewry, Jr.; the QM truck companies, MPs, attached units such as the 89th TD Bn.

The 8th also could remember the long, tortuous trek from the Louisiana swamps through foggy England and blustery, freezing France; the din and confusion of battle; wide autobahns, blown bridges, rivers, pillboxes and narrow streets of Germany; streams of refugees and grateful, liberated prisoners. They remembered, too, their buddies, killed and wounded.

The 8th Armored Division—sometimes called Show Horse, sometimes Irresistible, Tornado, Thunderer—had earned the right to "occupy and govern," had earned it the hard way.







PASSED BY CENSOR FOR MAILING HOME

Name _____

Date Enlisted _____

Assigned to 78th _____

Training _____

Battle Actions _____

Citations _____

This is one of a series of G.I. Stories of the Ground, Air and Service Forces in the European Theater of Operations, issued by the Orientation Section, Information and Education Division, ETOUSA. Major General Edwin P. Parker commanding the 78th Infantry Division, lent his cooperation to the preparation of the pamphlet; basic material was supplied to the editors by his staff.

Photos : U. S. Signal Corps - Printed by Curial-Archereau, Paris



This story of the 78th Lightning Division is but a brief account of our battles against the enemy here in Germany. There is not room in these few pages to record the countless instances of courage and valor, the numberless occasions of quick thinking and bold action, the endless examples of resolute determination; nor can these pages mirror the constant hardships, the physical exhaustion, the heartbreak and the fear of battle.

These things, however, as displayed and endured by the individuals within this division are responsible for our great successes and magnificent accomplishments.

This story is not finished. How many more pages are yet to be written no one knows. We of the Lightning Division fighting here east of the Rhine will, with God's help, carry our battle forward until we reach that place—somewhere out to the front—where lies **VICTORY**.

Edwin P. Parker

Major General, Commanding

THE STORY OF THE *78th Infantry* DIVISION

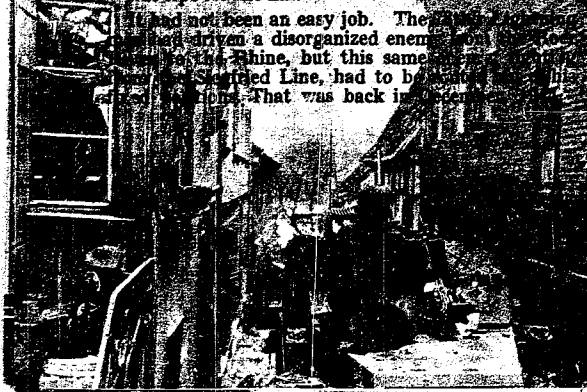
MARCH 8, 1945: Forty-five miles inside Germany, doughs of the 78th strained unbelieving eyes in the early morning mist, then embarked on the nightmare crossing of the Ludendorf Bridge. Tracer bullets ripped the air in wild, zig-zag patterns; shells splashed on

the bridge, dropped into the rushing water; flying metal ricocheted against steel girders. The men finally reached the opposite shore and became the first infantry division troops to span the Rhine.

It was indeed fitting that the 78th—the division which, by its capture of Schwammensauel Dam, had made possible the great drive to the Rhine—was the first infantry division to cross that river.

The crossing itself marked an important turning point in the war against Germany. The "impregnable" Siegfried Line defenses had been torn open; the German defense line along the Roer River had been smashed, and now the last remaining natural obstacle—the Rhine—had been crossed. The stage was set for the final, crushing blow of the offensive. Nazi Germany—its back to the wall, its vitals exposed—was ripe for the kill.

It had not been an easy job. The 78th had driven a disorganized enemy back to the Rhine, but this same enemy, now reinforced by the Siegfried Line, had to be driven back to his starting positions. That was back in December, 1944.



Days later, after a safe sea crossing, another was dropped at the south coast of England. Troops disembarked and piled into trains, climbing off again at Bournemouth. Here, on the coast, the division remained until the third week of November when it boarded LSTs and crossed the Channel to France.

Part of the division landed at a French port where they got their first glimpse of the ravages of war on the continent. Assembling at the small town of Yvetot, the 78th moved to Popering, Belgium.

In early December, the 78th Division crossed the border to Belgium where it set up its first headquarters on German soil.

FIRST MISSION :

Cracking THE SIEGFRIED



In the thickly wooded hills of Germany, just over the Belgian border, in the pre-dawn dark of that cold December morning, 78th Lightning Division doughboys crouched in their foxholes, awaiting the order that would hurl them into their first combat action. The division sector, a three-mile stretch, lay just south and east of a small town called Lammersdorf, about nine miles southeast of Aachen, first large German city to be taken by the Allies. Out in front, paralleling the Roer River, rose the vaunted Siegfried Line.

Germany had long proclaimed this line to be impregnable. Not a line at all, but a belt of defenses from three to five miles deep running just inside the German border from the Netherlands south to Switzerland, it represented a formidable barrier.

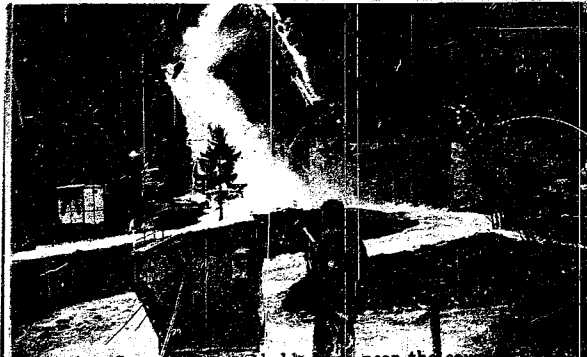
Rows of dragons' teeth stretched in an unbroken chain as far as the eye could see. Ingeniously concealed concrete pillboxes guarded every square yard of ground, firing slits covered all approaches. The ground surrounding these 16-foot thick monsters was sown with deadly anti-tank and anti-personnel mines. Concertina wire entanglements spiraled across the countryside. Intricate networks of ground entrenchments afforded the enemy movement and cover for forward firing positions. The entire diabolical



system of defenses was designed to prevent any further breakthrough into Germany and to inflict heavy casualties on any attacking force.

Members of the 78th Lightning Division were in foxholes outside of Lammersdorf, awaiting the darkness and were quiet. It was Dec. 13, 11:00 a.m. was 0800. At 11:00, Lightning was going to strike the Siegfried Line!

As their rapid sweep through France, Allied forces on the Western Front were poised just inside the German border. North of the 78th elements of the American First and Ninth, the British Second, and the Canadian First Armies had pushed to the west bank of the Roer River. The next move would be crossing the River and striking east over the Cologne Plain into the Rhineland.



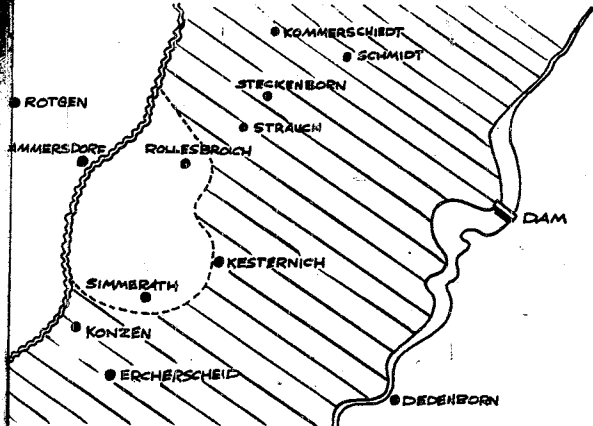
Several German-held dams near the southern bank of the Roer controlled the flow of water into the Moncheau area, a key element in the success of the surprise operation. The largest and most important of these was Schwammenauel Dam, which lay opposite the division sector. The 78th was given the mission of capturing and securing it. Immediate objective of the division, however, on the morning of Dec. 13, was to break into the Siegfried Line and capture the towns of Bickerath, Rollesbroich, Simmerath, Witzerath and Kesternich—all lying within the belt of fortifications.

Doughs stared at their GI watches. Slowly, the glowing hands straightened into 0600. Bayonets fixed, the men slipped from their foxholes and edged forward.

The plan of operations called for a surprise attack; a surprise attack it was. Many a German soldier, manning a forward outpost, was awakened by a Lightning bayonet against his ribs. Stunned prisoners, their eyes still puffed with sleep, were quickly herded to the rear. Awakening to the realization that their positions were being challenged, Germans began to pour on everything they had.

As doughs scrambled across the minefields, enemy pillboxes spewed automatic weapons' fire. Mortars and 88s pounded the earth; jagged bits of killing shrapnel exploded in the air.

Joos inched closer to the enemy. Overhead the air crackled as 78th's Div Arty hammered positions



ahead. A 105 slammed into an entrenchment, tore a hole in the barbed wire, clearing a path for the infantry to follow.

While one group engaged a pillbox in a fire fight from the front, others crept around to its flank with dynamite. A 1000-pound charge was placed, the fuse lit. Doughs dived for cover as the concrete monster blew up. This was the way the 78th removed the pillbox menace.

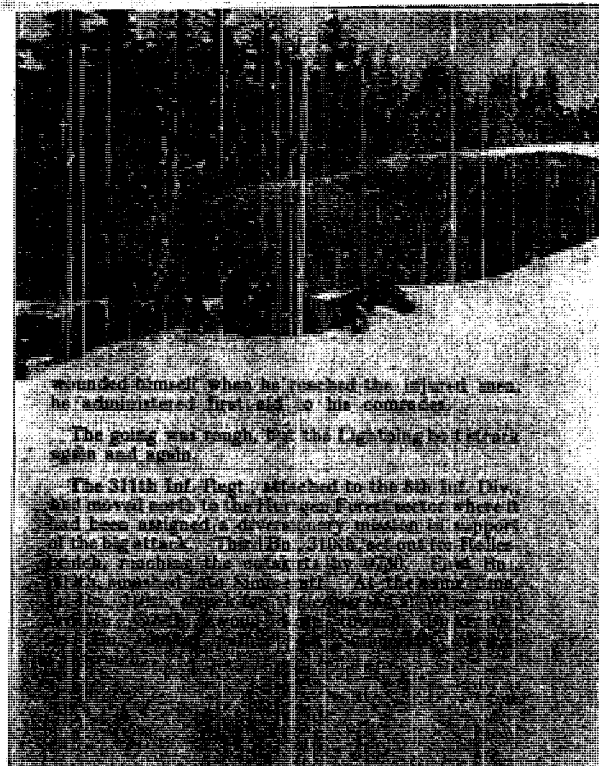
THE pattern of advance was slow. Minefields were detected and by-passed. Machine guns chattered, rifles cracked incessantly. There always was low, grazing fire.

Aid men scurried about the battlefield, braving sudden death. From the start they won the respect and admiration of every Lightning soldier. Instances of their individual heroism would fill volumes.

One aid man of the 309th Medics exposed himself to artillery and mortar fire, walked into a minefield to administer morphine and successfully amputate the leg of a badly injured dough.

While treating a wounded man, another medic of the 309th was hit in the leg by shrapnel. He continued working, then returned to the CP for assistance in evacuating the casualty before treating his own injury.

A 310th medic crawled 100 yards across an open field to reach four wounded men who were pinned down by machine gun fire. Although seriously



wounded himself when he reached the injured men, he administered first aid to his comrades.

The going was rough for the Lightning boys as they fought their way across the open and again.

The 311th Inf. Regt., attached to the 83d Inf. Div., had moved north to the Heron Forest sector where it had been assigned a defensive mission in support of the big attack. Through with one or two flanking attacks, the 311th was able to hold the line against the enemy. At the same time...

By nightfall, Rollesbroich, Simmerath, Bickerath had fallen. Thirty-five pillboxes had been destroyed; the enemy had been thrown back 2500 yards. A big chunk had been bitten out of the Siegfried Line.

The town of Kesternich, however, still remained in the German's grip. Struggle for its possession raged during the next three days. From hedgerows skirting the town, from cellars and buildings of the town itself, the enemy resisted furiously. Combined infantry-tank assault teams repeatedly battered their way into the town but were repulsed by heavy fire from enemy positions on the high ground beyond. Constant mortar and artillery fire pounded and blasted the buildings to rubble, as the fighting, bitter as any on the Western Front, continued.

Finally, 2nd Bn., 310th, drove through to the far eastern edge of town. An unexpected enemy counter-attack trapped the elements farthest forward, cut them off from the battalion. The courage with which these men, comprising almost a full company, continued to fight for six days without food, water, or communications until rescued is a tribute to the tenacity of 78th doughs.

THE 78th, holding the western tip of Kesternich, was preparing another attack to complete its capture Dec. 16 when von Rundstedt launched his mighty counter-offensive in the Monschau area, five miles to the south. Ordered to the defensive, the division was instructed to hold its gains at all costs.

It was Christmas in Germany. There was turkey for dinner, and the Christmas spirit found its way to the man in the foxhole. Gen. Parker, in a message to the troops, expressed the spirit in these words:

On this particular day our hearts go homeward, just as our people at home are thinking of us. By your very presence here, amidst the misadventures that are war, we have made and are making possible a peaceful Christmas for our families back in America. We have done this by carrying the fight to the enemy, so that the people at home can have a Christmas for the boys. Yes, the spirit of Christmas is with us, and it is helping us to win the war. I join with you, the boys, in wishing a peaceful Christmas to all of us. Best wishes to all. Luck to all.





Lightning STRIKES IN THE WEST

FOR the second time in two generations, soldiers wearing the Lightning patch looked back on their achievements, knowing that theirs had been a difficult assignment and that they had performed it well.

It was during World War I that the 78th Division first made a name for itself. Originally activated at Camp Dix, N. J., Aug. 27, 1917, the division was made up mainly of men from New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Rhode Island and Illinois. Following a nine months' training period at Ft. Dix, the 78th—a square division of approximately 20,000 men—embarked for overseas duty, arriving in France May 6, 1918.

Moved into reserve for the St. Mihiel drive, the 78th relieved the 2nd and 5th Divisions in the Limey sector, Sept. 15. Here it was given the mission of conducting a number of raids and limited objective attacks to divert enemy attention from Allied preparations for the coming Meuse-Argonne offensive.

The 78th was relieved by the 89th Division, Oct. 3. It started immediately on a forced march into the Argonne. At dawn, Oct. 16, the great Meuse-Argonne offensive was launched with the 78th in the forefront. By meeting and rolling back remnants of nine German

divisions, the 78th won its place among the outstanding divisions of the first World War. Later it was described as "the point in the wedge" of the final offensive which knocked Germany out of the war.

Six days before the Armistice, the 78th was relieved by the 42nd "Rainbow" Division. It headed for ports of embarkation April 23, 1919, and by June 15 all units had returned to Camp Dix for demobilization.

The 78th Division of World War I left its offspring, the current Lightning Division, a proud heritage—one which it has upheld.

THE 78th Division of World War II was reactivated at Camp Butner, N. C., Aug. 15, 1942, under the command of Maj. Gen. Edwin P. Parker, Jr., Wytheville, Va. Streamlined to triangular proportions, the new division totaled about 15,000 men.

At the time of its formation, the 78th had won a well-earned reputation for fighting men, with some of the best of the war.



Throughout the maneuvers the Lightning Division took each problem confidently and established an enviable record for smooth operation.

From Tennessee the division moved to its new home, Camp Pickett, Va., where from April until September, preparations for combat were completed. During its training the 78th received commendations from Under-Secretary of War Robert P. Patterson, Lt. Gen. William H. Simpson and Lt. Gen. Ben Lear.

THE 78th's performance in its first combat action of World War II had spoken well of its training. The Wehrmacht, leaning on the security of its Siegfried Line defenses, had been startled into the recognition of a new and potent force on the Western Front.

Throughout the rest of December, 1944, and most of January, while the First and Third U. S. Armies hammered at the Bulge from three sides, the 78th held and improved the salient it had thrust into the German defenses. Positions were organized in great depth; raids were carried out to destroy a fringe of pillboxes which menaced the security of the sector.

The 311th, having launched two fierce night attacks in conjunction with the main assault of the 78th, was returned to division control.

Rain and mud of December gave way to the snow and bitter cold of January, 1945. Thick snow draped the hills and valleys and hung from fir trees in a picture-card beauty that belied the horror of war.



By the end of January the German Bulge ceased to be a threat. Von Rundstedt had gambled and lost. Remnants of his forces had withdrawn from Belgium under cover of bad flying weather for the Allies, and were licking their wounds behind the protection of German border fortifications. It was time for Allied armies to strike.

Schwammenauel Dam still was in enemy hands. Its 22 billion gallons of water, once unleashed by German demolitions, would be sufficient not only to submerge completely and destroy all the towns along the Roer from Heimbach to Doermund, but to sweep away like matchsticks men and equipment in a river crossing operation. Its capture was imperative.

The Lightning Division, already poking more than two miles into Siegfried defenses, was given the signal to resume the vital task of capturing the Dam.

The mercury had taken a sudden drop. A biting wind drove the cold through overcoats. Men moved about in muffled silence. A 310th platoon leader was making a last check before the attack when he noticed a private trying to attract his attention.

"What's the matter?" whispered the lieutenant.

"Sir, my fingers are so cold I can't move 'em," replied the dough.

"Well, do you want me to send you to the rear?" asked the officer.

"No, just unlock my piece!"

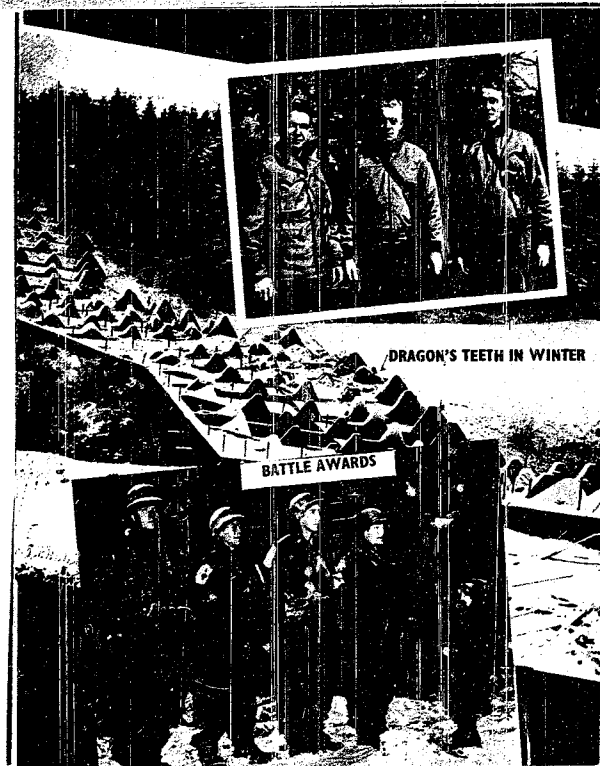
CAPTURED : SCHWAMMENAUEL'S

22 Billion Gallons

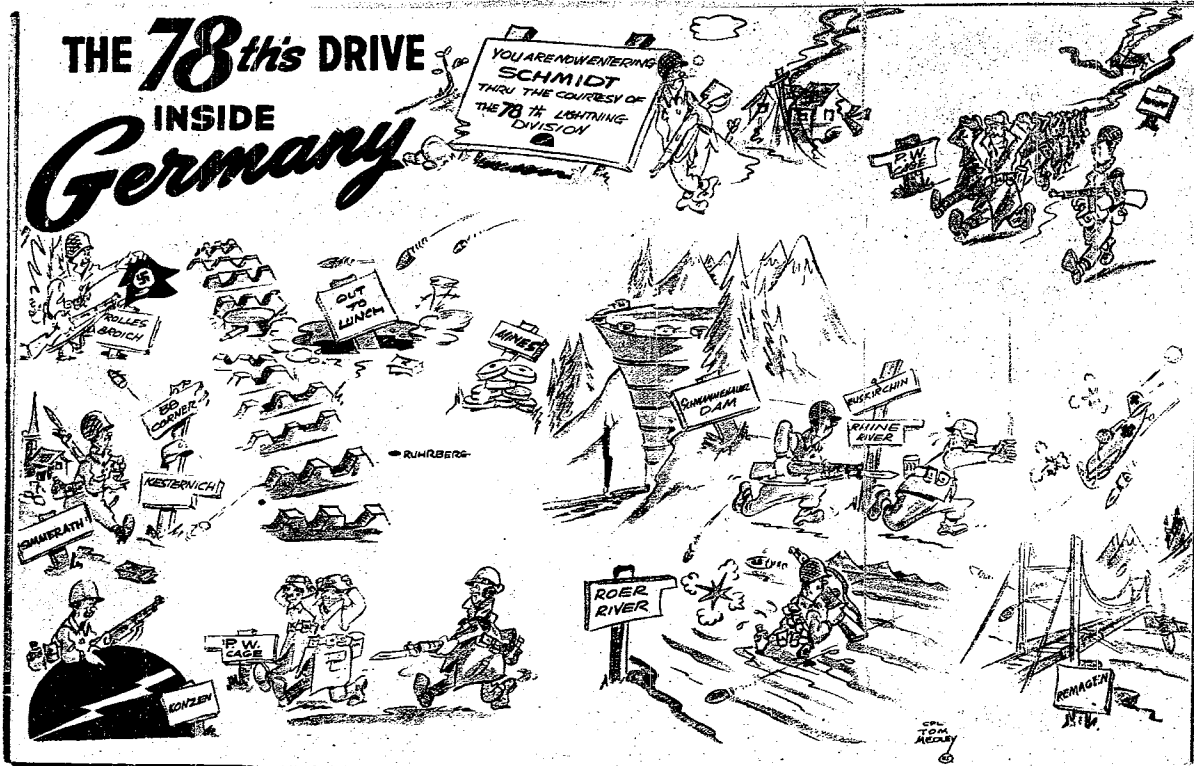
As the massed guns of division and corps artillery threw up a supporting umbrella of fire, doughs moved out in the dawn.

While the 309th held the north flank, the 310th and 311th, ploughing through waist-deep snowdrifts, pressed to the east and the south from their positions near Simmerath and Kesternich.

The action was swift, strong. Lightning doughs rushed in 100 yards behind the artillery to smack the enemy reeling from the concussion. At Konzen, 3rd Bn., 310th, captured the town's entire defense garrison. Fortified positions and pillboxes at Am Gericht and Imgenbroich were blown sky-high, ripped



THE 78th DRIVE INSIDE Germany





to shreds. Everywhere, the enemy poured from shelters, helmets off, hands in the air.

At Kesternich, it was different. Once again this town became the scene of bitter, painful fighting. From hedgerow to hedgerow, from cellar to cellar, rubble heap to rubble heap, Germans resisted the advance of the 311th doughs. The attack slowed, then halted.

Each of the town's 112 buildings then were plotted and their systematic destruction begun. Houses were seized one at a time after radio-carrying infantrymen moved from building to building to call back house numbers to tanks and artillery. The big guns of the 307th FA Bn. zeroed in and let fly a barrage which cleared the way for the next advance.

IT was slow, arduous work, but it brought results. By Feb. 2, Kesternich—a town no longer, but a name which never will be forgotten by the 78th Division—was captured and cleared of Germans.

To the south, Konzen, Am Gericht, Huppenbroich and Eicherscheid already had fallen. Treacherous minefields, veiled by heavy snow, took their toll, but Lightning soldiers would not be stopped. Hammer, on the Roer, was seized.

Next, Co. C, 311th, struck out for Dedenborn, a small town across a crook in the river, approximately two miles southeast of Kesternich. The swift stream was a formidable obstacle, but a water crossing was effected. Hanging onto a cable strung from one bank to the other, the company stumbled and swam



... across. Searching for a position, they rushed the town after a short battle. German defenses were everywhere. The town belonged to the 78th.

Next morning, Feb. 4, the 311th continued the attack straight east from Kesternich toward Ruhrberg. When that town was buttoned up before dark, all the area south and east of Simmerath was clear. With its south flank secure, the division turned northeast toward Schmidt and the Schwammenauel Dam.

The much-attacked, never-captured stronghold of Schmidt lay on the high ground three miles north of Ruhrberg, overlooking the river. A mile and a half below, just around a bend in the Roer, stood the key to the Allied offensive in the north—Schwammenauel Dam.

Guarding the approaches to Schmidt from the southeast were the fortified areas of Strauch and Steckenborn. To its southeast was a two-mile mass of rough,

hilly, heart-breaking terrain, diabolically sprinkled with pillboxes and mines.

The goal which had seemed so far away in December now was within striking distance. Weariness had to be thrust aside. There was no time for rest. The enemy was cracking, and the attack to batter down his remaining defenses and capture Schmidt already was underway.

The 311th struck northeast from Ruhrberg. The 310th attacked northeast from Simmerath. The 309th plunged over the wild, heavily wooded countryside to the north to block enemy withdrawal from the pocket.

Wofflesbach, Strauch and Steckenborn were captured Feb. 5. Strong enemy counter-attacks were beaten off. A 310th bazookaman who had taken a position inside a building when Germans attacked one town, told how rocket guns helped repulse the armor: "After three hits, the leading tank burst into flames. One of the crew who dived out of the tank was on fire from head to foot."

Across open ground under a hail of withering artillery, mortar and small arms fire; through deadly minefields in the face of enemy automatic weapons' fire, doughs advanced—running, crawling, creeping, scrambling up slopes and rolling down ravines.

Pinned down by machine gun fire, one man would flank an enemy position, knock it out, and his squad would resume its advance. When platoon leaders were wounded, other men would step forward to assume command.

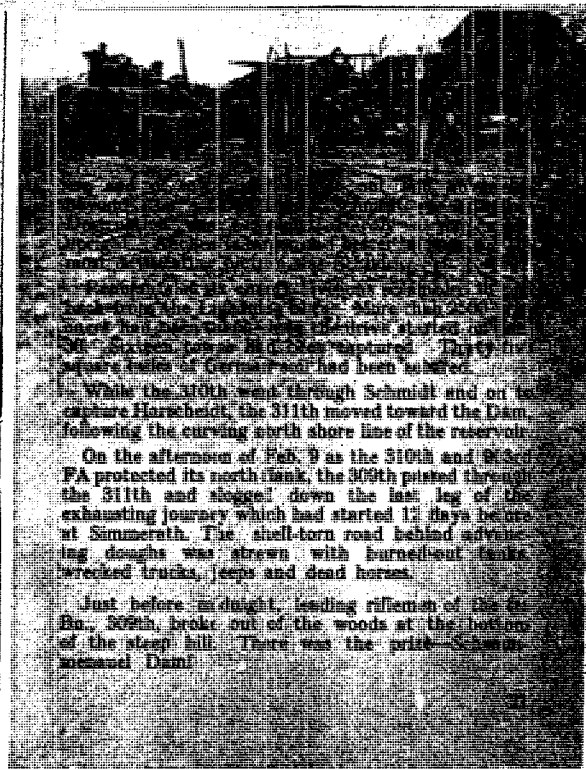
Two platoons took over a 310th platoon when their lieutenant dropped out. The unit, along with four tanks had been assigned the mission of knocking out three particularly troublesome pillboxes. The assault led the assault team into an action which netted two pillboxes, a troop shelter and 136 prisoners.

Advancing in rushes, assaulting each objective in turn—a hill, bunker, emplacement, building—the 78th stormed into Schmidt defenses. The assault continued three days as the regiment advanced abreast to place an on their objective.

The 309th peeled off and battered into Kommer-scheidt. The 311th riding tanks, pushed straight ahead toward Schmidt. Forced to dismount by anti-tank fire, doughs gritted their teeth, went in afoot. The strongest pockets of resistance were by-passed as infantry moved through mountainous heaps of debris which once had been houses.

A sergeant who volunteered to lead a 78th Sig. Co. wire team into Schmidt, said: "We rode into town, dismounted and started laying wire. Boy, was it hell. We deluged shells all the way."

The 310th plunged into the heavily defended north-



While the 310th went through Schmidt and on to capture Harscheidt, the 311th moved toward the Dam, following the curving north shore line of the reservoir.

On the afternoon of Feb. 9 as the 310th and 309th PA protected its north flank, the 309th pushed through the 311th and slogged down the last leg of the exhausting journey which had started 12 days before at Sommerath. The shell-torn road behind advancing doughs was strewn with burned-out tanks, wrecked trucks, jeeps and dead horses.

Just before midnight, leading riflemen of the 309th, 309th, broke out of the woods at the bottom of the steep hill. There was the prize—Schmidt, renamed Dam!

BRIDGING THE ROER



WITH *Courage*

THE area was weirdly lit up by enemy flares from the far side of the river. Machine gun fire splattered all around. The crash of bursting mortar shells mingled with the whip-cracking reports of flying lead. Registered-in 88s whined over the Dam to burst at knee height among the doughs.

While the fire fight raged unabated, a specially trained 303rd Engrs. team set about the grim work of exploring the Dam for demolitions. One group searched control houses on the near shore; another crawled cautiously over the face of the Dam. A third checked the structure from the inside.

Built in 1934 primarily for defense purposes, Schwammenauel Dam is 188 feet high and 1000 feet across. A reinforced concrete core supports the five-tiered earthen staircase which is more than 1000 feet thick at the base.

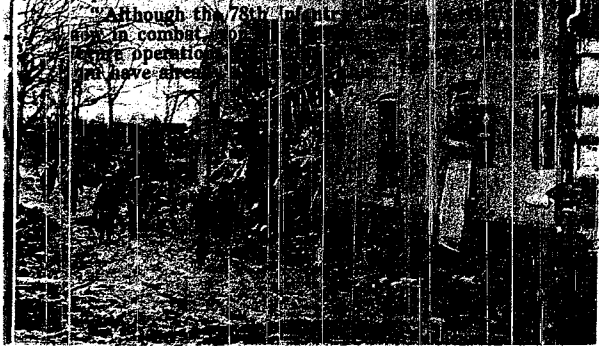
Engineers groped their way through the inspection tunnel in the very bowels of the Dam with the knowledge that 22 billion gallons of water were straining against the structure and that even as they pursued their search an already lighted fuse might be burning closer to the charge. It was a ticklish job, but it had to be done.

Three hours later, new engineers returned to the 1st Bn. CP. The Dam was safe. No demolitions had been touched off. A bridge across the sluiceway had been blown. The control houses had been demolished. The control to the penstock tunnel had been destroyed. Water was flowing through the penstock and into the river. The reservoir was emptying and the water level of the river would rise. But the threat of destruction and flood was removed.

Schwammenauel Dam no longer was a menace to the Allied forces in the north.

FOLLOWING the seizure of the Dam, the division received a commendation from Maj. Gen. C. R. Huebner, V Corps Commander, which stressed the strategic importance of the accomplishment. It was a commendation which further contemplated similar operations against the enemy on the northern front, which would be impossible...

Although the 78th Infantry Division was in combat, the operations were successful and have already...



The 9th Inf. Div. had established a bridgehead at Nideggan north of the 78th sector. On Feb. 28, the 311th crossed the river and attacked south toward Hausen. As soon as the town had been secured, the 303rd Engr. Bn. started construction of a bridge across the Roer. By nightfall, the span was completed and 309th infantry poured across.

After capturing Hausen, the 311th continued its attack south over the steep rocky hills and cliffs leading to Heimbach. Advancing in the face of direct enemy self-propelled artillery fire, the 311th overran the town. Meanwhile, 2nd Bn., 310th, crossed the Roer over a footbridge at Schwammenauel Dam. Seizing the high ground east of the Dam, the battalion joined forces with the 311th, which drove down from the north.

THIS threat removed, First and Ninth Armies launched their great offensive toward the Rhine, Feb. 23. The 78th joined the attack five days later with the mission of protecting the south flank of the drive.

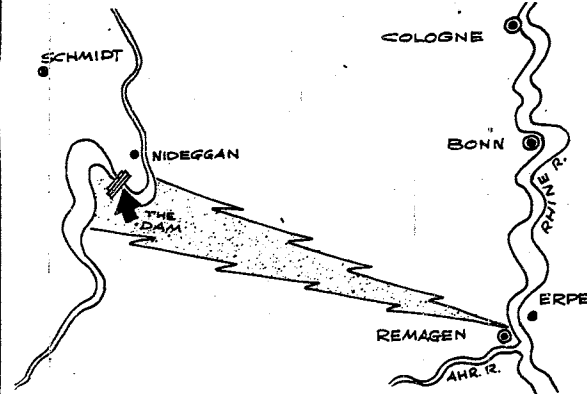
Almost three weeks of active patrolling on both sides of the Roer had preceded the actual crossing. One of the reconnaissance units went across the river time and time again to bring back vital information. Div Arty lobbed shells over the river to harass Germans attempting to organize defenses.

The division bridgehead across the Roer was established, secured.

The way to the Rhine now lay open, stretching for 35 miles over rolling, open ground dotted with

little towns. There were no permanent defenses, no pillboxes, few minefields. Hastily constructed earth entrenchments and dug-in gun positions were the Germans' only means of checking the powerful blows to come. Battle for control of the Rhine's west bank was to be a race. Could the Germans, staggering back from the whipping they had taken along the Roer, reorganize and occupy these positions before Lightning men hit them?

The 309th led off. While the remainder of the division crossed the Roer, that regiment lashed out to the east. Advancing rapidly at first, the doughs ran smack into a stiff fight near Vlatten. With all the force and determination they could scrape together, Germans defended the approaches to the town. It took the combined efforts of the dogged infantrymen



and the booming guns of the 308th FA to break through this crust of resistance.

House-to-house fighting raged inside the town. The Germans were shoved out, block by block. Before dark, the job was complete. The 309th had advanced five miles and won the first leg of the race toward the Rhine.

The battle swept on at a rapid pace throughout the next five days. The 309th and 311th alternately smashed forward for large gains. Tanks of the 774th Bn. and 893rd TDs added impetus to each thrust. Stunned and surprised, the enemy was on the run.

THIS was new, wide-open, fast-moving combat, a far cry from the bitter yard-by-yard struggles of Kesternich and the Siegfried Line. Taking full advantage of the shattered enemy resistance, the 78th kept punching forward.

South of Rheinbach, the 78th Recon Troop overran a panzer ammunition dump. More than 1500 tons of ammunition and a convoy of trucks were captured intact. At Schweinheim, Kalenborn and Holzweiler, the Germans fought back furiously with self-propelled artillery and mortars. Nazis collected forces for a stubborn defense at Stazvey.

A liaison officer racing along in his jeep, took a wrong turn and arrived at Hertgarten—a town not only out of the division zone but also beyond front lines. The lieutenant found civilians waving white sheets, a German officer and seven enlisted men waiting to surrender the town.

LIGHTNING *Flashes*



ACROSS THE RHINE

IN other towns along the division sector, white flags and deserted streets greeted the Lightning men. From second story windows, flagpoles and balconies hung bed sheets, towels—anything that was white. Ignored was Hitler's order to defend to the last. With their Wehrmacht in undisguised rout, the Herrenvolk in the towns had decided to call it quits in the face of the Lightning juggernaut rolling in high gear.

The end of the drive toward the Rhine now was in sight. The 309th and 311th had reached the Ahr River where they captured five bridges intact to pave the way for a link-up with Third Army forces coming up north of the Moselle.

In eight days the two regiments advanced 35 miles. More than 1500 prisoners and 47 towns were captured. More than 87 square miles of German ground was cleared. The German army west of the Rhine ceased to exist.

Meanwhile, the 310th, working with the 9th Armd. Div., had been motorized for most of its race Rhine-ward. Mounted on open-top trucks and preceded by

tanks, the 310th troops captured many German towns without ever dismounting. Firing BARs, M-1s and grease guns from the sides of the trucks, they rolled through town after town, wiping out snipers and overpowering the already demoralized enemy. By March 7, the 310th had seized more than 2300 prisoners and 35 towns, including Euskirchen, Rheinbach and Bad Neuenahr.

THE 310th infantrymen were fighting in the towns of Mehlem and Lannesdorf March 7 when word was flashed that the Ludendorff Railway Bridge over the Rhine still was intact.

1st Bn. was ordered to move immediately for the Rhine crossing. Doughs rushed to Remagen aboard trucks. At 0430 March 8, the battalion crossed the Ludendorff Bridge from Remagen to Erpel—the first infantry battalion of an infantry division to span the Rhine. Later the same day, the 311th crossed over. Within the next two days, the entire 78th Division had crossed on the east bank.



Mustering the remnants of a once powerful Luftwaffe, the Germans tried everything to bomb out the bridge. Anti-aircraft artillery batteries, among them the 552nd AAA (AW), were rushed in and Nazi raiders paid a terrific price.

Enemy guns, skillfully directed by observers hidden in the steep hills overlooking the river flats near Erpel, incessantly pounded the bridge and the columns of men and vehicles moving in the tiny bridgehead area. Massed along the west bank of the Rhine, Long Toms and six-inchers disintegrated these German firing positions with a deluge of counter-battery fire.

For the Germans, it was do or die. If they failed to stem the flow of men and materials across the bridge and wipe out the bridgehead, their entire Rhine River defensive position was lost. For the Allies, this small patch of land across the Rhine was the most critical spot on the entire front. Seizure of the bridge had been unexpected gravy. Now, if forces fighting east of the Rhine could be sustained, reinforced, and





trated rifles, grenades, machine guns, mortars and howitzers to pry Germans from the hills. Slowly, the tiny bridgehead expanded. Einz and Dattenberg were cleared.

MEN and materiel continued to pour across the Ludendorf Bridge. New spans were thrown across the river. Relieved in the southern sector, the 78th turned north. Past Erpel, into Honnet, it stormed then beyond Honnet to the northeast.

As the doughs moved along the east bank of the river, VII Corps engineers, working under the concealment of man-made fog, threw up three bridges.

First Bn., 309th, cut the Autobahn, a new four-lane super-laneway linking the industrial Ruhr with

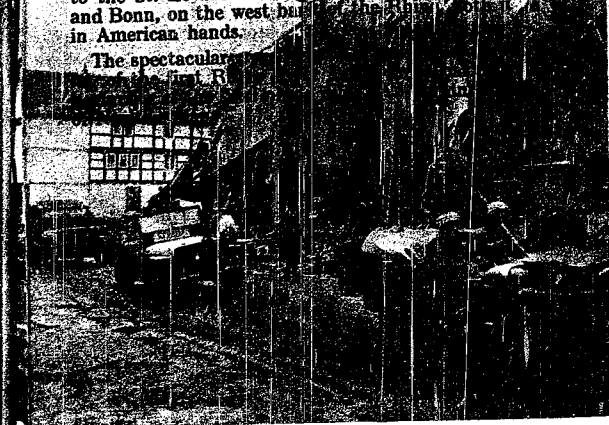
Frankfurt-am-Main. Konigswinter was captured. Prisoners were herded to the rear by the thousands.

In frantic efforts to stem the inexorable tide of the advance, Germans shoved into battle a conglomeration of forces without regard to unity or organization.

By March 17, the bridgehead had been expanded into an area of 100 square miles. Enemy artillery no longer could bring effective fire on the main crossing sites. The bridgehead was secure.

This was the climax of the 35-mile, eight-day drive from the Roer to the Rhine—the aftermath of the capture of many towns and the seizure of a dam. The First and Ninth Armies had hurtled forward across the Rhineland with a speed and force comparable to the St. Lo breakthrough in July, 1944. Cologne and Bonn, on the west bank of the Rhine, soon fell in American hands.

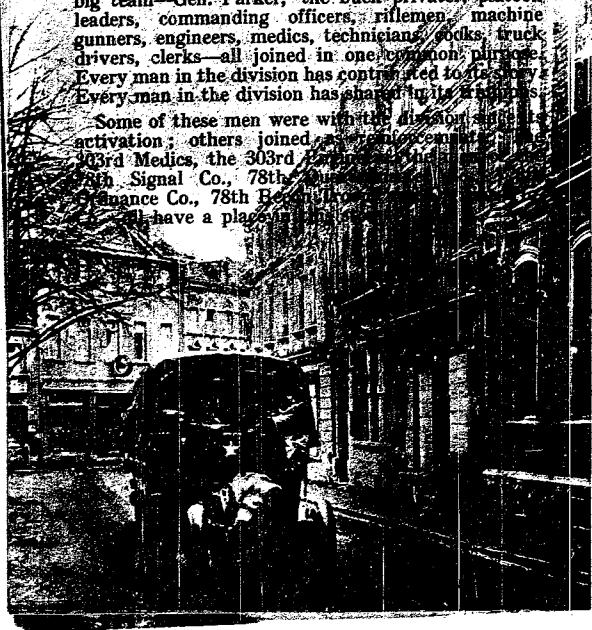
The spectacular



THE men of the 78th Lightning Division are understandably proud of the part they played in bringing about the collapse of the Wehrmacht.

It took men to accomplish what they did—all sorts of men, performing all sorts of jobs. The 78th is one big team—Gen. Parker, the buck privates, platoon leaders, commanding officers, riflemen, machine gunners, engineers, medics, technicians, cooks, truck drivers, clerks—all joined in one common purpose. Every man in the division has contributed to its glory. Every man in the division has shared in its triumphs.

Some of these men were with the division since its activation; others joined as reinforcements. The 303rd Medical, the 303rd Engineer, the 78th Signal Co., 78th Quartermaster, 78th Ammunition Co., 78th Reconnaissance Co., 78th Reconnaissance Co., all have a place in the 78th.



RAILCUTTERS



SENSOR FOR MAILING HOME

Name _____

Date Enlisted _____

Assigned to 84th _____

Training _____

Battle Actions _____

Locations _____



Series of G.I. Stories of the Ground, in the European Theater of Operations, issued by the Section, Information and Education, Division, TAGUSA. Major General A. R. Bolling, commanding the 84th Infantry Division, and his cooperation in the preparation of this pamphlet, have made it possible to supply to the editors the story

The following story is of your actions and accomplishments to date. Much history is yet to be made. Mere human words cannot express the valor, human effort and suffering necessary for the writing of your glorious history on the pages of life's book, but I, as your commanding general, am deeply aware of your faith and courage. Many of our comrades have made the supreme sacrifice on the field of battle. To them we dedicate this booklet and for them we will complete our final mission.



A. R. Bolling

Major General, Commanding

THE STORY OF THE 84th INFANTRY DIVISION

JAN. 16, 1945, 0945: Outside a farmhouse near the Ourthe River south of Petite Mormont, a brawny infantryman walked through the icy snow and shook hands with a group of men who waited in two jeeps and an armored car. Then he handed them a message.

"It is with the greatest pleasure that I greet you across the Ourthe," the note read. "May we meet again, and soon, across the Wilhelmstrasse."

The message was signed by Lt. Col. Lloyd H. Gomes, CO of the 334th Regiment, 84th Infantry Division.

This was the meeting of the First and Third U.S. Armies which closed the gap of the dangerous German salient in the frosty Ardennes of Belgium.

One month earlier, Field Marshal Gerd von Rundstedt had launched his mighty counter-offensive designed to split the Allied armies in the north. For the Allied nations, this junction between two American armies marked the end of a particularly anxious phase of the war.

For doughs of the 84th, it climaxed two months of savage fighting which saw them strike powerful blows in three critical sectors of the Western Front.

Led by Maj. Gen. (then Brig. Gen.) A.R. Bolling, they had made a record crossing of the English Channel to rush into furious battle in the Geilenkirchen sector of the Siegfried Line.

Operating with the Second British and Ninth U.S. Armies, Railsplitters of the 84th took Geilenkirchen, then second largest German town to fall to the Allies, and proceeded to knock out 122 pillboxes and bunkers in Hitler's West Wall.



Trouble-shooters in Germany, they were chosen for the important job of cracking what had been a stalemate. Hard-fighting men from all the states did their job well — a fact which Germans tacitly admitted when they dubbed 84th doughs "Hatchet Men" for the way the division hacked through the Siegfried Line.

Then Germans drove into the Ardennes through a lightly-held line in the First Army sector, pushed towards the historic Meuse River. Called on again as trouble-shooters, Railsplitters were pulled from the Siegfried Line and sent to the Ardennes.

Although they faced numerically superior forces, men of the 84th, their flanks unprotected, made a rock-like stand south of the important road center of Marche. Facing the main German threat, these offensive-minded doughs lashed back with a vengeance, virtually destroying one of the Wehrmacht's panzer divisions.

The German drive halted, the 84th was shifted to the northern side of the Bulge von Rundstedt had created. Less than two weeks later, it helped smash the Germans back across the Ourthe River.

Railsplitters now had driven to a meeting with Third Army. The infantryman who walked out from the farmhouse on the Ourthe was Lt. Byron Blankenship, Texarkana, Ark., leader of a 32-man patrol from the 334th. The men waiting for him were members of Third Army's 11th Armd. Div. In the distance, they could hear scattered shots as the defeated Wehrmacht retreated to the German frontier.

With bullets and bayonets, the 84th stood squarely behind Col. Gomes in his expressed wish for an early meeting across the Wilhelmstrasse.

Railsplitters SHARPEN AXE FOR GEILENKIRCHEN

THEN known as the Lincoln Division, the 84th had landed at Cherbourg and Le Havre in World War I, eager for action against the Kaiser's armies. Most of the 1918 Railsplitters got their chance at combat but not as a unit. The Meuse-Argonne offensive and an epidemic of influenza had created a vast manpower shortage, and the 84th, like many other divisions, was used as a reinforcement pool.

The new 84th was activated Oct. 15, 1942, at Camp Howze, Tex., about 60 miles north of Dallas. Then, as now, it was composed of the 333rd, 334th and 335th Inf. Regts.; 375th, 526th, 327th and 909th FA Bns.; 309th Engr. Combat Bn.; 309th Med. Bn.; 84th Sig. Co.; 784th Ord. Light Maintenance Co.; 84th QM Co.; 84th Recon Troop.

Basic training for the division's 16,000 men began Jan. 4, 1943.

It was cold on the wind-swept plains of north Texas, sharp foretaste of what was to come two years later in the Ardennes.



From Camp Howze the 84th went to the Louisiana Maneuver Area for eight weeks of large-scale war games beginning Sept. 15, 1943. So-called "free maneuvers," combining the operations of infantry, artillery, tank destroyers and other branches, climaxed the training.

Brig. Gen. Nelson M. Walker, then Asst. Division Commander, hailed Railsplitters as the "first team" on maneuvers, predicted they would see combat in 1944.

During maneuvers, Gen. Bolling joined the division as assistant commander, succeeding Gen. Walker, who went overseas with another division and was killed in action.

The 84th moved to Camp Claiborne, La., following maneuvers. This was the one-time home of the 164th Inf. Regt., which fought at Guadalcanal, the 34th Inf. Div. and the 52nd Airborne, veterans of fighting in Europe.

In February, 1944, regiments went out into swamps and hills around the camp for unit training to test the effectiveness of individual platoon leaders. Unit leaders were

strictly on their own. Virtually all movements were made at night, camouflage was emphasized at all times. To accustom men to battle conditions, units were limited to one jeep each. Map reading, patrolling and security measures were stressed.

April saw the entire division in the field for the first time since maneuvers, signaling the start of a series of problems which featured development of attack against outpost lines and conducting active patrolling and air reconnaissance. To avoid losses in future amphibious operations, hundreds of Railsplitters learned to swim at Valentine Lake. Doughs received training in air transport operations, including the use of parachutes and securing of equipment in planes.

Several important administrative changes were made. In April, the division's first chief of staff, Col. Charles J. Barrett, was made CO of Div. Arty. Col. (then Lt. Col.) Louis W. Truman joined the Railsplitters in May to succeed Col. Barrett. Gen. Bolling took over division command June 15.



With all phases of their training complete, Railsplitters left Camp Claiborne in September for their staging area, Camp Kilmer, N.J. By Oct. 1, they were in England.

Crowded conditions at Cherbourg altered the original plan of landing at the Normandy port. Troopships docked instead in England. One of the 84th's transports was the first troopship to enter the English Channel



and land at Southampton in World War II.

Their headquarters at Winchester, Railsplitters remained in England for a month. Mines and military police schools were conducted. The division supplied personnel necessary for ten provisional Quartermaster truck companies formed to assist in the operation of the famed Red Ball Express, shuttling supplies to fighting fronts.

At Cherbourg, Brig. Gen. John H. Church, former 45th Inf. Div. regimental CO, joined the advance detachment of Railsplitters as Asst. Division Commander.

The bulk of the division, preparing for action, waited for word that would start it to the combat zone. Orders came in late October. First units landed at Omaha Beach Nov. 1 with the remainder arriving the next three days. Crossings were made in LSTs, LCTs and Liberty ships.

Wasting little time, doughs sped through France and Belgium into Holland. Rarely had a division been moved from the States to the flaming Western Front with such speed as the 84th's. Within a week after the division CP was set up, Railsplitters were attacking one of the strongest sectors of the Siegfried Line.

For some time, Allies and Germans had been swapping punches along the northern sector of the Siegfried Line with neither side able to land a solid blow. Jutting out into Allied lines was the enemy salient at Geilenkirchen, a mining and transportation center with a population of 20,000.

Germans were just as determined to hold the city as the Allies were to take it, and they prepared for a fight to the death. Pillboxes, fire trenches, mine fields, tank ditches, dragon's teeth and concrete shelters studded the area around this anchor of the Siegfried Line.

Joos of the 84th, untried in combat but anxious to see how they stacked up against the vaunted Wehrmacht, were given the job of breaking the stalemate. For men whose combat experience had been limited to mock skirmishes in Louisiana swamps, it was a large order.

Lent to the Second British Army for the operation, the 84th hit the Siegfried with two of its regiments, the 333rd and 334th, and attached Sherwood Yoeman Rangers. Its 335th was working with the 30th Inf. Div.



FIRST OBJECTIVE :

"A *Perfect* OPERATION"

The 334th Inf. went the distinction of being the first 84th unit to seize the initiative in the Geilenkirchen sector. It jumped off at 0700 Nov. 18 to take Prummern. Subsequent thunderous action demonstrated the division's offensive spirit.

When their tank support bogged down in mud, 334th doughs, guns blazing under a pale November sun, poured through two gaps in an enemy mine field near Breil, knocked out pillboxes to their right, cut the road between Geilenkirchen and Immendorf, then charged into Prummern.

These were men who had seen New York and London sights just a few short weeks before. A dazed German officer said : " We knew we were facing new troops and expected it to be easy, but these men fight better than any troops I saw in Africa, Russia and France. "

By evening, the 334th had moved through Prummern and occupied high ground before Geilenkirchen. Germans scratched 450 more names from their company rosters. Three hundred and thirty German fighting men huddled behind barbed wire in the 334th PW cage.

Fighting raged through the night in heavily-defended Prummern. From this knock-down, drag-out fight emerged the 84th's first heroes of World War II.

Lt. Carl C. Palm, Brooklyn policeman, cut off from the rest of his anti-tank platoon, climbed into a loft and spent the night firing into a German CP across the street.



T/Sgt. Ellsworth Dover, Miami, Okla., and his platoon laid a mine field from the front porch of the enemy CP to another house across the street. During the night a Tiger tank plunged into the mines and was wrecked.

Typifying the spirit of the 84th, this was just the beginning. Nov. 19, another 84th combat team, the 333rd Inf., launched an attack on Geilenkirchen. Germans, as expected, laid down a gauntlet of fire from pillboxes, machine guns, mortars and 88s, but Co. B smashed ahead to fight its way into the center of town within two hours. Hardly pausing, troops swept on toward Suggesterath.

Co. A met stiff opposition, engaged in bitter house-to-house fighting. Germans hurled 88s point blank. Snipers lurked in cellars, church steeples, on roofs. That night, 1st Bn. took Suggesterath and dug in on high ground to the north, while 2nd Bn. cleared Geilenkirchen.

In a few hours, Railsplitters had broken the Geilenkirchen salient and, in crushing the resistance, had taken the second

largest German town to fall to the Allies up to that time.

Wes Gallagher, veteran Associated Press war correspondent, wrote of the operation: "It was revealed today that the 'Railsplitting' 84th Division was the American unit which teamed with the British to capture the German stronghold of Geilenkirchen in a "perfect operation."

While infantry did the heavy work, four division engineers claimed credit for being the first Railsplitters in Geilenkirchen. They had followed the infantry advance, had stopped to clear the road of mines. Resuming the march, these engineers took the wrong road and found themselves in the middle of the blazing town. To make certain no one contested their claim, they brought back 47 prisoners as proof.

In the next few days, Railsplitters pushed on from Prummern and Suggesterath to consolidate newly-won positions. Resistance came chiefly from topflight Panzer Grenadier and SS troops. Gen. Bolling said: "The crack Panzer Grenadier and SS troops looked no different than those that were met in the initial stages of the campaign."

RAILSPLITTERS were detached from the Second British Army Nov. 23 and joined Ninth Army, XIII Corps. The Ninth was an offensive army and the 84th became one of its hardest-hitting spearheads.



Back to the division came its still-fresh 335th Inf., operating during the early phases of the 84th drive with the 30th Inf. Div., and later the 2nd Armd. Div.

Before dawn Nov. 29, the 335th attacked Lindern, part of the Siegfried's formidable Wurm-Beeck-Leiffarth-Lindern triangle. Enemy infantry resistance, backed by pillboxes and tanks, was fanatic.

Lt. Creswell Garlington, Jr., Rollo, Mo., his platoon held up by machine gun fire, crawled 300 yards to knock out two guns with hand grenades. Lt. (then Pfc) Michael Citrak, Endicott, N.Y., silenced two others.

Sgt. (then Pvt.) Robert L. Nordli, Milford, Ia., saw six Germans running from a pillbox. One shell from his bazooka dropped them.

Two Co. K platoons, with Lt. Garlington's unit, Co. I., fought into Lindern at daybreak. They held the town against fire from all sides until help arrived.

Beeck was easier. Railsplitter artillery poured such a heavy barrage into the village that harassed Germans withdrew that afternoon. Two 333rd Inf. companies and two troops of the 113th Cav. Group, attached to the division, entered the town that night.

Elements of the 333rd and 334th ripped through the staggering Germans, taking high ground west of Lindern and north of Beeck. Furious fighting raged for Lindern



during the night. Four or five Germans slipped back into the town and wounded a battalion commander, but sharp-eyed Railsplitter riflemen cut them down. By nightfall, Jan. 30, there was no question of who controlled Lindern and Beeck. The division was there in force and had no intention of leaving.

Germans had little time to catch their breath. December was only two days old when doughs went after Leiffarth which fell before a perfect infantry-artillery operation.

The 909th FA rocked Leiffarth with a vicious barrage at 1200. Simultaneously, a smoke screen blocked the enemy's view of the town and high ground to the south. Five minutes later, when the artillery concentration shifted to Wurm, Mullendorf, Flabstrass and Hornsdorf, Cos. A and B, 334th, jumped off. Never more than 50 yards behind the artillery — "so close they looked as if they were walking midst the bursting shells" — 84th Joes moved

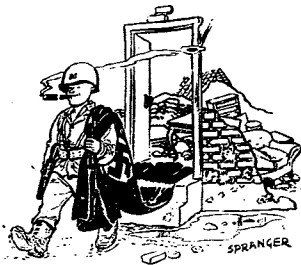
into Leiffarth, dug in north of the town. The operation required only half an hour.

Germans struck back the next morning with tanks and infantry. Div. Arty. and bazookas quickly blotted out the attack. Railsplitters broke up a second counter-thrust before it could get started.

In preparation for future operations, the 84th spent the next few days in special training for assault on pillboxes. Suddenly, Krauts counter-attacked in the Leiffarth area, their most ambitious assault against the 84th up to that time.

Two Wehrmacht battalions smacked Railsplitter lines, one against the 335th's 2nd Bn., the other against the 334th's 1st Bn. Within four hours, doughs had blunted the thrust. One group of 200 enemy was boxed up. There were two choices — retreat through mine fields or surrender. A German battalion commander was killed, his successor captured. This thrust cost the enemy 80 dead, 200 wounded, 73 prisoners.

Railsplitters had unfinished business — taking Wurm and Mullendorf. First Bn., 334th, cleaned up Wurm in less than two hours Dec. 18. German prisoners complained of the paralyzing artillery barrage preceding the infantry attack. While 1st Bn. was taking Wurm, Maj. (then Capt.) James V. Johnston, Port-



land, Ore., led 2nd Bn. against Mullendorf. Within 15 minutes, the major, a six-shooter swinging from his hip, strolled from Nazi headquarters, smoking a cigar and carrying a Nazi party flag.

So ended the original mission of the 84th which had begun with the capture of Prummern a month before. Railsplitters, taking stock, counted 1549 prisoners, 112 pillboxes knocked out.

TROUBLE-SHOOTERS

Race TO RESCUE

WHILE the division prepared further assaults against the West Wall, Nazis unleashed a do-or-die counter-offensive through the Ardennes in Belgium. Von Rundstedt opened his drive Dec. 16 against a thinly-held line in the First Army sector. Three days later, strong enemy forces were penetrating between Houffalize and Bastogne and driving south of Marche toward the Meuse River.

Same day, the 84th was ordered to prepare for a move in the general direction of the German threat. Railsplitters resumed their trouble-shooting role. Preceded by Gen. Bolling and a small staff, the crack 334th Inf. led the division into Belgium, arriving at Marche early Dec. 21. Remaining division elements roared into town later that day. Although the weather was bad, the entire movement was made without the loss of a vehicle.

Railsplitters immediately were faced with problems they had never known in Germany. Information about the enemy was lacking. Reports circulated that German forces in American uniforms and vehicles had spearheaded the

drive, that disguised German paratroopers had dropped in rear areas, that Germans were seizing American supply dumps.

The division did know that Germans had overrun an entire American division and had pushed others back as much as 40 miles. The Luftwaffe was out in greater strength than at any time since D-Day.

As in Germany, the Railsplitter unit which met the enemy onslaught was the 334rd Inf. At Hotton, Co. F fought off an attack of seven Mark V tanks, a half-track and 20 infantrymen. Four tanks were destroyed. Co. E repulsed a sharp assault at Hampteau.

In the overall picture, these were mere skirmishes. Establishment of a line was the big job and doughs were ordered to hold rampaging Germans south of the Hotton-Marche road at all cost.

This was no simple job of digging foxholes and waiting. Railsplitters lacked flank support; they were an island of resistance to the all-engulfing tidal wave of German Panzers.

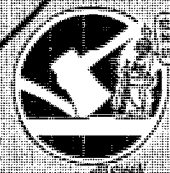
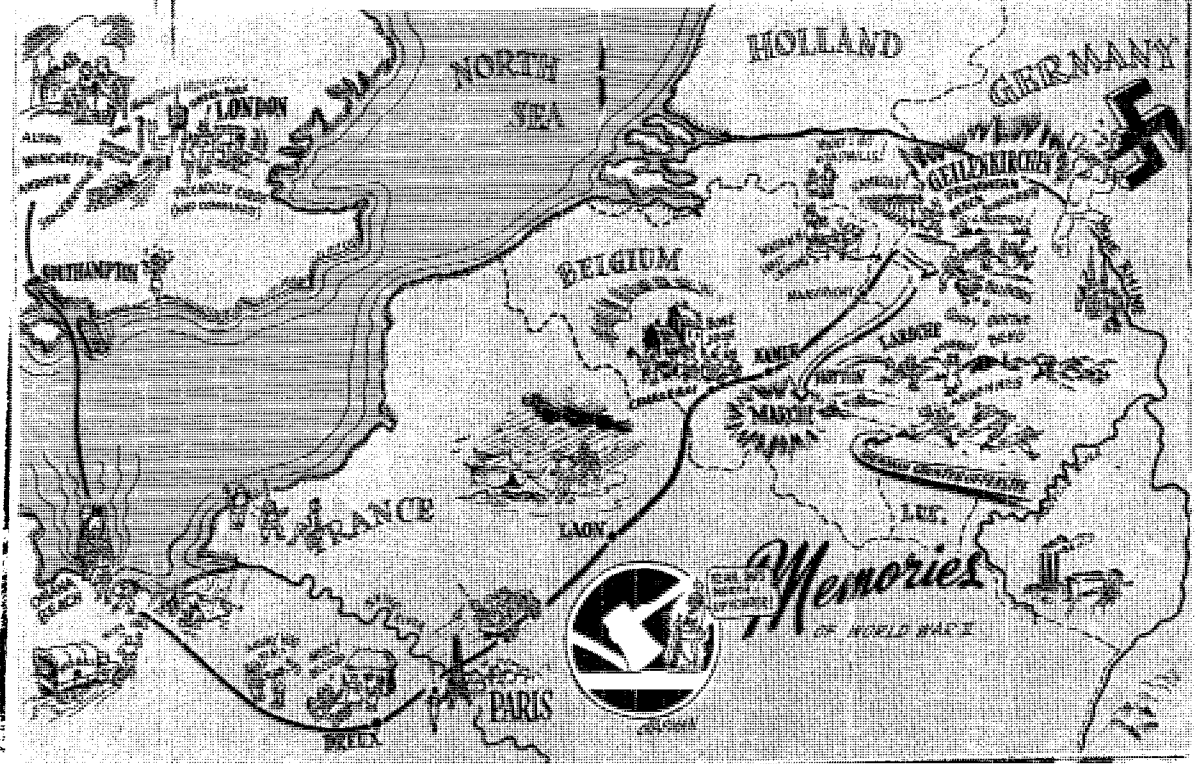
Hatchet Men calmly took positions along a 12-mile front extending from Menil to Hampteau and on to Melreux. Foxholes were spaced every 150 yards.

The greatest danger was a wide flanking movement that would cut the division off from the rear rather than a direct assault on its lines. To prevent this, Gen. Bolling sent out two battalions as a counter recon screen.

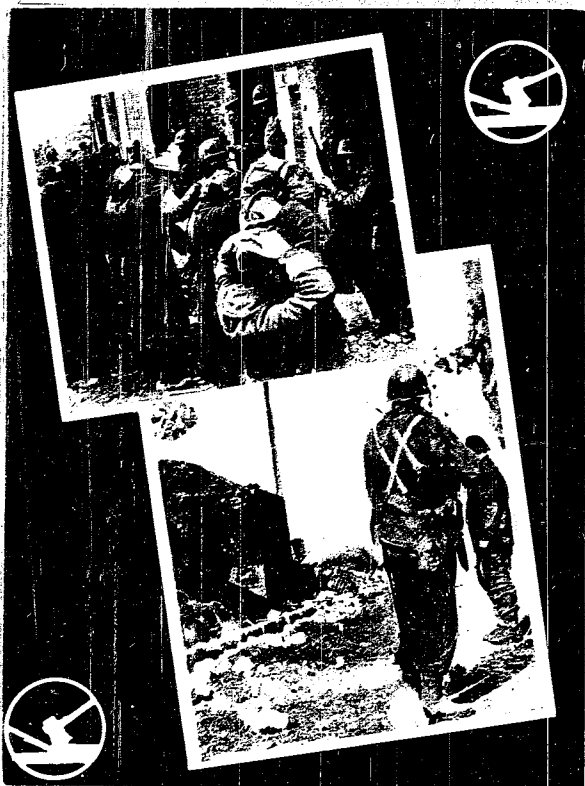
Third Bn., 335th, was to hold Rochefort and set up road blocks at Tellin, Grupont, Massigny and Harsin. First Bn., 334rd, shifted to Wanlin, Beauraing and Wellin.

Companies and platoons often operated independently during this confused situation. Co. L, 335th, was cut off between Marloie and Rochefort. Co. K, led by Lt. Leonard R. Carpenter, Fall River, Mass., fought its way





Memories
OF WORLD WAR II



out of a trap near Grupont, then joined Co. I in the defense of Rochefort which was under attack by enemy tanks and infantry. Fighting raged for 18 hours, with the Germans losing six to eight tanks. Later, hard-charging Railsplitters smashed into Marloie and relieved Co. L, which had lost all its officers when Germans scored direct hits on the CP.

First Bn., 333rd, the other unit of the recon screen, skirmished almost continually with the enemy. Three times, the battalion knifed its way out of a trap.

Lt. August Hundt, Madison, Wis., showed Germans how Railsplitters can fight even against unfavorable odds. Ambushed while leading a convoy near Wanlin, he drove his jeep full speed ahead, ran down a German, was fired on at point blank range, jumped from his jeep when an anti-tank shell hit it and then hiked back to his lines.

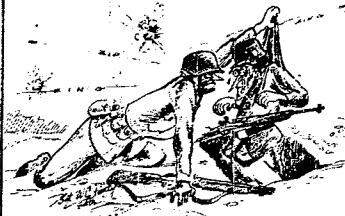
Germans weren't stopping the 84th. Enemy propaganda tabbed Railsplitters as the "Terror Division." That was sufficient praise.

It was bitter cold in the Ardennes. Hills and woods were covered with ice and snow. The mercury dropped to zero. Ground was frozen so hard it took five hours to dig a foxhole three feet deep. GIs suffered, but fought savagely.

Surrounded by an entire German company, five members of Co. G, 334th, knocked out a machine gun, killed or wounded 45 Krauts before returning to their lines.

Lone survivor of his ambushed patrol, Sgt. John E. Bell, Jetersville, Va., killed three attackers, then returned to his company through blinding snow.

Ordered to capture several Germans for questioning, T/Sgt. Harold L. Howdieshell, Dayton, Ohio, crawled forward under heavy machine gun fire. He snatched one Nazi from a foxhole by the nape of his neck, ordered a second out at the point of his sub-machine gun.



When flaming guns failed, railsplitters employed other means. Pfc M. L. Johnson, Asco, Tex., a medic, was captured on his way to a battalion aid station. Before night, he had talked his captor into becoming his prisoner.

The 84th fought minor skirmishes for three days before its flanks were filled in by two armored divisions. In the process, some of the Wehrmacht's best Panzer outfits were badly mauled.

WHEN the big attack came, Germans hit the center of the 84th's lines. Third Bn., 334th, spread out before the Verdenne-Marenne-Bourdon triangle, was in a hot spot. By taking Bourdon, Germans would cut the Hotton-Marche road, whose defense was the division's primary mission.

Because of widely spaced foxholes, Krauts had infiltrated two reconnaissance companies behind Co. I into woods half a mile west of Verdenne, Dec. 23. Supported by Co. A, 771st Tank Bn., doughs attacked the next afternoon.

Railsplitters smashed back as Germans deployed for an attack against Verdenne. While tanks spewed flame, yelling troopers closed in with machine guns and rifles. Panic-stricken Germans attempted to withdraw. The effort came too late. Sixty-seven prisoners were taken.

Simultaneously, another German force drove on Verdenne in a frontal assault, pushing ahead to a chateau 200 yards north of the village. Immediately, Germans began reinforcing their troops, extending the salient further north.

At 0100 Christmas Day, 1944, Co. K, 334th and Co. L, 333rd, pushed back into Verdenne to catch surprised Germans in holiday celebration. GIs, who spent the day cleaning out Verdenne and the shell-riddled chateau, collected 305 prisoners. Smoking hulks of six tanks and other German vehicles cluttered snowy fields near the village.

Recapture of Verdenne made a pocket of the salient to the north. This pocket was approximately 800 yards long and 300 yards wide in woods midway between Verdenne and Bourdon. Huge cedar trees concealed at least two companies of infantry and five tanks.

Twice before dawn Dec. 26, Railsplitters clashed with Germans in the pocket. First, Cos. A and B, 333rd, launched an attack which was repulsed by heavy tank fire. Later, behind an artillery barrage, Germans struck back with infantry and tanks. Div. Arty. broke up the attack.

Shortly after daylight, Krauts tried to break out and succeeded in pushing 100 yards into the division's over-extended lines before being repulsed. Four tanks broke through to join the five already trapped during the battle.





The see-saw scrap continued all day. Elements of the 334th, along with Co. D, 87th Chem. Bn., smacked the pocket in an attack backed by Div. Arty. Four German tanks were destroyed.

Before midnight, desperate Krauts pushed tanks and infantry out again, but alert Rallsplitters blasted away with everything they had. Three more Nazi tanks were wrecked. Germans withdrew to the woods to lick their wounds.

Meanwhile, another Rallsplitter force handed the Wehrmacht a resounding blow when Germans attempted to break through at another point further north, between Marenne and Hamptean.

Eight tanks, ten half-tracks, several motorcycles, jeeps

and 80 infantrymen struck the positions held by Co. I and a machine gun section of Co. M, 333rd. Hitting a string of mines planted across the road, the lead tank exploded, careening into a ditch. Bazooka teams went to work on the other tanks.

Pfc Clarence E. Love, Cherry Valley, Ark., and Pfc Alex V. Tiler, Paris, Tenn., set a second tank afire, while Pfc Carl R. Tisdale, Parteskala, Ohio, and Pfc Robert C. Holloway, Englewood, Calif., blew tracks off a third. Sgt. James M. Scanlan, Danville, Ky., a one-man team, scored a hit on the fourth, then saw it strike a mine and explode.

The second wave of tanks ran through Co. I's positions. One hit another mine. Sgt. Jesse Tenpenny, Morrisson, Tenn., and Pvt. Stephen Theil, Beaver, Pa., bagged a sixth with their bazooka. Two German half-tracks tried to bull their way through, but Sgt. Scanlan sent one into a mine field and set the other afire with his sizzling bazooka. Hand grenades killed two motorcyclists who had opened fire on him.

In half an hour, the fight was over. Germans fled to a nearby hill. Artillery was called and the big guns splattered them and their equipment all over the hillside. Seventeen wrecked vehicles later were counted.

What was left of



the pocket at Verdennes produced still another battle. Railsplitter artillery blunted still another attack. When the shooting ceased, a patrol shoved forward, scooped up 15 prisoners and returned with the report that the pocket no longer existed.

"THESE GIs CAN DO
Anything"

GERMANS had repeatedly attacked the Railsplitters — Hatchet Men as they chose to call them — and had been set back on their heels, suffering heavy losses. In the 334th's 3rd Bn. sector alone, the enemy had lost 16 tanks, eight half-tracks, an armored recon car, three motorcycles.

Said Maj. Gen. J. Lawton Collins, VII Corps Commander, to Gen. Bolling: "The Army and the Corps Commanders have commended the division for its fine work since its arrival here. We nearly have them beaten. We must keep holding them."

The crushing battles near Verdennes and Menil had been enough for the Germans. As early as Dec. 27, prisoners admitted that the 116th Panzer Div., which had been one of the units facing Railsplitters, no longer existed as a fighting force. Germans again were on the defensive.

A decorated veteran of World War I, Gen. Bolling showed admiration for American doughs when he said: "I'm forever amazed at what these GIs can do — anything!"



Railsplitters had been fighting with little rest for 45 days in raw weather. Harold Denny, veteran observer for the *New York Times*, wrote that conditions in the Ardennes were the worst in which American troops ever had fought.

WHEN the command had decided to push back the Germans without delay, the 84th was called for a leading role. Gen. Bolling, completely confident of his troops' ability, pronounced the division fit for any mission.

Railsplitters turned over their positions south of Marche to British troops Jan. 2 before rushing to the upper Ardennes to jump off in a new attack. The 84th now was teamed up with the 2nd Armd. Div.

Spurred by fanatical officers, Krauts resisted strongly. They had the advantage of dug-in positions, mine fields, road blocks. German artillery and mortar fire were heavy.



Weather was against the doughs. Although Railsplitters primarily functioned as support for tanks they usually led each assault. Several times doughs found it necessary to attack unsupported by armor, which was

contrary to orders. The reason was that heavy tanks couldn't move forward on slippery roads. Driving snow almost blinded charging riflemen. Correspondents covering the campaign gave the weather and German resistance equal space.

Railsplitters plunged through deep snow to hit the Germans just as hard as they had at Geilenkirchen and Menil. Within three days, the enemy suffered such heavy losses that he grudgingly began a withdrawal.

Second Bn., 333rd, overran Marcouray. Bedraggled, cold German prisoners were stunned. "We were told to expect armored attacks and didn't know what to do when infantry attacked," they told interrogators.

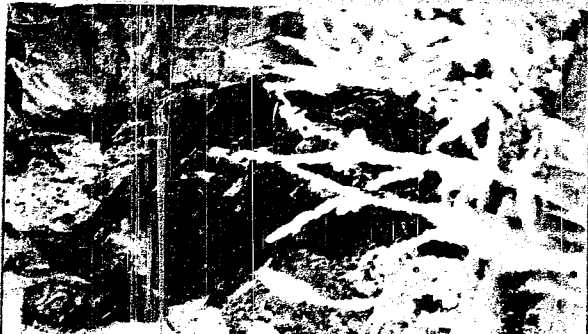
If Germans resorted to new warfare tricks to meet difficult situations, Railsplitters proved they weren't born yesterday. Twice repulsed in attacks on a small village, 1st Bn., 335th, under Maj. William C. Stone, Brownwood, Ga., pulled one for the books. The major sent a rush order to QM for enough white woolen underwear to outfit the whole battalion. Doughs pulled long johns over their



normal battle dress, strapped on pants around an open field and got within 100 yards of the village before being hit. Eight German tanks pulled out, followed by the infantry, which absorbed a solid barrage.

First Bn., 334th, took Clais Jan. 8. While the 334th bore down on the important town of Luterey, the Germans fought viciously, groups of eight to ten tanks attacking north of the town. By nightfall next day heavy losses forced them to withdraw. Troops of the 334th marched into the shattered town the next morning.

While SS troops were taking a terrific beating, by now Railsplitters were busy and destroyed the 2nd SS Panzer Div. Germans rushed with the 2nd SS Panzer Div. but it fired no better. The 1st rolled forward. Parts of the 334th found Luterey a day after the 334th had taken it, but they were attached to the division



hardly bothered to occupy it next day when they moved through.

Germans, who envisioned Christmas in Paris when they launched their December counter-offensive, now ran like beaten dogs. Railsplitters gave them little time to reflect on their misery.

Swift-advancing doughs grabbed Berismenil; cavalry seized Barzee and Mabase. Next, Railsplitters gobbled up Nadrin, Filly, Petite Mormont, Grande Mormont, Ollemont.

Maj. Roland L. Kolb, Fond du Lac, Wis., CO of 1st Bn. 334th, took a personal hand in disrupting German organization. Leading a five-man patrol into the woods behind enemy positions near Nadrin, he stuck a pistol into a tall man walking in the forest. His prisoner commanded the battalion facing him. The Nazi was astounded by the speedy, silent approach.

Houffalize, where Germans were expected to make a stand, was the next big objective in the drive against the Bulge. But soundly whipped Nazis hardly paused in their

retreat. A 333rd patrol under Lt. Jack Genczer, Chicago, entered the town Jan. 16.

Earlier that day, a patrol under Lt. Blankenship, established contact with Third Army south of Laroche to close the gap. The 84th was commended by VII Corps for being the first division to gain its objective.

Railsplitters weren't finished despite two months of continuous battle. Cold rains concealed three key villages—Gosvy, Beho and Gurthe. In its last Belgian operation, the division was assigned the mission of taking, holding these points midway between Houffalize and St. Vith.

Second Bn., 335th, jumped off Jan. 22 with its sights set on Gosvy. Withdrawing after stubborn resistance, Germans left a road block in front of the town. This obstacle overcome, Co. G entered the objective only four hours after the attack was launched.

Meanwhile, elements of the 335th assaulted Beho, a communications center. Against heavy opposition, they swept into the town next day.

The 84th's Belgium mission was a closed chapter.



A Reputation IN RECORD TIME

IN late March, 1945, Railsplitters stood on the banks of the historic Rhine, eagerly awaiting the signal that would send them across the river into the heart of Germany.

Back in November, new to combat, they had attacked the Geilenkirchen sector of the Siegfried Line, knocking out 112 pillboxes and bunkers within a month. Then they were rushed to the Ardennes in December to help stem von Rundstedt's counter-offensive and drive back the Germans. In January, they moved secretly to an assembly area in Holland. The Allies prepared for the last round against the foe.

Before they could meet the bulk of the German armies, these doughs had to cross the small but treacherous Roer River. Allied commanders planned carefully. The 84th, resting after the Ardennes battles, was picked to play a prominent role. Early in February, Railsplitters moved to positions along the river under cover of darkness. Feb. 23 was D-Day; 0330 was H-Hour.



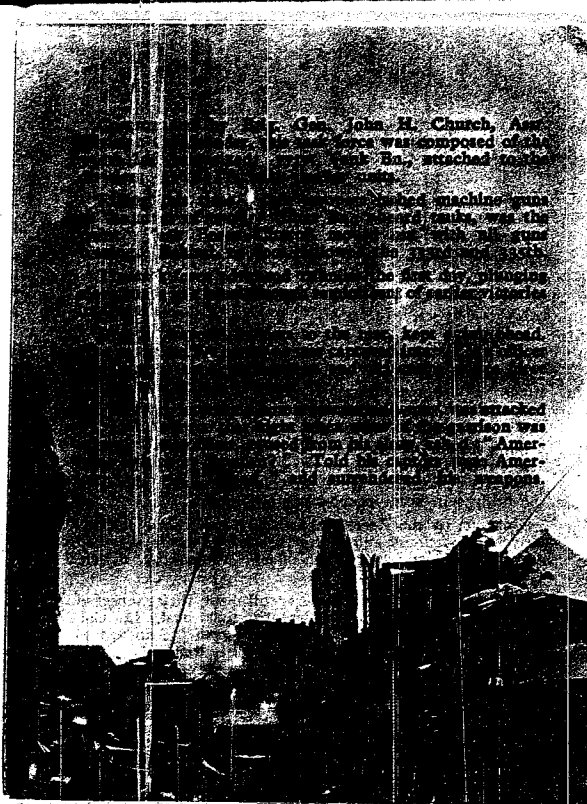
Units were caught off guard.

Soon after the attack began, engineers built rafts and crossed the river and infantry crossed in the middle of the day. Anti-aircraft batteries drove off German planes over the bridges in bombing and strafing attacks.

Once across the Roer, the division experienced particularly heavy artillery and mortar fire. The advance rolled ahead. Kesternich fell, then Bad. Mengersdorf, Melen, Geilendorf, many others.

Barre was now, Railsplitters will keep their eyes of honor. When his and his 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th, 13th, 14th, 15th, 16th, 17th, 18th, 19th, 20th, 21st, 22nd, 23rd, 24th, 25th, 26th, 27th, 28th, 29th, 30th, 31st, 32nd, 33rd, 34th, 35th, 36th, 37th, 38th, 39th, 40th, 41st, 42nd, 43rd, 44th, 45th, 46th, 47th, 48th, 49th, 50th, 51st, 52nd, 53rd, 54th, 55th, 56th, 57th, 58th, 59th, 60th, 61st, 62nd, 63rd, 64th, 65th, 66th, 67th, 68th, 69th, 70th, 71st, 72nd, 73rd, 74th, 75th, 76th, 77th, 78th, 79th, 80th, 81st, 82nd, 83rd, 84th, 85th, 86th, 87th, 88th, 89th, 90th, 91st, 92nd, 93rd, 94th, 95th, 96th, 97th, 98th, 99th, 100th.

Under siege, however, blows from direction forces, Gen. Patton's opposition weakened. Gen. Patton sent a powerful column battering into German lines Feb. 27.



Gen. John H. Church, American

force was composed of the 33rd and 35th Divs., attached to the 1st Army.

Machine guns were used in the attack, and the 33rd was the first to enter the town.

The 35th followed, and the town was captured after a hard fight.

The 33rd then moved on to the next town, and the 35th followed.

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Smoke still was spewing from Dulken factories when the 33rd delivered an ultimatum that the town surrender or be destroyed. When the terms were ignored, the division's big guns plastered the town and the infantry walked in to mop up.

Ralliplitters were in high gear now. The 33rd headed for Krefeld, large manufacturing city. Down the road raced a German staff car. Doughs opened fire. Out jumped a colonel, arms raised.

After cleaning up Krefeld, the 33rd took Moers and swept on to the Rhine. Co. E was the first division unit to reach the river bank.

Meanwhile, the 34th battled through to Homberg, fought savagely for the town, then mopped up in the dark of night. Another 84th regiment was at the Rhine.

FROM the Roer to the Rhine in ten days — an advance of nearly 50 miles. Railsplitters had accounted for more than 9000 Germans killed, wounded or captured.

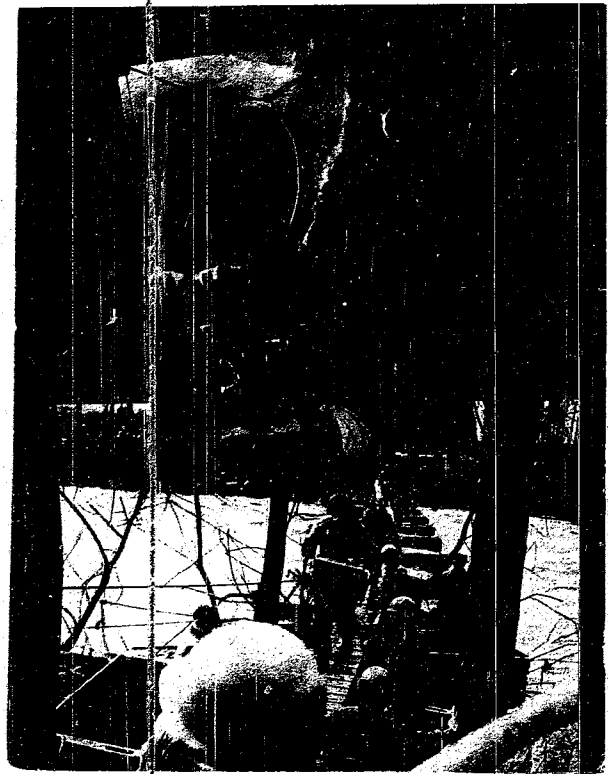
This was the pay-off to four months of fighting in the mud of Germany and the snow and ice of Belgium — bitter fighting that tore chunks out of the German army. The trouble-shooters had built an enviable reputation in record time.

Railsplitters now looked back on Gellenkirchen and Lindern where they had crushed the enemy in their first taste of combat. They looked back to Marche, where they had stood alone before the might of the once-powerful Wehrmacht and where they held fast in the face of a potential Allied disaster.

And they looked ahead — ahead to Victory and to Peace.

The TEAM









Name

Date Enlisted

Assigned to 100th

Training

Battle Actions

Citations



This is one of a series of G. I. Stories of the Ground, Air and Service Forces in the European Theater of Operations, issued by the Orientation Section, Information and Education Division, ETUSA... Major General W. A. Burrell, commanding the 100th Infantry Division, lent his cooperation : basic material was supplied by his staff

PASSED BY CENSOR FOR MAILING HOME

The story this booklet tells is not yet complete. Here you have only the first and second chapters of the story of the 100th Division; the first, our days of rigorous training in the United States, and the second, the beginning of our combat experiences. The purpose of this pamphlet will have been accomplished if it succeeds in recalling for old-timers and informing newcomers of the basic traditions we have built in the past and which we intend to carry on. My congratulations to all of you for the superior job you have already performed and my best wishes for your continued success.



W. A. Burrell

Major General, Commanding

THE STORY OF THE 100th INFANTRY DIVISION

NOV. 1, 1944: It was a cool, rainy day in a dismal sector of the Western Front near Rambervillers, France, when Cpl. Fred Pisano, Lodi, N.J., Btry. B, 925th FA Bn., jerked the lanyard of his 105mm howitzer and sent a shell screaming into the German lines.

This was a big moment. That shell was worthy of

attention because it was the first round to be fired by the 100th Infantry Division in World War II.

That shell carried a special meaning to more than just the men of the 100th. Not only did it signal the division's initial action, but with that shot Centurymen established some kind of a record for getting into combat with a speed that would have dazzled the old-timers.

Exactly 12 days before that chunk of 105mm ammunition dropped into some German lap, the convoy transporting the division had sailed peacefully into the wrecked, but still beautiful, harbor at Marseille — 400 miles away from front lines. The convoy, first to make a landing at France's largest seaport since the area had been liberated, arrived directly from the States.

The 100th, like other units, left home with equipment packed and loaded so it could not be removed immediately from the ships and put to front line use. Normally, the program called for a lay-over near the port during which cargo vessels would be unloaded, equipment issued, other equipment checked.



This procedure suddenly was changed when Sixth Army Group ordered one combat team to be ready to go into the line by Nov. 1. Seventh Army and its three infantry divisions — the 3rd, 36th and 45th — which had made the initial landings in Southern France in August and raced the Germans all the way up to Belfort from Normandy were tired. Doughs who had slogged all the way from the Riviera to the Vosges Mountains needed a rest. But the 100th Div., first reinforcement to appear for Army, was on the continent and it was wanted badly at the front.

It was a tough order to fill. Maj. Gen. Withers A. Burress, Richmond, Va., who had commanded the Century Division ever since its activation, had to take quick steps to get his own green troops equipped and ready to move. Large quantities of material had yet to arrive in the harbor; more was waiting to be unloaded from ships already at anchor.

THE rush job was accomplished by Oct. 29, and the first combat team — the 399th Inf., 925th FA, attached engineer and medical units, plus the forward echelon of division headquarters — pulled out of Marseille for the three-day motor movement to the Seventh Army front.

With overnight bivouacs near Valence and Dijon, the 399th Combat Team reached the front Oct. 31, just 11 days after debarking at Marseille. The 399th went into line, relieving the 179th Inf., 45th Div., veterans of Sicily, Italy, Anzio and Southern France.

It had been a fast trip — as fast a transition as any outfit ever made from boat to combat, but the 100th took it in

stride. Part of the division still was in Marseille when the 399th went into the line near St. Remy Nov. 1, but on successive convoys the remainder of the outfit arrived in the north. By 0600, Nov. 9, the relief of the 45th was complete. The 100th assumed full control of its portion of the VI Corps front.

If the move from the States to the front lines was at lightning speed, then the division has had little chance to catch its breath since. The Century never once was out of contact with the enemy until late March, 1945. Its string of consecutive days in combat rose to 146, a long stretch for any outfit. No other new division in the American Army can boast of such a stretch on its first trip into combat.

The Century Division may have been green when it first hit the cold, muddy, densely wooded heights of the Vosges Mountains, but it long since has become a veteran. Less than a week after the division took over its own sector, the 100th became the first American unit to crack the

German winter defensive line in the area near Raon-l'Etape. In two weeks, the Century had contributed to the complete breaching of the "impregnable" Vosges Mountains. Veterans were made overnight in that fighting.

For individual heroism in this early battle, two Centurymen later were awarded the Distinguished Service Cross. Lt. Paul F. Loes, Cascade, Iowa, received the deco-



ration for silencing a concealed machine gun under concentrated artillery and mortar shelling near St. Remy, Nov. 4. Crawling within 10 yards of the enemy position, the 399th Inf. officer single-handedly destroyed the entire gun crew.

Cpl. Robert L. Ethridge, Rome, Ga., 375th FA, was awarded the DSC posthumously for his extraordinary heroism in holding off an enemy ambush at a road block near Thiaville, Nov. 8. Enroute to a new gun position, the truck carrying Ethridge's crew was met by automatic fire which cut off escape to the rear. His handling of the truck-mounted machine gun temporarily stopped hostile fire and enabled his buddies to escape. Ethridge, however, was fatally injured.

After the entire division had taken up its positions just east of Rambervillers, on a line running approximately parallel to the Meurthe River, the 397th and 399th Combat Teams were moved out of the line. Crossing the Meurthe at Baccarat, the northern tip of the sector, they took up new positions southeast of the city on the enemy-held side of the river. The 398th remained on the original front and, with the 100th Recon Troop, held the entire line.

WITH the stage set, the 100th, after only three days of combat experience, jumped off Nov. 12 as part of Seventh Army's gigantic winter offensive.

The VI Corps plan called for the 397th and 399th to clear the northern side of the Meurthe River where the entire Corps had been stopped cold up to that point.

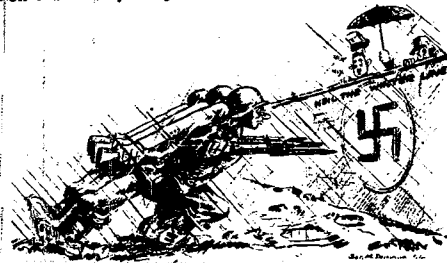
Moving abreast, the two regiments drove along the river toward Raon-l'Etape, key supply and communications

center. The 397th occupied Bertrichamps the first day, then blasted through the dense woods, mud and rain to capture Clairrupt two days later.

Both teams struck a stone wall when they smacked the German winter defensive line in the Vosges between Neufmaisons and Raon-l'Etape. Whipping past Neufmaisons, 3rd Bn., 399th, captured Hill 409-431 after a furious battle while 1st Bn. moved against Hill 462.5.

The bitter clash for the weapon-bristling wooded height that was Hill 462.5 typified the battle for Raon-l'Etape and wrote one of the first important pages in the division's combat story. Coming only two weeks after the 399th lunged into combat, 1st Bn., commanded by Lt. Col. Elery Zehner, Washington, D.C., stepped off on a line covering a 1000 yard front in an advance across the clearing to the ominously silent hill.

Even without opposition, the ascent up this rocky elevation would have been difficult for Centurymen, burdened with weapons and ammunition. As it was, they met deeply-trenched automatic weapon emplacements before getting halfway up. Taking the steepest grade on the assumption that enemy weapons would be directed to the more



gradual incline, 399th doughs crawled through brush and overhead fire toward the top.

By eliminating or temporarily silencing machine gun nests from the rear with hand grenades, Co. A reached the summit first, fanning out to fight over three knolls.

Cos. B. and C followed and joined in the battle to take and hold these commanding positions. On the center knoll, an enemy counter-attack developed from below but heavy fire power maintained the hard-won foothold. Then began the strength-taxing job of evacuating wounded and bringing up ammunition. By nightfall, 1st Bn. was perched atop the peak. Resistance was broken.

With the occupation of that high ground, which was behind the enemy defensive line and allowed observation and fields of fire over the entire area, Germans were forced to withdraw. The 100th celebrated the second anniversary of its activation Nov. 15 by surging forward again. The way now was open for VI Corps to cross the Meurthe and launch its drive toward the Alsatian Plain.

THIS first major action of the 100th was marked by many acts of the finest soldiering. Outstanding was that of Lt. (then T/Sgt.) Rudolph Steinman, 399th. The 46-year-old Chicagoan, commissioned on the battlefield, maneuvered along to the enemy flank during a company approach march, fired his carbine into a machine gun nest, killing one Nazi, disorganizing the enemy and forcing 16 to surrender. This action paved the way for an ammunition detail to bring badly needed supplies to the main body ahead. Lt. Steinman later was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross.



During the action before Raon-l'Etape, Col. William A. Ellis, White Plains N.Y., 397th CO since activation, was killed. Lt. Col. John M. King, Baltimore, Md., 1st Bn. CO, replaced him. In January, Lt. Col. Gordon Singles, Denver, Colo., was transferred to the division and took over command of the regiment.

The battle became a race as the 100th pushed forward in full-scale pursuit of retreating Germans. Moyenmoutier, Senones, Belval and St. Blaise were added to the fast growing list of cities captured. Gains from 10 to 12 kilometers a day were made as the 397th spearheaded the division's advance in the Rabodeau River valley.

At St. Blaise, Centurymen made a junction with the 3rd Inf. Div. Nov. 23, then both began a race up the Bruche River valley. As the 397th took the lead in the division's chase, Salm, Abet, Frenconrupt, Bacquenoux, Wachenbach, Lutzelhause, Netznebach, Schirmeck, Urmatt, Niederhaslach and Oberhaslach were buttoned up in quick order. Schirmeck, key town where the Plaine and Bruche River valleys join, commanded the route of approach for a possible German counter-attack. The threat was eliminated when the 399th swarmed into the town.

While the main effort was being made up the Bruche River valley, 1st Bn., 398th, and 117th Recon Sqdn. swept up the Plaine River valley from Raon-l'Etape to clear all enemy resistance, capturing Celles, Bionville, Allarmont, Vexaincourt, Luvigny and Raon-sur-Plaine.

Toward THE MAGINOT LINE

WITH the Vosges campaign over by Nov. 26 except for mopping up, and with American forces ready to spill out onto the Alsatian Plain, the 100th was ordered north to the toughest part of the XV Corps sector.

In recognition of his leadership in the division's drive through the Vosges, Gen. Burress was awarded the Bronze Star by Maj. Gen. Edward H. Brooks, VI Corps commander. Indicative of the action, the commendation stated that "Gen. Burress' vigorous leadership and skillful execution of the 100th Division drive through terrain previously regarded as virtually impregnable reflect great credit upon himself and the military service."

Praise for the division's effort as a whole came in a letter from Gen. Brooks:

The 100th Infantry Division made a marked contribution to the success of the VI Corps attack, first, by the capture of Raon-l'Etape, an operation which breached the hinge of the German defensive position and at the same time drew forces from the center where the main attack was to be made; and second, by the prompt capture of Schirmeck, which blocked the enemy on the left and permitted the main attack to push through without delay. Your fine division has written a bright page in the military history of our armed forces.

The Century arrived at the XV Corps area near Saarbourg Nov. 27, the 397th Combat Team moving directly

to front lines — attached to the 45th Inf. Div. — while remaining troops stayed in Corps reserve for several days.

The entire division hit the line again Dec. 3 with one of the toughest missions any division had been assigned. Relieving the 44th Inf. Div. of part of its sector, the 100th was to drive northeast and breach the Maginot Line near Bitche, heart of the entire fortifications system.

With the 398th jumping off towards Puberg and Wingen, the division launched its new offensive. The regiment's 2nd Bn. wheeled into Puberg that day, but 1st Bn. ran into stiff opposition at strongly-held Wingen.

Artillery softened up Wingen with heavy shelling while the 398th occupied Rosteig against moderate opposition. The regiment finally smashed into Wingen Dec. 5, occupying both the town and the surrounding high ground. The 397th Inf. and 100th Recon Troop, both attached to the 45th Div., were ordered to fight to the division sector. On the way back, they captured Rothbach, Reipertswiller Lichtenberg and Wimmeneau.

OCCUPYING Wingen, 3rd Bn., 399th, passed through the 398th and carried the division's advance to the north astride the Wingen-Lemberg road. Meeting no enemy resistance, the advance roared forward. Next day, by 0930 Goetzenbruck and Sarreinsberg had been taken.

The battalion bumped into a stone wall of resistance when it reached Lemberg. Although the town was encircled by nightfall, the beginning of a bitter four-day struggle was underway.

Artillery pounded Lemberg as 399th's three battalions

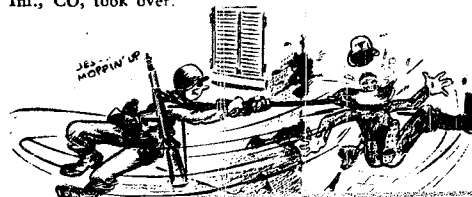
pushed ahead to take high ground surrounding the town. Nazis fought doggedly under a "fight-to-the-last-man" order. When 2nd Bn. cut the Lemberg-Bitche road and railroad Dec. 8, 1st Bn. ripped into the town. After house-to-house fighting during the night and early morning, the battalion completed occupation and mopping up of Lemberg.

Meanwhile, the 398th was taking Soucht and Meisenthal as 397th overran Melch and Wildenguth near Wimmeneau. The 397th ran into another of the "last-man" bastions, when it reached Mouterhouse.

Against bitter opposition, the regiment surrounded the town Dec. 6, blasting it with artillery. Next day, in the face of heavy mortar, automatic weapons, and small arms fire, 1st and 2nd Bns. entered the town and spent the next two days cleaning out lingering enemy resistance.

After Lemberg's fall, 398th passed through the 399th and moved northward toward Bitche and the Maginot Line to carry the brunt of the division attack. The 397th continued to drive east abreast of the 398th.

Col. Paul G. Daly, Southport, Conn., who took command of the 398th when Col. Nelson I. Fooks, Preston, Md., was transferred, was wounded, and Lt. Col. Robert M. Williams, Greenville, Tex., former 3rd Bn., 399th Inf., CO, took over.



Blasting A PATH TO BITCHE

THE famous town of Bitche, into which the 100th was to drive, nestled in a valley formed by a number of high hills. A natural strongpoint, the hills housed the four strongest forts on the entire Maginot Line—Simserhoff, Schiesseck, Otterbiel, and Grande Hohekirkel. With the exception of Simserhoff, the forts were directly in the path of the 100th. In addition, several smaller one-pillbox forts, including Freudenberg, were scattered in the "Ensemble de Bitche," filling gaps between the larger installations. This system of fortifications never before had surrendered. In 1940, the French had held out here against Germans until the armistice was signed.

When 2nd Bn., 398th Inf., occupied Reysersviller Dec. 13, the last obstacle before the Maginot Line was removed. The plan called for the 398th to reduce Fort Schiesseck, then move around to the hills north of Bitche. With such protection, the 399th was to move into the town while the 397th, remaining on the division's right flank, would be poised to occupy Camp de Bitche, a military camp to the east.

Schiesseck, consisting of 11 separate casemates connected by underground tunnels, was on the left flank of the 100th's sector of advance. On a hillside overlooking the basin almost devoid of woods, the fort commanded a wide field of fire over every avenue of approach. In addition, one casemate, Fort Freudenberg, was to its south, directly

in the path of 398th doughs trying to approach the larger fortress.

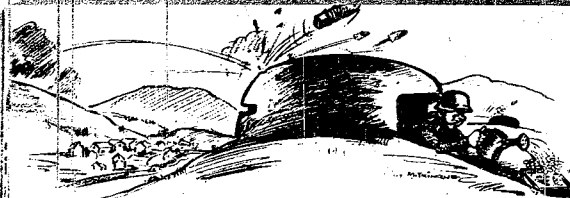
Because divisions in other sectors had been meeting only token resistance, or none at all, Gen. Burrell decided to drive the 398th into Freudenberg and Schiesseck as soon as the division reached the line. Should the line be undefended here, as it had been in other sectors, he did not want to delay advance with unnecessary preliminary preparations. At the same time he was cautious, knowing that the Bitche sector was a natural strongpoint. The 398th was ordered to wait for further support if it hit strong opposition.

It didn't take long for the regiment to learn that Germans were defending every inch of the Bitche area. Woods on the southern slopes of the hill ring forming the Bitche basin, which doughs had to pass to reach Schiesseck, stopped abruptly at the crest of the high ground. Leading the attack, 1st Bn., 398th, learned that a man would be pinned down by vicious fire from Freudenberg and Schies-

seck as soon as he emerged from the woods.

The 398th stood fast overnight as Division and Corps Artillery were brought up. Tactics were to pulverize the concrete casemates and either force out or kill the Germans. Least hoped





tor was to make them button up their portholes so that doughs could advance. Because of the open ground surrounding the forts, infantrymen were unable to get close enough to the emplacements to employ flame throwers and dynamite.

Shortly after dawn, the artillery of Brig. Gen. John B. Murphy, Amarillo, Tex., opened up. Throughout the day, everything from 240 mm and 8-incher to infantry 105 howitzer shells plastered German positions. Two captured German 88s were mustered into service. A direct hit eliminated Fort Freudenberg. Schiesseck was a different problem. Four-foot thick concrete cupolas with seven-inch steel doors and gun turrets, ignored the explosives. Forward artillery observers saw some 240mm and 8-inch shells ricochet from casemates and explode in air.

Fifty-four Thunderbolts went up during the shelling, dropping 27 tons of 500-pound bombs. But aerial explosives had no more effect on the fortress than ground shelling.

Biggest lesson learned that day was that artillery alone could not destroy the forts; indirect artillery fire was not forcing the enemy to abandon his guns long enough to allow infantry to move in. Three of 11 casemates at Schiesseck were of the disappearing turret type, one housing

twin-mounted 75mm guns. The remainder of the pillboxes had cupolas and portholes through which 80mm mortars, automatic weapons, and anti-tank guns could be fired. Moreover, all blocks had tubes through which hand grenades could be rolled on attackers. Although an 8-inch shell knocked out one of the disappearing turrets while it was up, the fortress still could spout tremendous fire on troops attempting to approach it on foot.

NEXT day, tactics were changed slightly; direct artillery support was brought into play. Units of the 60mm TDs and M12 155mm "Long Toms" were moved up to the hill's crest to fire at point blank range. Heavier artillery was shifted to positions just behind the hill where it could give closer support. That turned the trick. Germans had to stop firing and withdraw to underground portions of their casemates.

Their first opportunity to advance in two days, 398th's 3rd Bn. doughs, smashed at the fortress with a vengeance. Centurymen charged forward while shellfire still boomed on the forts ahead. Three hundred yards from their objective, artillery lifted. Doughs now had time to reach the blocks before enemy guns resumed firing. With the engineers, they went to work. Artillery blasted adjacent blocks to keep them buttoned up. One by one, casemates fell and as grenade-tossing doughs kept Nazis from gun ports, engineers dynamited the pillboxes, ruining them for further use.

Finally, after days of fierce combat, the last Schiesseck casemate was neutralized. The 398th took a deep breath as it consolidated its hard-won gains.

Meanwhile, the 399th had pushed its front close to

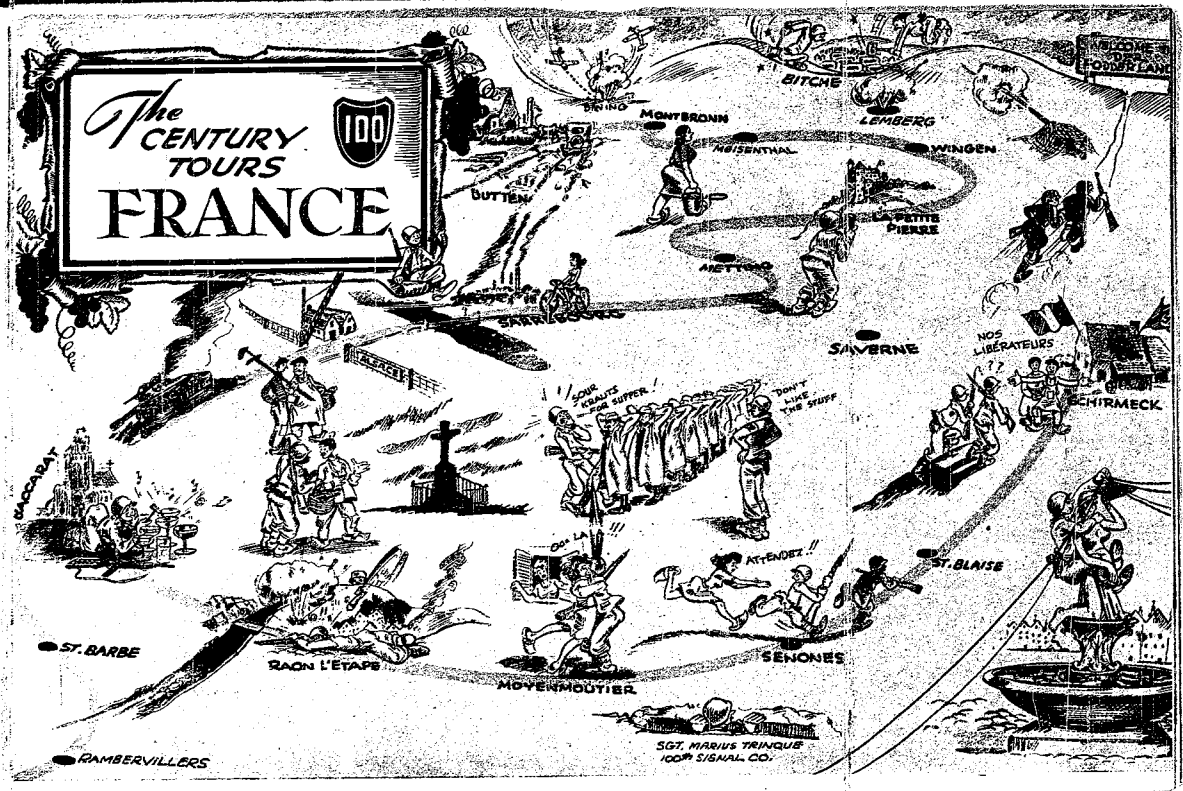
Bitche so it could move into the town after the 398th captured high ground to the north. The Powderhorn men captured College de Bitche on the outskirts, occupying it as a forward position. The 397th held a position on the hills to the east overlooking Camp de Bitche.

This was as far as the 100th drive went. Four days previous to the capture of Fort Schiesseck, Dec. 20, the large-scale German counter-attack in Belgium had started. On the left flank of Seventh Army, Third Army was ordered to move north to help repel the enemy drive. Since its front would have to be extended to cover the area vacated by the Third, Seventh Army was ordered to defensive positions.

AS a part of the fanning-out defense on Army's front, the 100th was ordered to withdraw from Fort Schiesseck, untenable for defensive operations because Germans held all adjacent forts. Set up temporarily at better defensive positions on high ground to the south, the division immediately was told to increase its sector to the left. By Dec. 22, the shift was completed and the front became quiet with both sides employing defensive tactics.

It was during the Bitche operations that Brig. Gen. Maurice L. Miller, Syracuse, N.Y., Asst. Division Commander since activation, was evacuated through medical channels. Replacing him briefly was Brig. Gen. John S. Winn, Jr., but the position was permanently filled at the turn of the year by Col. Andrew C. Tychsen, Haddonfield, N.J., 399th CO. Taking Col. Tychsen's post Dec. 27 was Lt. Col. Elery Zehner, 1st Bn. CO. On Jan. 12, Col. Edward J. Maloney, Ware, Mass., who had been transferred into the division, became 399th CO.







WELCOME AT SEMONES

ARTILLERY ON PILLBOXES NEAR BITCHE



100th HOLDS

THE COUNTER-OFFENSIVE

THE week of relaxation was abruptly ended at 0015 New Year's Day when the German counter-offensive crashed the Seventh Army front with the brunt aimed directly at the 100th Div. sector.

Third Bn., 397th, was the first to be hit. On the division's left flank near Rimling, the battalion repulsed the thrusts. The 100th's entire right flank was exposed when 117th Recon Sqdn., holding a portion of the front to the east, was hit by powerful German forces. Unable to hold against the onslaught, the squadron dropped back several thousand yards.

On the same flank, the 399th was faced with the serious problem of maintaining a line to the front and extending another to the right to prevent Krauts from infiltrating into regimental and division rear areas. By skillful maneuvering of troops and tenacious fighting on the part of its forward elements, Powderhorn men stretched their front into a L-shaped line which, although dangerously thin, held off repeated German stabs. The 148th Inf., 36th Div., was attached to the 100th Jan. 2 and put into position to help the 399th stem the tide at the Bitche salient.

Although activity on the front quieted down for several days after the Germans had established their spearhead at Bitche, the attack was not over. Germans hit 2nd Bn., 397th, at Rimling Jan. 8, and a terrific two-day struggle for the town began.



Sgt. Myers, center, working on target instructions during the heavy shelling of Rimling, N.Y. The soldier on the right is also working on target instructions. The soldier on the left is also working on target instructions. The soldiers are in a trench or bunker, and the scene is dark.

Amsterdam, N.Y. Working on Sgt. Myers' target instructions, Outlaw squeezed off amazingly accurate automatic fire during the heavy shelling, and at ranges up to 800 yards, accounted for more than 100 dead Germans.

S/Sgt. Donald L. Butcher, Zionsville, Ind., taking charge of a platoon, maintained the men in position by making periodic checks of the holes during the siege. Wiremen, chosen by Sgt. Butcher on the spot for the job, repaired frequently hit wires under the same conditions.

The third platoon appropriated a machine gun from a disabled American tank to keep its foothold. Rations arrived irregularly; water, rarely. It took one man a whole day to bring two boxes of ammunition from the town to Outlaw. Until they were ordered to retire, men held their positions.

A kingpin in the defense of Rimling itself was 2nd Bn., 397th. In the terrific siege during which the town was jointly occupied by Yanks and Germans, the heroism of T/Sgt. Charles F. Carey, Jr., Cheyenne, Wyo., always will be remembered by Co. F. Sgt. Carey directly accounted for 41 prisoners, 15 dead, one Mark IV tank, and directed a TD in destroying a Nazi flak wagon and two Tiger tanks. In addition, this one-man Army twice cleaned out one section of the town after the Nazis had come in. The bazooka-carrying sergeant fell before sniper fire but only after he had done more than his share of keeping the German attackers at bay.

WHEN the second attack came Jan. 8, the positions were impossible to defend. Germans charged from three sides and pounded continually for two days. Finally,



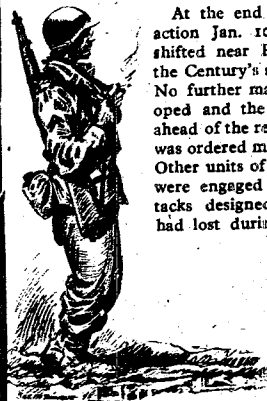
and the enemy, finding its position, withdrew just south of Hatten. A Nazi attack on the town, 30 minutes after the troops had pulled back, was greeted by an artillery barrage.

Net result of the 100th's defense during the entire counter-attack was that it was the only division on the entire Seventh Army front to hold its original ground. The enemy tried to come from two directions, Bitchel on the right and Hatten on the left—and had come with his fullest force, but the Century held its ground. When the Nazi offensive had ended, the 100th Div. sector protruded ahead of all the rest of the Army line.

For his leadership in stemming the Nazi tide, Gen. Burress was awarded an oak-leaf cluster to his Bronze Star, and the division was commended by Gen. Jacob L. Devers, Sixth Army Group Commander, who wrote:

The rugged American stubbornness of the combat elements of the 100th Infantry Division has played

a tremendous part in stemming the tide of attack by superior enemy numbers. In the area of Rimling you successfully repulsed enemy attempts to penetrate your lines; your great accomplishment forced the enemy to give up the offensive action on your front. Inflicting great losses to strong elements of three enemy divisions, you have successfully protected an important sector in the Harde Mountains. When the force of the powerful enemy drive carried him into a salient in the Bitchel area, the prompt and effective extension of your lines to block his advance was a splendid example of skillful maneuver. I heartily commend all members of this Division for their outstanding achievements.



At the end of the German offensive action Jan. 10, when the attack was shifted near Hatten and Rittershoffen, the Century's sector was relatively quiet. No further major German action developed and the 100th with its front still ahead of the remainder of the Army line was ordered merely to hold its position. Other units of Corps' and Army's front were engaged in limited objective attacks designed to regain ground they had lost during the counter-attack.

36 Hours

TO CHANGE HISTORY

ON March 15, 1945, the division launched a history-shattering operation which ended its three-month non-offensive stand. As part of the Seventh Army, Centurymen jumped off on the drive which was synchronized with Third Army action to wipe out all German resistance in the Rhineland south of the Moselle. The 100th now returned to the work it left unfinished in December — the task of taking the tough Maginot Line fort city of Bitche.

In a three-regiment operation, the move was rapid, complete. Artillery was withheld and all was quiet when the Century began its surge at 0500.

The 397th steamed ahead to capture the high ground north of the fortress and grabbed Schorbach by noon. The 399th, at the same time, attacked Reyersviller Ridge to the southwest. In this fast action, Germans on the western side of the elevation were trapped and open for other 399th elements which kicked off 25 minutes later.

The frontal assault against the once impregnable line was made by the 398th which sneaked forward to seize Freudenberg Farms, Fort Freudenberg and Fort Schiesseck on the high ground northeast of Bitche. The engineers had done their demolition work well in December and only small resistance was met at temporary Schiesseck trenches outside the blasted cement pillboxes. Mines were numerous, but most of these had been emplaced in

the winter months and were not buried. Engineers cleared heavy road blocks and filled in huge craters along the approach routes.

Next day, the 398th climaxed the "powerhouse" play by marching into the city, with 2nd Bn. leading the advance, as 1st Bn. assaulted Fort Otterbiel. Seventy-five PWs were taken in house-to-house scouring. CPs were set up in short order. First U. S. flag to fly over the city was given Capt. Thomas Garrahan, Brooklyn, N. Y., Co. E CO, by a former American resident living in Bitche.

In the closing round of the two-day fray, elements of the 398th and 399th — which had been moving east upon Camp Bitche — joined the 781st Tank Bn. to clear pillboxes and rout 70 Germans.

With the entrance of these troops in Bitche, some 200 years of military defensive history was shattered. The city first assumed strategic importance in the middle 1600's when King Louis XIV ordered the French engineer Vauban to erect a citadel on the city's central hill as part of a defense series. In the closing days of the War of 1870, this bastion held off the German assault up to the French capitulation. After the last war, France built the \$500,000,000 Maginot Line

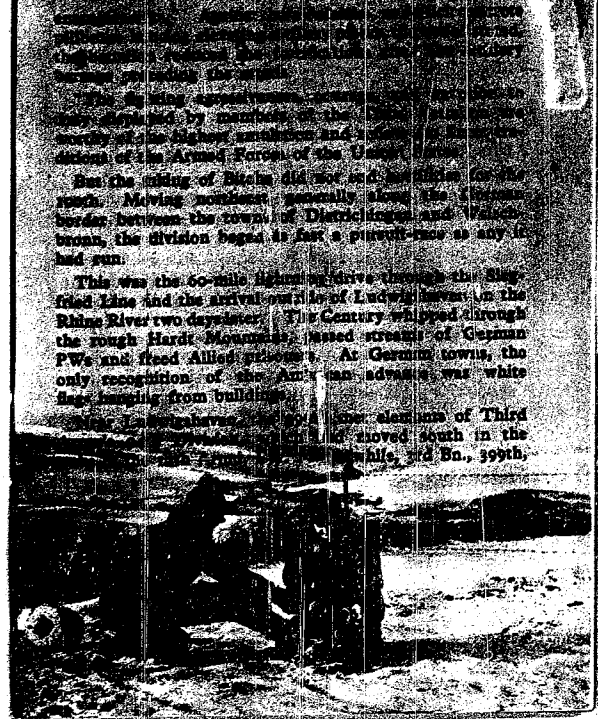


and, at Bitche, constructed the strongest layout in the southern chain of the system. This fortress held off the German invaders in 1940 until the French armistice.

THE Century Division's occupation of Bitche was the first in the bastion's history. Leading up to it was the terrific December siege and the preparation immediately before the March undertaking. For the latter operation an outstanding contribution was the XII TAC blasting of the targets in close support of troops. Artillery also played a major role in firing counter-battery rounds just after the take-off. German artillery and mortar positions on Otterbiel were silenced almost immediately after the move began.

In its brief stay at Bitche, the division received the gratitude of residents in a formal ceremony at which Gen. Burress became the first Citizen of Honor in the town's history. Following a unanimous vote of the town council, Mayor Paul Fischer presented the general with a document entitling him to the honor in "testimony of gratitude in behalf of citizens of Bitche" for the American division's freeing of the city.

Another honor befell the 100th while it was taking the city — the award of a Presidential Citation to 3rd Bn., 398th, for its work in reducing Fort Schiesseck during the December fighting. The unit was described as "fighting its way up the steep barren slope of the difficult terrain and through barbed wire



drove south of the city to get the first glimpse of the Rhine at Altrip. In the tank-infantry move, each of the outfit's three companies claim theirs was the first to arrive, but all were agreed the battalion was first.

While organized resistance ceased west side of the Rhine, PWs were taken everywhere—on the road, in buildings, in cellars. By March 25, the division had taken more than 900 during the period from the jump-off at the original line, to the arrival at the Rhine.

The 100th has served under three Corps—XV, XXI and VI, under which it had first operated when it entered the line in the Vosges.

IN its two years of training in the States, the 100th packed in rehearsals which were to stand it in good stead for the McCoy. The year of conversion from citizens to soldiers at Ft. Jackson, S. C.; the rough three months of Tennessee maneuvers in the winter of 1943-44; and, the advanced training at Fort Bragg—all contributed to the Centurymen's fighting know-how. By the time the Century Division embarked for the ETO, Oct. 6, 1944, its men felt it was a good outfit. They were ready to put out everything they had with the experience they had gained in training. They had, indeed, come a long way from the day when the 100th Inf. Div. was born at Ft. Jackson.



ON Nov. 15, 1942, approximately 2000 officers and men stood in formation as the division flag passed into the hands of Gen. Burrell. The division had officially entered the "birth" list of the War Department, and the XII Corps commander, Maj. Gen. William H. Simpson (now Lt. Gen. and Ninth Army commander) charged the assembled cadre with the mission of making the division a "fighting 100th."

At this activation ceremony, all 14 organizations of the division came officially into being: three infantry regiments, 397th, 398th, and 399th; four artillery battalions, 373rd, 374th, 375th and 925th and Div Arty Hq. and Hq. Btry.; 325th Engr. Bn.; 325th Med. Bn.; 100th Sig. Co.; 100th QM Co.; 800th Ord. Co.; 100th Recon Troop; Div. Hq. and Hq. Co. and the 100th MP Platoon.

Personnel started with 1100 men from the 76th Inf. Div. at Ft. Meade, Md., and a good percentage from the 1st Inf. Div. Under Gen. Burrell, the officer staff was chosen by higher headquarters from a dozen other organizations, with most junior officers coming from OCS.

Troops arriving the next month came largely from eastern states.

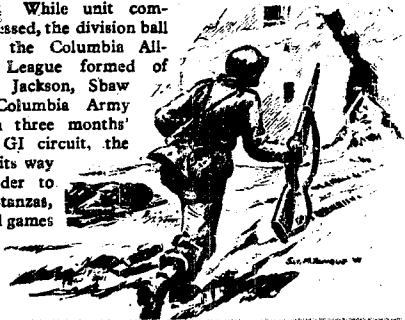
The big change-over from citizen to soldier for the 15,000 new Centurymen had its setting in South Carolina's sandy soil, raw rain, and in Ft. Jackson's garrison hutments previously occupied by the National Guard's 30th Inf. Div. Nearly every man was doing a brand-new job—from division commander to new troops. It was the general's first command of a division, the first time that many officers had held their particular jobs, junior officers' first command of men, newly-made non-coms' first experience in handling

men—and, for the new arrivals, their first taste of Army life.

The 100th looked good at the end of its basic training period. XII Corps said the results of its training tests were "very satisfactory."

Training developed through the year's stay at Ft. Jackson, running through squad, platoon, company, battalion, and regimental training on the reservation. Three months after basic training began in early April, the division was ordered to guard the entire 252-mile roadbed of the Atlantic Coast Line in South Carolina for the late Pres. Roosevelt's inspection tour. Highly secret, none of the troops knew what it was all about—only knowing that it cancelled a week end's relaxation after the first trip into the field at Ft. Jackson. Only after it was all over did Centurymen learn the identity of the man whose train they guarded.

ABOUT the same time, baseball enthusiasts took to the diamond. While unit competition progressed, the division ball team entered the Columbia All-Servicemen's League formed of teams at Ft. Jackson, Shaw Field, and Columbia Army Air Base. In three months' play in the GI circuit, the 100th fought its way as league leader to the closing stanzas, but in the final games



fell before the slants of Shaw Field's George Turbeville, former Phillies' pitcher. The division, however, nosed out its persistent post rival, the 106th Inf. Div., for second place.

Centurymen had a fling at drama too when they staged "The Eve of St. Mark," produced by Special Service. The Broadway hit of this war was presented twice on the post and twice at Columbia's Town Theater.

Early in the year, the division began publishing its own newspaper, *The Century Sentinel*, which has continued since.

Special training activities stood out above the regular run. The Nazi Village, constructed by the 325th Engrs., provided a street for practice in fighting which was soon to come in France. Through the summer, the division fought the "battles" of Ft. Jackson and northern South Carolina.

In early summer, a 32-man detachment of the MP platoon sailed for prisoner duty aboard ships from Africa to the States. In this first trip outside the country for a division unit, MPs began their two round trips from Newport News July 4, 1943. Arriving in Casablanca, Centurymen brought prisoners to Boston, then returned to Oran for a second consignment of Germans captured in Sicily.

The entire division witnessed one of its most spectacular training demonstrations in late August. In a combined aerial-artillery opening barrage, mock pillboxes were the targets of live ammunition and bombs. A battalion of infantry wound up the demonstration by firing all its weapons on hill objectives.

PAST : A JOB WELL DONE FUTURE : FINAL *Victory*

NOV. 15, 1943, exactly a year after it was born, the 100th's first truck pulled out of Ft. Jackson for its first big-time training operation—Tennessee maneuvers. In eight problems staged in extremely crisp weather, the 100th was among the first organizations to train there in the winter months. Teaming up with, and against, the 35th and 87th Inf. Divs., the 14th Armored, plus many supporting elements, including TDs, air and service troops, the Century learned to live and fight in the field.

It was a grimy but field-toughened division that moved from the maneuver area in mid-January. Living in freezing weather, in rain and snow, catching chow as time and the situation permitted was rough, but Centurymen felt a confidence in themselves, in what they could take and what they could dish out.

THE 100th's new home was Ft. Bragg, N. C., which had been occupied last by the 13th Airborne Div. Here, the division began things easily—getting accustomed gradually to showers, beds, linen—and all men had furloughs.

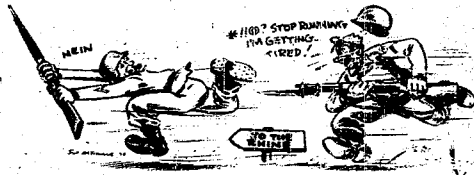
By February, the division launched into advanced phases of training designed to blend the organization into a fighting team. Combined attack exercises, training with tanks, and instruction in handling mines formed a busy schedule.

One phase of the program, combined infantry-artillery, assault problems employing live ammunition, was so unusual that it attracted the attention of the War Department. Among those who came to witness the siege-advance were Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson; Undersecretary of War Robert P. Patterson; Assistant Secretary of War John J. McCloy; two parties of the country's leading editors and newsmen.

Another signal distinction came to the division in March, during its Ft. Bragg training. The War Department, in an effort to give more adequate recognition to the role of the infantryman in training and combat, was about to issue Expert and Combat Infantryman Badges. The Century was selected to conduct necessary tests and to award the first of these Expert Badges.

Coming out on top for the award was T/Sgt. Walter L. Bull, Baltimore, Md., Co. A, 399th, who, later in France, became the first man in the 100th to be commissioned on the battlefield. At a division review at Ft. Bragg, the late Lt. Gen. Lesley J. McNair made the presentation of the first blue-and-silver badge.

An unusual honor came in June, 1944, when the 100th was selected by the War Department to send a composite battalion of infantrymen to parade in New York City on the nation's first Infantry Day. Coinciding with the launching of the Fifth War Loan Drive, Centurymen

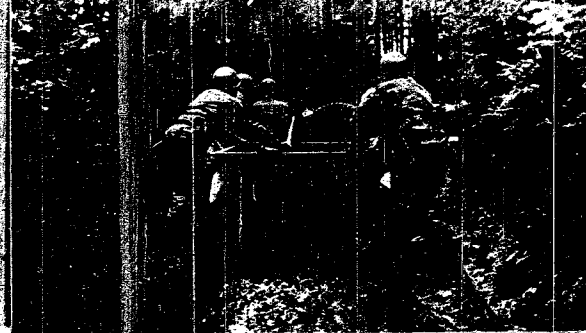


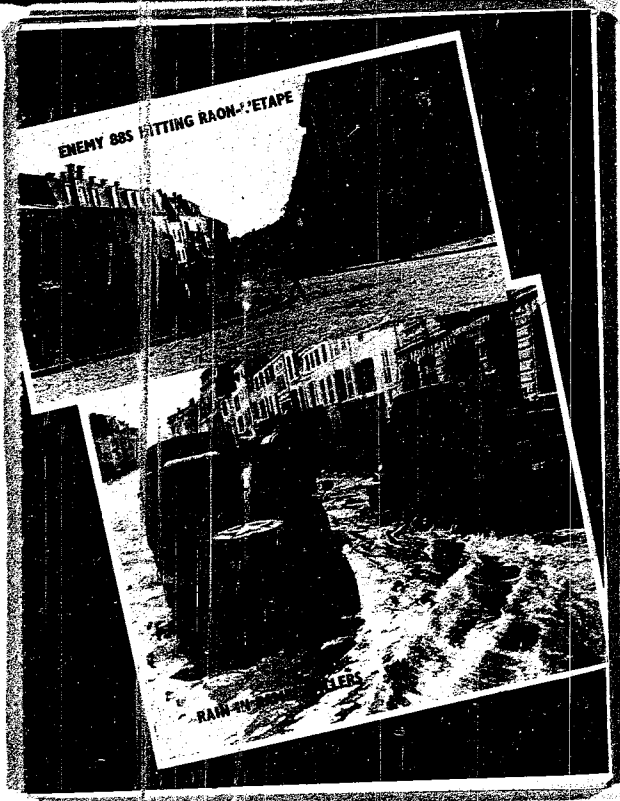
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Today, battle-tested Centurymen can look back to their
hazy trip from the port to front lines, reared fighting in
the dense Ypres, to the Meuse Line campaign, to the
shatter defense against the Germans' never-to-be-forgotten
New Year's Eve attack and to Bitch. They can look
back now with a feeling of full satisfaction at a job well
done.

Because of their rich achievements, Centurymen also can
look ahead to a bright future and peace.





ENEMY 885 HITTING RAON-ETAPE

RAIN ON THE SLEDS

TIMBERWOLVES

104 INFANTRY DIVISION



FOR FORMALING HOME



Get smart and get tough' expresses the spirit of Timberwolf training. In our initial campaign with the First Canadian Army in Holland, the division spearheaded the drive to the Maas River. We then fought in Germany with the First U.S. Army in the drive to the Roer River and later to Cologne and beyond the Rhine. Enemy resistance was decisively overcome by continuous pressure and aggressive night attacks. All objectives have been taken "per schedule". Ground never has been given.

The tenacity of our Infantry, the skill of our Artillery, the cooperation of our Engineer, Signal and Reconnaissance elements, and the efficiency of our Medical, Quartermaster Ordnance, Headquarters and Military Police personnel have been outstanding. The 555th AAA Battalion, 750th Tank Battalion and the 692nd Tank Destroyer Battalion have contributed effective support.

We must always live up to our battle slogan: "Nothing in hell must stop the Timberwolves."



PASSED BY

one of a series of J. Stern of the Eastern Theater of Operations, Second Army and Air and issued by the 104th Division, the 104th

THE STORY OF THE *104th Infantry* DIVISION

The sacred soil of Germany shall never be invaded by the enemies of the Reich. — Adolf Hitler

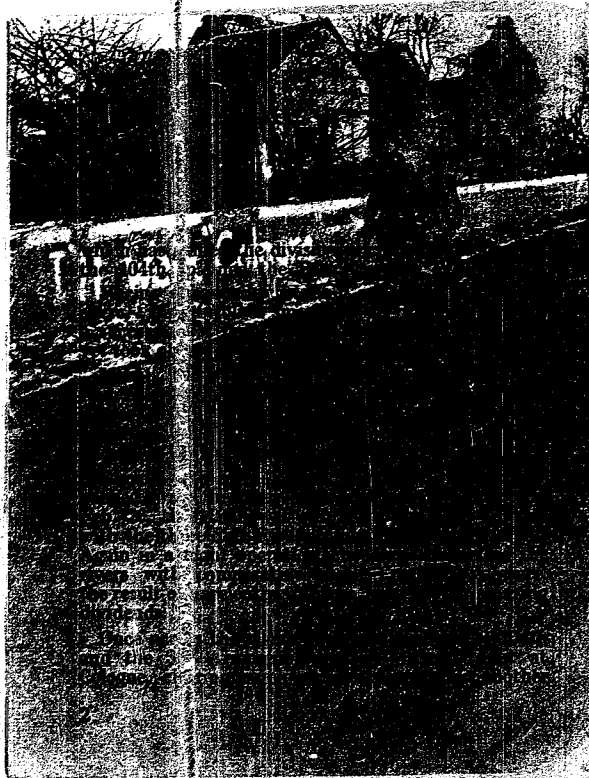
SACRED TOWNS of Germany — scores of them — have been taken by the 104th Infantry Division. Nazi towns, wrenched from Hitler's Third Reich, serve as battered and bruised evidence of the ripping, fighting Timberwolves who have clawed their way over countless miles of industrial Germany.

Smashed with devastating fire, surprised by night attacks, soundly drubbed by the smooth combination of guts, brains and supplies, Germans have had cause to reel in headlong retreat.

Timberwolves have sustained casualties, but the enemy has paid a higher price, including many prisoners. On frequent occasions, complete divisions fronting the 104th had to be replaced.

The drive on Cologne — once a great German city but now a brooding, conquered rubble heap — is a typical result of the division's speed and effectiveness.

The massive offensive for the "Queen City of the Rhine" jumped off after a pulverizing artillery barrage flashed and rumbled along the east bank of the Roer River where Duren lay in the Timberwolves' path. In one of the numerous night attacks



the spires of the Dom, the city's famous
cathedral, were visible.

Germany's third largest city fell March 5, 1945, a
symbol of the disintegration of Nazidom and its
feared Wehrmacht.

The men under Maj. Gen. Terry Allen, Division
Commander, always have turned in a superb perform-
ance. Everywhere — in Belgium, Holland, Ger-
many — Timberwolves have let actions speak for
themselves.

During the days of the division's initial action in
Germany, Maj. Gen. Terry Allen, VII Corps
Commander, wrote Gen. Allen:

...the action of the Timberwolves
to express to the world the
104th Infantry Division
the disintegration of the
VII Corps area.

...the area of the
VII Corps area.

...the first phase
of the operation.

...the result of the
operation.

more than 100 miles in a few days. The 104th Division, in a few days, had cleared its entire sector in the Roer River. I regard the operation as one of the finest, noble pieces of work accomplished by any unit of the 3rd Army since D-Day.

During the entire time that the 104th Division was under my command, I and my staff were tremendously impressed with the cooperative spirit and exceptional fighting ability of the officers and men of all ranks. We regard the Timberwolf Division as one of the finest assault divisions we have ever had in this Corps.



GRAY WOLVES

Attack BY NIGHT

Nov. 15, 1944, 2255 hours: The phone rang at Division Headquarters. The officer who answered repeated what he heard. "The word is Wolf."

This was the signal. The Timberwolves were to begin their battle through Germany.

Preceded by a crushing, record-breaking air bombardment, attackers kicked off at 1115 the following night. Long embattled Stolberg and Hill 287, directly to its right, were the prime objectives. Third Bn., 415th Inf., ripped its way through Stolberg, while 3rd Bn., 414th Inf., pounded Hill 287, no ordinary mound.

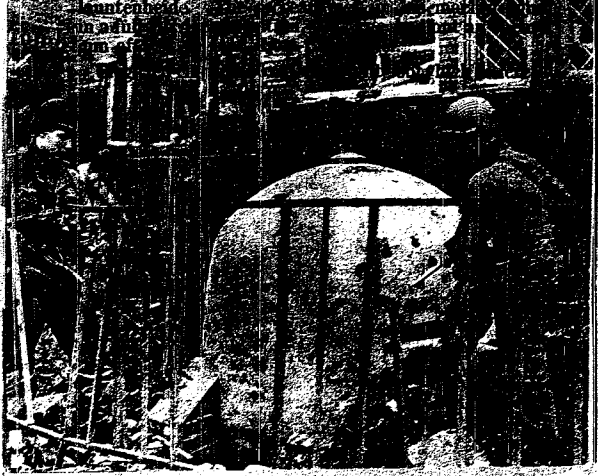
Controlling the surrounding area, the hill had withstood three major assaults before the Timberwolves' entry into the line. Second Bn., 414th, also was on the move, aided by such men as T/Sgt. Robert J. Warner, Pomona, N. C., who twice adjusted punishing mortar fire after voluntarily crawling to an exposed position only 50 yards from dug-in Germans. Hill 287 held out two more days while it was battered from the air, assaulted by tanks and rocked with artillery. The defense cracked Nov. 13 when doughs punched to the summit.

This valley of factories and dingy stone houses dom-

Turning the industrial valley below had been transformed into a trap for the enemy. Doubtless soon were to come the German would defend their industrial towns. The wolves were to fight from house to house, from cellar to cellar, for every fortress-factory. Every place was mined, every house booby-trapped.

Rain was followed by more rain. Douglas drove ahead in ankle-deep mud. Visibility was hampered and lashing winds threatened to blow observers from vantage points.

Paced by veterans like Sgt. Clifford P. Hayes, Paducah, Ky., of Co. C, the 413th Inf. captured the laundries, the telephone exchange, the command post and a number of other buildings.



walls crumbled to TNT, flame-throwers, eight-inch guns and courage — raw courage. Garrisons died, surrendered or pulled out. Pushing on from Venlauntenheide, the battalion took over a portion of the famous Adolf Hitler Autobahn, a 60-foot wide super-highway.

First Bn., 414th, crept through a forest to surprise the enemy, Nov. 18. Moving as silently as ghosts, the battalion stole through this integral part of the Siegfried Line without a man being injured or a shot fired. Some of the fiercest fighting of the campaign followed next day as the 413th bore down on Rohe, Helrath and Durwiss. The 414th was temporarily held up at Volkenrath, Bergrath and Hastenrath, while the 415th slugged forward to Eschweiler, a city with a normal population of 36,000.

In swift, slashing strokes, the 413th buttoned up the three towns. Germans used everything but armor against the battalion which insisted on victory.

Pvt. Lucky C. Harkey, Davidson, N. C., Co. E, crawled across 500 yards of fire-swept ground to lead his imperiled platoon to safety.

A bitter bayonet and grenade battle raged but Germans were "kaput" by morning. Co. L plunged forward to gain a 1000 yard area north of Durwiss.

It had been quite a day. 3700 yards of Germany changed hands; Nazis said goodbye to three of their battered towns; PWs continually asked about the division's "automatic artillery."

Patrols probed Eschweiler shortly before noon Nov. 20. By 1640, 1st Bn., 415th, was cellaring itself at the southern tip of the town as 2nd Bn. smashed to the outskirts after a 3000 yards skulk through the dense Propster Forest where trip-wired explosives hung from trees like Christmas decorations.

The next night, Cos. A and C, 415th, tossed a nightmare at napping Nazis. In an attack launched at 0300, Co. C, 329th Engrs., cleared a route through mines and booby traps as attackers shoved ahead. Four hours after the jump-off, doughs were in the heart of Eschweiler; five hours later they had blazed their way completely through the city. It was an incredible performance—moving through a staunchly-defended German town and seizing it from a non-plussed enemy who had yet to learn how to deal with these Timberwolves who fought by night.

In the fighting east of the city, Sgt. Anthony J. Schukes, Mechanicsville, N. Y., Co. D, 414th, virtually thwarted an enemy counter-attack single-

handed when he killed seven Germans and routed their companions.

By now, Timberwolves were tired. But the Germans were just as tired and considerably weakened by punishing body blows they were absorbing. Putzlohn was next.

The 413th bellied ahead under raking fire until 3rd Bn. was pinned down by tanks on the outskirts of the town. Fighting reached a furious high Nov. 23 when Co. K attacked in the pre-dawn darkness, wrenching the southeast corner of the town while beating off vicious counter-thrusts by Nazi tanks and infantry. Co. L pushed ahead to seize Hill 272. Putzlohn capitulated finally to indomitable Timberwolves.

Confronted by open ground over which Germans had grazing fire, the 414th decided to attack Weisweiler.



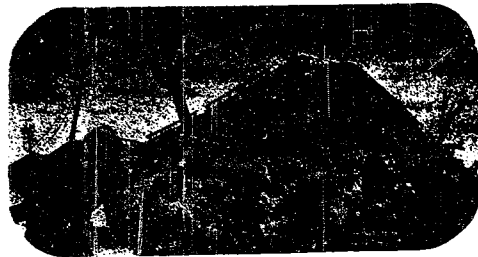
the next objective, at night. In the glum dusk, one attack jumped off; another followed several hours later. By 2200, 3rd Bn. was in the hem of the town as withering fire poured from an 80-foot slag pile.

By the time the battalion had readied itself for an assault on the slag pile next evening, Capt. Bernard E. Barker, New Raymer, Colo., and Capt. Cornell E. Bryhn, Madera, Calif., commanders of Cos. C and E respectively, had drummed up a plan.

A shifting barrage of covering fire followed attackers so close that three men were wounded. The pay-off was, however, that not another man was lost to the deeply-entrenched and numerically superior enemy. One German, forced to keep his nose buried in the earth by the blazing fire, finally looked up to stare straight into the smudged faces of three Timberwolves.

The commander of an adjacent task force called this mission the "best example of an infantry attack I ever have seen."

Weisweiler was rough. Germans threw every



conceivable weapons at the 114th whose grenades and bayonets took a heavy toll in the savage, house-to-house fighting. Capt. Charles Glotzback, Paxico, Kan., Co. B commander, supervised the pulverizing of enemy forces when he asked for, and received, fire on his own position in a factory. By Nov. 25, Wolves had slammed to the center of the town, forcing Germans to withdraw toward Lamersdorf.

In the original plan, the Timberwolves were to be pinched out of the offensive as soon as they reached Weisweiler. A higher commander smilingly told Gen. Allen: "You'll be pinched out, Terry, when we reach Berlin."

The division hadn't even called for the help of another combat team which had been expected to join it. That assistance never was necessary for a good reason—the Wolves were moving just a trifle too fast!

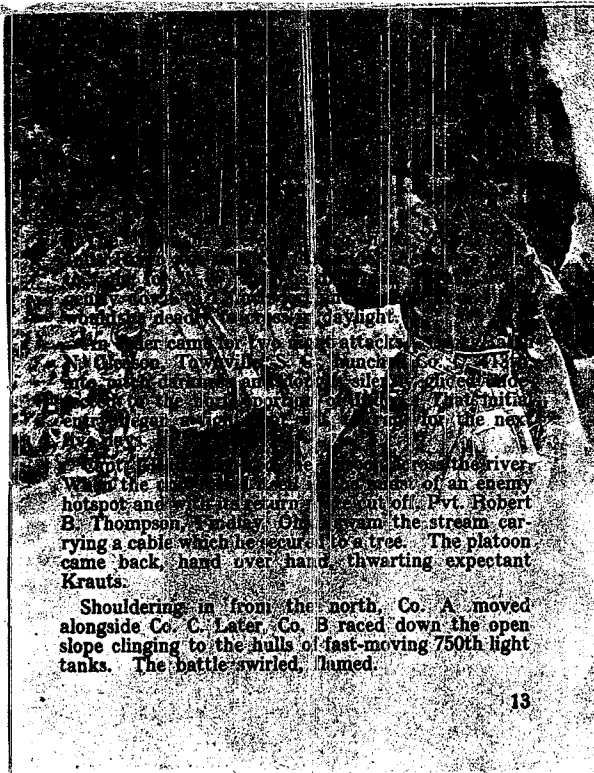
Across THE INDE, UP LUCHERBERG

STILL a comparatively new outfit, the 104th was being mentioned in the same breath with famed veteran units. A correspondent for Newsweek wrote: "...By the third week of the big push, it became apparent that Terry Allen had trained a very good division indeed..."

The 104th now was drawing close to the Inde River and three more towns — Frenz, Lamersdorf and Inden. Timberwolves looked to the east in cool, clear weather, hung more grenades on themselves and prepared to jump off again.

Mopping up Weisweiler by noon, Nov. 26, the 414th requested, and was granted, permission to move on to Frenz. After an advance of only 500 yards, the regiment was pinned down by everything in the ammunition chest. The 386th FA then laid down a thunder of punishing artillery and Cos. C and E ripped forward. Eight hours later, weary doughs secured Frenz against counter-attacking Germans. Tanks of the 750th, spurring death-dealing support, immeasurably aided the Timberwolf assault.

Nov. 27, 1944 — The front lines advanced 300 yards northeast from Frenz against the fiercest and most intense concentration of mortar, artillery and small arms fire yet experienced in the operation. — Operations Journal



T/Sgt. John McCaslin, Duquesne, Pa., kayoed a tank from such close range that shrapnel from the grenade he tossed cut his eye. Keen enemy eyes were blinded by the fog of dense smoke laid by artillery. Fighting with the L, 413th, Pvt. John B. Murray, Falls City, Mo., focused medical attention while he supported the company's attack for nine hours, spraying the enemy with BAR fire from an exposed position. When one of his squads was isolated by the enemy, Sgt. James Bondanville, Moline, Ill., Co. C, 413th, walked forward on Inden street with his BAR blazing at the enemy.

Kraut artillery assumed a frenzied crescendo of 50 shells a minute. Artillery aircraft entered the fray, boosting the pitch and power. Evidence of the white heat of battle came back in fragmentary reports: "Bridges blown up," "air houses left to clean out," "wire seems pinned down," "artillery on Inden terrific," "boats and bridge equipment pinned down or burning."

This was bitter fighting. Timberwolves had to dig Germans from cellar hide-outs. Pfc Francis T. Chase, Utica, N. Y., Co. L, 414th, blew two 88s out of action with his bazooka after they had been turned on him. One shell locked down a building in which he huddled, but that didn't stop the bazookaman.

The struggle for Inden waxed hotter as determined enemy tank-infantry teams grudgingly counted inches. Elements of the 413th, 592nd TDs and 750th Tank Bn. edged ahead. The procedure was the same — house-to-house under a storm of fire. Troops were

reinforced as the savage close-in scrapping continued one exhausting day after another.

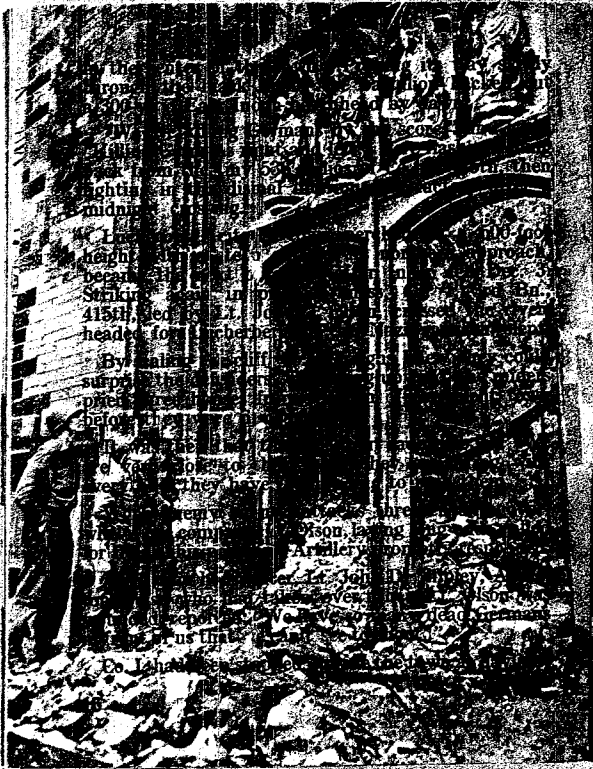
While this battle raged, 2nd Bn., 413th, was cracking Lamersdorf. The jump-off came at night as German star shells lighted the heavens. Against strong opposition, doughs punched ahead doggedly. Pvt. James V. Polio, Hazlehurst, Pa., Co. F, crawled close to two blazing machine gun nests and silenced them with grenades.

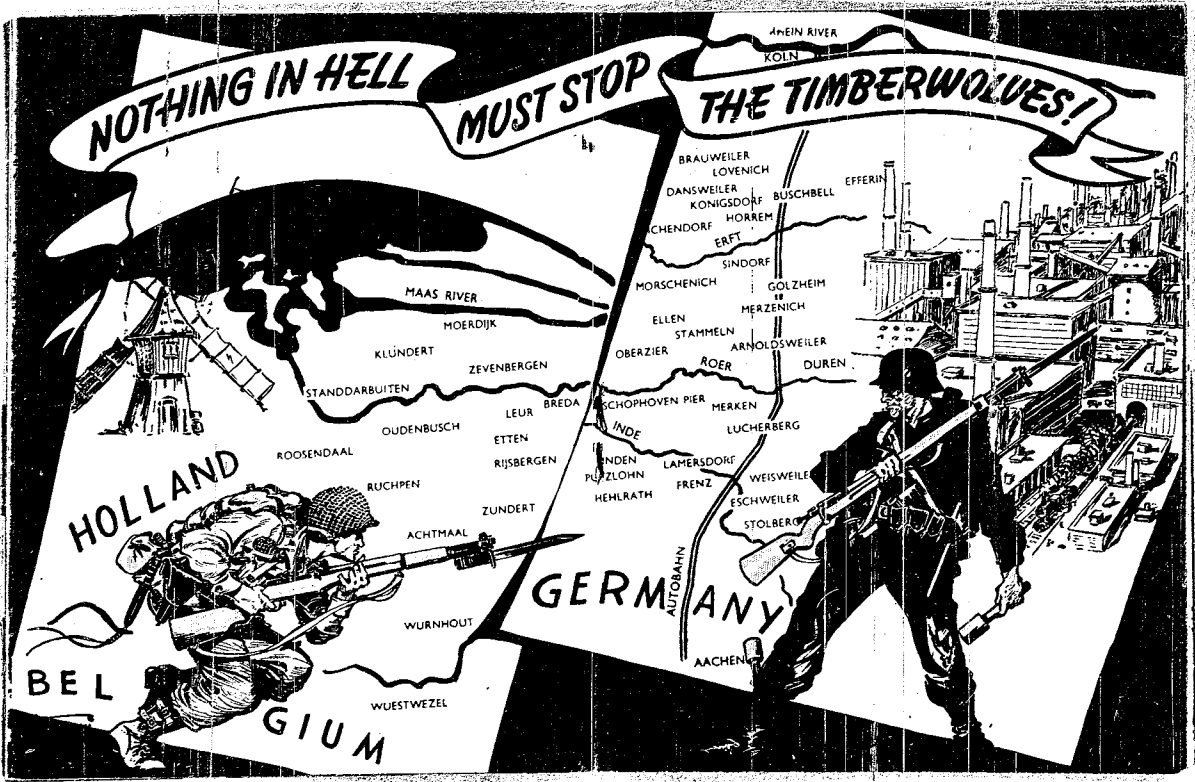
The battalion had clamped a firm hold on the town by nightfall as five mediums from the 750th clanked in the following day to support infantrymen. By midnight, the Timberwolves held Lamersdorf. The north jaw, already in place, now had a southern mate. Together they crushed Inden. The immediate job now was the crossing of the Inde River.

Preceded by a terrifying artillery barrage, two companies of 2nd Bn., 415th, waded the icy stream an hour before midnight, Dec. 2. Surprised Nazis, dazed by the heavy fire, were overrun in cellars and bayoneted and grenaded into submission after staging several rallies.

At the same time 3rd Bn., 414th, forded the river.









heavy fire. Reluctant to give up, doughboys retraced their steps, wading the river they had crossed and moved south. Splashing in the waist-deep water a third time, the company was rescued from the south to fight. A fierce enemy attempt to be made. The company implemented the attack. By late afternoon the 415th had taken Lucherberg. The cost had been only 13 casualties, while more than 400 had been killed or captured.

Reluctant to relinquish this strategically located town, Germans countered with 10 tanks and supporting infantry. A 70-ton Tiger Royal tank fired point blank into Co. F's Command Post. Sgt. George E. Burns, Findlay, Ohio, rushed from the building and fired his bazooka — only seven feet from the tank. The bulky tank waddled away in flaming retreat.

The Corps Commander messaged: "Congratulations to the 104th Division on its superb performance in capturing Lucherberg."



Three More

TOWNS FALL PREY

THREE more German towns remained west of the Roer River. On Dec. 10, the 414th hurled itself against Schophoven and Pier, meeting heavy fire and mixing into a see-saw melee at the western tip of Pier.

Three tanks were kayoed by German self-propelled 88s which ran up and down streets and darted out from behind walls. After crumbling buildings that sheltered battalion doughs, the same 88s fired the buildings with incendiaries, forcing one company to dig itself from the flaming rubble. Parts of two other companies were reported safe in cellars although buildings had collapsed on them.

Pfc Francis F. Sloan, Co. B, fired every weapon he could find, including tank machine guns, a rifle, German bazooka and a BAR to allow his company, trapped in a cellar, to escape. Schophoven fell as did Pier after a maelstrom of fierce combat.

Merken was jolted by a perfectly planned and executed night attack as 1st Bn., 415th, pressed into the heart of the town. Lt. Jerry Hooker, Eugene, Ore., Co. C, and Capt. Raymond Garino, Passaic, N. J., Co. B, hooked their outfits into Merken from the northeast.

"We have nine houses along the northeast edge of town," radioed Co. C. "Co. B holds 11 houses," was the next report, followed by: "Dug-in 88s giving

trouble." Reports of progress followed the moving bands of anxiously consulted watches. "1000 came, "Two thirds of the town in our hands. Prisoner total 168. Little left with me. More than 200 enemy dead."

A routed foe pulled back to the west of the Roer and spent the next few weeks in the enemy held area. As a rule, as the world knows, the Germans in their heavy armor which struck south of the Roer.

While the 104th was in the area, the division was reorganized and redesignated as the 104th Infantry Division. It was redesignated as the 104th Infantry Division on March 2, 1942. The division was redesignated as the 104th Infantry Division on March 2, 1942. The division was redesignated as the 104th Infantry Division on March 2, 1942.

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Came World War II. The 104th was redesignated as the 104th Infantry Division on March 2, 1942. The division was redesignated as the 104th Infantry Division on March 2, 1942. The division was redesignated as the 104th Infantry Division on March 2, 1942.

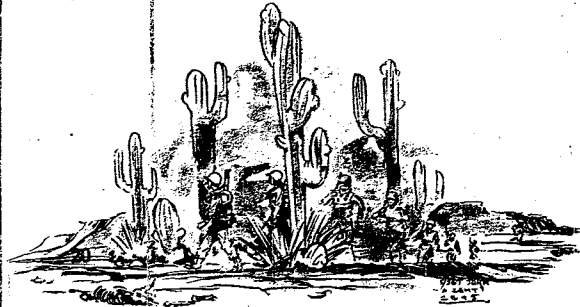
Men came from every corner of the nation to join the division in December. With the men came the

rains. During that wet Oregon winter, fillers became soldiers, sloshing through mud the like of which was to greet them later in France, Belgium, Holland and Germany. Mid-summer 1943, the 104th moved to the high desert of Oregon for division and Corps maneuvers.

After taking preliminary desert training in the California-Arizona Maneuver Area, the 104th paused briefly at Granite, Calif., before shoving off early in March 1944 for Camp Carson, Colo.

For the next three months, Timberwolves developed the tricks of night fighting. Excitement of going overseas mounted throughout July. Destination guesses ranged from Inner Mongolia to the docks at Hoboken. Transportation was to be by dog sled, glider, roller skates, and, of course, by foot.

The blue chips went down Aug. 9 when advance parties suddenly were alerted. The 413th and 415th were recalled from the field. The advance party pulled out on two hours' notice with everybody



wondering just what he had packed and where he had packed it. By August 15 the entire division was aboard trains, headed for the POE. Trips averaged four days and featured poker, blackjack, "calihoo-stics," engine grime and spit.

With the embarkation complete, Timberwolves rolled their 12 long rolls of equipment into horseshoe rolls, packs, suitcases and pockets, then marched to trains taking them to ferries and finally aboard ship. By Aug. 27 the division was underway.

Life aboard ship was easy and cozy in the clear, balmy weather. When the ship rolled, some boys lost their lunches, when the boat rolled, others regretted their lunches.

The destination was unknown, but latrine pilots had the division landing in Liverpool, Glasgow, Calcutta and Providence. One guess did click — Cherbourg — and the boys became the first American troops to land here direct from the States.

The division moved on to a staging area where it awaited its first assignment. At Beauneville, provisional truck companies composed of more than 2500 Timberwolves helped roll the famed "Red Ball" as it performed miracles of supply. Under the supervision of the artillery, including drivers from every unit, these truck companies earned the praise of Lt. Gen. John C. H. Lee, who wrote Gen. Allen:

...The superb performance of your officers, your men and your trucks have given us will always be remembered as a great service in time

of you need. The magnificent manner in which you went about and have completed your task reflect highest credit to the 104th and its Commander who never fails. Now you're going forward again on a special mission — also of highest importance to the Allied Forces. Our devoted best wishes go with you...

After a short stay at Barneville, the Wolves showed off again — anxious, ready to begin their prowl. It was in Belgium where the 104th first met the Germans.



First Fight—

"BATTLE OF THE DIKES"

ANTWERP'S giant cranes and miles of docks now are stevedoring millions of tons of "what it takes" from ships for the journey to front line troops. This shortened supply line was instrumental in bringing Nazis to defeat.

Timberwolves played a vital role in wresting control of the great seaport from the foe. Thrown into the thick of the fight near the Netherlands border, in a land as flat as a billiard table and criss-crossed with innumerable canals, the division went to work. There began the "Battle of the Dikes."

Oct. 23, 1944, 1700 hours: Wolves dug in on a line near Wustwezel facing the mighty Maas River, 22 miles to the north, after relieving the British 49th Division.

Originally assigned a defensive role that was to last only a few hours, the division instituted vigorous patrolling. The first PW was captured by a Co. E, 414th, patrol led by Lt. Herman C. Kramer, Mt. Vernon, N. Y.

It was a chill, overcast day as the regiments mudded toward Holland, meeting only slight resistance and chalking up a considerable advance. By nightfall, the division had crossed the Netherlands frontier, and preparations were made for the first of attacks

...in the Timberwolves their imp...
...ation... fighters.

While the 88th FA battered the enemy, 413th
... pushed forward just before midnight. A
... continued next day. Pfc Beverly Tipton,
... KY., Co. L, inched within six feet of a
... machine gun that pinned down his squad
... with his BAR. Tipton silenced it.
... and 2nd Bns., 414th, strangled the Breda
... highway. Although casualties were suf-
... as intense machine gun fire sprayed its front
... and flanks and mortars and 88s rained down ince-
... santly, 2nd Bn. rallied, plunged on. To the left
... the 415th carved a 1600 yard...



As the 413th right-hooked Zundert, the 414th jab-
bed the center and the 415th uncorked a powerful
left. Zundert took the count, and its citizens decked
their homes and streets with long hidden Netherlands'
flags and "Welcome to Our Liberators" signs.

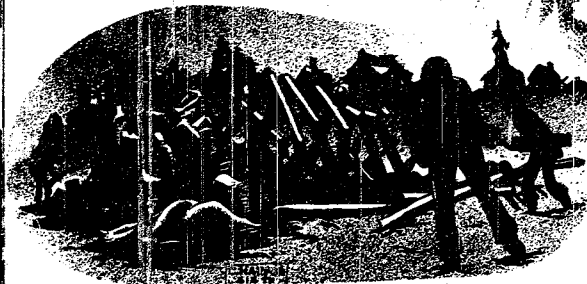
The tempo quickened. The 414th sped toward
Breda, swallowing Rijbergen, while the 415th in a
fast-moving and deadly night strike stormed 5000
yards to break an enemy position near Sprundel.

The 414th slammed forward Oct. 29, hitting a
solid German block at the Vaart Canal. The break-
through was forced mainly through the work of Capt.
Dar Nelson, Laramie, Wyo., Co. L commander.

Moving far forward to an exposed position, the captain directed artillery fire so effectively that the enemy was forced to pull out. The battalion then advanced 1000 yards beyond the canal. A grim-faced enemy waited along the Breda-Roosendahl road but the 415th broke through after mined approaches were cleared.

"Push on tonight and force a crossing of the Mark River in the vicinity of Staanddarbuiten," was the order. First Bn., 415th, complied by thrusting a beachhead across the stream before astonished Germans could act. Angry counter-attacks and aroused artillery made reinforcement of assault forces too perilous, so Corps ordered a withdrawal. A crackling wall of fire on the north shore cut off two officers and 65 men from Cos. A and B with no weapons other than their rifles. Here began one of the gallant stands of this or any other war.

Three days later, Staanddarbuiten literally was blasted to rubble by a stunning, earthquaking artill-



ery concentration which lasted an hour. Then, at 2100 on Nov. 2, the 413th and 415th assault-boated the Mark. Just 50 minutes later, four infantry battalions were picking Staanddarbuiten's bones. One of the most difficult of military maneuvers had been achieved with the smoothest precision; it was an accomplishment worthy of the best troops.

The courageous band of isolated men under Lts. Ernest D. Fox, Salt Lake City, and George K. Squires, Portland, Ore., was rescued from the thin, pocked crescent which had held for three nightmarish days against jabbing German tank infantry and whining 88s. The men had subsisted on turnips and beets, had treated their own wounded, had killed many enemy, had refused to quit. Later, Platoon Sgts. James H. Ferguson, Downers Grove, Ill., and Edward R. Arbogast, Norton, W. Va., were awarded battlefield commissions and Silver Stars.

By the next day, the 329th Engrs. had completed two bridges across the river, working constantly under deadly accurate artillery and mortar fire. Three Germans who directed the fire from the abutment of the old bridge were ferreted out. This explained repeated hits that caused constant reconstruction.

Attacking by night, by day, but always attacking, Timberwolves crossed dike after dike, flooded field after flooded field, took town after town. Second and 3rd Bns., 415th, converged on Zevenbergen. Patrols of 1st Bn., 414th, dipped into the Maas River and sent a bottle of its water to Gen. Allen. These patrols were the first Allied troops to reach this river.

Nothing in Hell

HAS STOPPED TIMBERWOLVES

ONE of the world's longest bridges spanned the Maas at Moerdijk. The division was assigned the mission of taking the town in conjunction with the Polish 1st Armored Division, which had been operating on its right.

When orders arrived the same day shifting Timberwolves to the Aachen vicinity where they were to become a part of First Army, 2nd Bn., 414th, and the 386th FA were left to continue the Moerdijk operation.

It was here that T/Sgt. John A. Cronin, Mauchunk, Pa., left his covered position to go to the aid of a fire-raked platoon. Moving from man to man, he administered first aid while under constant fire. Later, he supervised evacuation of 21 wounded. His devotion to duty exemplifies the actions which have earned aid men the respect of the doughs.

Just before the Timberwolves retired from the "Battle of the Dikes," which helped to free Antwerp, Lt. Gen. G. G. Simonds, First Canadian Army Commander, passed on the following letter from Field Marshal Sir Bernard L. Montgomery, 21st Army Group Commander:

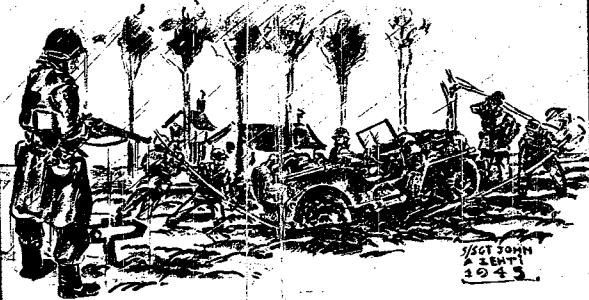
Now that the operations designed to give us the free use of the port of Antwerp are nearly completed, I want to express... my admiration for the way in which you have all carried out the

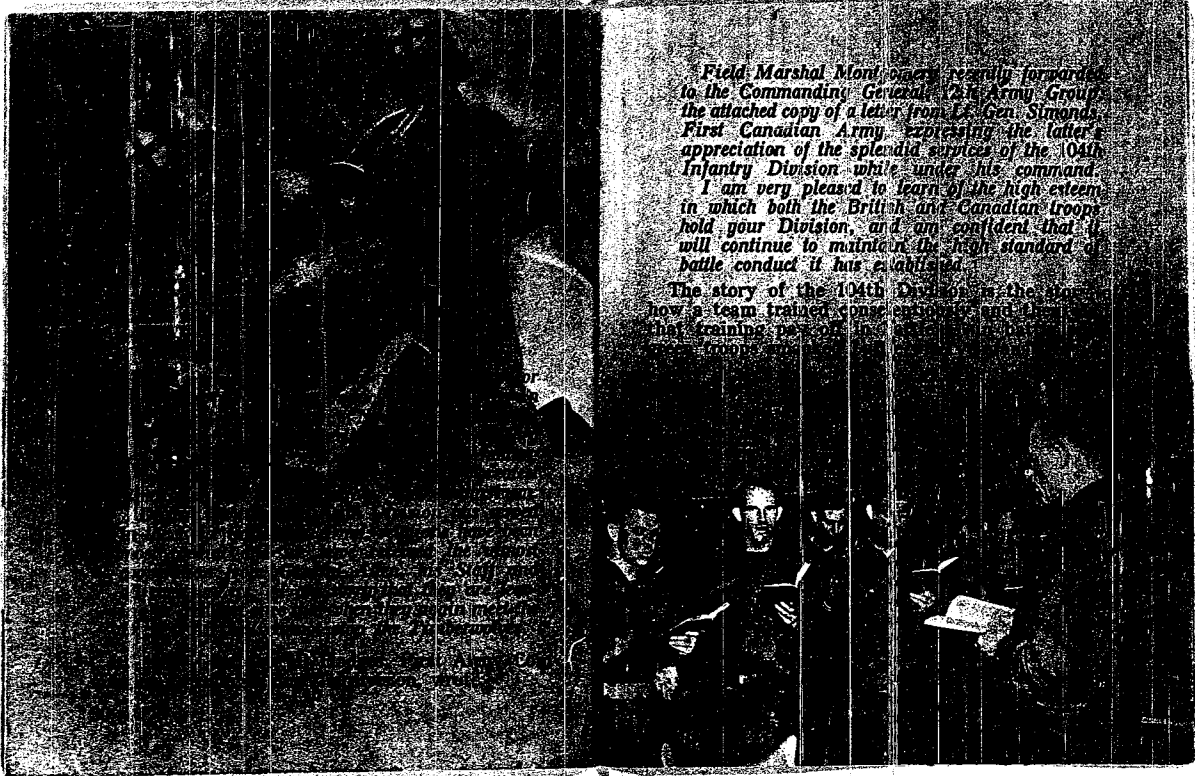
very difficult task given to you. The operations were conducted under the most appalling conditions of ground — and water — and the advantage in these respects favored the enemy. But in spite of great difficulties you slowly and relentlessly wore down enemy resistance, drove him back, and captured great numbers of prisoners. It has been a fine performance and one that could have been carried out only by first class troops.

The Canadian Army is composed of troops from many different nations and countries. But the way in which you have all pulled together, and operated as one fighting machine, has been an inspiration to us all...

Gen. Simonds then answered:

On behalf of First Canadian Army will you kindly express to the Commander-in-Chief, 12th Army Group, my appreciation of the services of 104th U. S. Infantry Division while under





Field Marshal Montgomery recently forwarded to the Commanding General, 24th Army Group, the attached copy of a letter from Lt. Gen. Simonds, First Canadian Army, expressing the latter's appreciation of the splendid success of the 104th Infantry Division while under his command. I am very pleased to learn of the high esteem in which both the British and Canadian troops hold your Division, and am confident that it will continue to maintain the high standard of battle conduct it has established.

The story of the 104th Division is the story of a team trained, concentrated, and led by that training personnel in the field.

very outset.

Many victories were achieved by employing Gen. Allen's favorite maneuver — the night attack. Casualties were held to a minimum because of good headwork.

One correspondent wrote after the division's first few engagements: "It is already possible to say that it is a very good division. And that, in such fast company as we have here on the First Army front, is a real compliment."

By its actions, the 104th has lived up to its battle slogan and

Nothing in hell must stop the Timberwolves.



RALLY THE PACK

From way up north in Oregon to
Southlands far away,

We've moved across the desert sands
a-fighting all the way.

We'll climb the highest mountains in
any state or land.

We will swing along by combat-team
a-fighting hand to hand.

CHORUS :

Oh, this is our night to howl boys,
just follow us with will,

The Timberwolves are on the prowl,
we're closing in to kill.

We're a helluva gang to fight with,
just follow us and see.



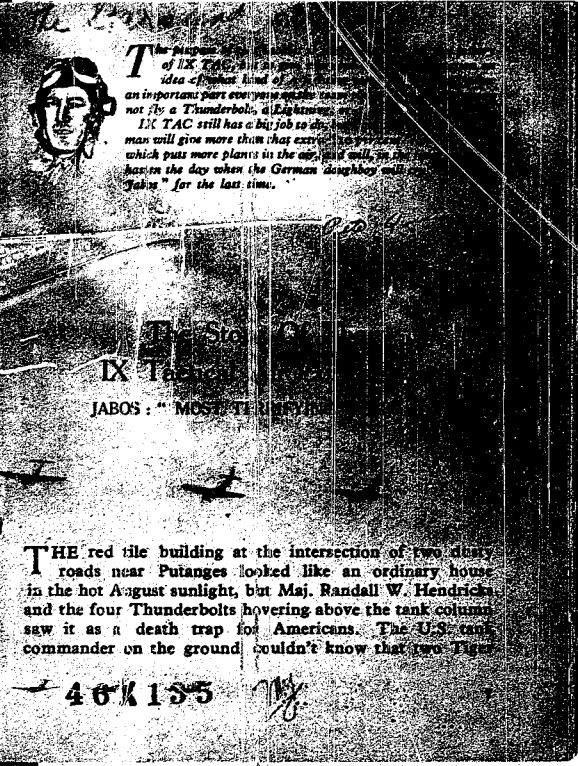
Printed by C. ... Paris



Cologne



THE STORY OF
THE IX TAC



The planes of IX TAC are an important part of every mission. Not only do they fly a Thunderbolt, a Lightning, or an F4U Corsair, but they also have a man who will give more than that extra effort which puts more planes in the air, and will, in the hour of need, be the "Tiger" for the last time.

The Story of IX TAC

JABOS: "MOST TERRIBLE"

THE red tile building at the intersection of two dusty roads near Putanges looked like an ordinary house in the hot August sunlight, but Maj. Randall W. Hendricks and the four Thunderbolts hovering above the tank column saw it as a death trap for Americans. The U.S. tank commander on the ground couldn't know that two Tiger

46K155

tanks had their muzzles trained at right angles to the road, all set to knock off the Shermans as they went by.

"Couple of tanks ahead of you," Maj. Hendricks radio-telephoned the tank commander. "How about us bombing them?"

"You're too close. You might knock us out, too," was the reply.

"Then swing your guns about 45 degrees left because those tanks are set to come out shooting."

Sherman guns swung around. A few moments later, the ugly snouts of the Tiger 8s nosed out from behind the building. The American tanks fired immediately, but were not in range. The Tigers, however, scurried back to shelter.

"Put some bombs on them," said the tank commander.

"Achtung, Jabos." There was no escape for the Tigers.

Maj. Hendricks' flight peeled off in a steep dive. Bombs dropped. Tanks were knocked out.

Meanwhile near Looges, German troops were holding up another tank column. The tank commander radioed to Thunderbolt Flight Leader Lt. Col. John D. Haesler of Loop City, Neb. Because the road ahead led through the trees, the tanker didn't think pilots could bomb without hitting his tanks.

For 25 minutes, pilot and tank CO discussed the situation. The pilot won out. Two flights of Thunderbolts swooped to within 250 yards of the tanks and strafed the German position.

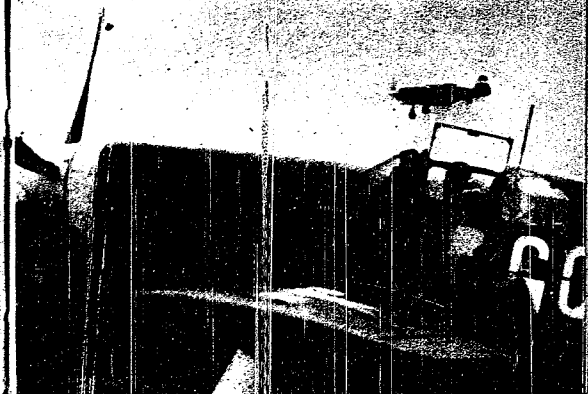
"How's that?" the Colonel called to the Shermans.

"Great. With support like that we can go all the way to Berlin!"

The two tank columns didn't get to Berlin that day, but they made so much distance with the Thunderbolts that the Commanding General of the German Army phoned Field Marshal von Kluge to report "considerable tank losses and terrific fighter-bomber attacks."

THE previous week, Col. Helmdach, German G-3, phoned his Chief of Staff. "G-3 reports enemy penetrated into Laval. Our troops showed signs of rout after strong fighter-bomber attacks."

Commanding General of the German Seventh Army also called Field Marshal von Kluge. "...We were



unsuccessful, mainly because of the sizable fighter-bomber activity..."

Col. Reinhard of the XLVII Panzer Corps called the Chief of Staff. "The activities of the fighter-bombers are said to be unbearable. *Liebstandarte* also reports that fighter-bomber attacks of such caliber have never before been experienced. The attack of the *Liebstandarte* has been stopped. Five of their tanks are out of action."

The Chief of Staff got still another call from the Commanding General of the enemy Army Group, West. "...The actual attack has not made any progress since 1300 because of the large number of enemy fighter-bombers and the absence of our own..."

The climax came with U.S. tanks advancing towards Granchiel and Avranches. "The enemy air superiority is terrific and smothers almost everyone of our movements," phoned Field Marshal von Kluge to Gen. Werlimont, Hitler's personal representative in the West. "Every movement of the enemy is prepared and protected by its air force. Losses in men and equipment are extraordinary."

Meanwhile, German troops in U.S. PW cages unconsciously coined a new catch phrase to describe the Allied weapon they feared most.

"Jagdebombers" (Jabos for short), they said, from privates to generals. "The most terrifying weapon on the Western Front."

BECAUSE it was born of this war, IX Tactical Air Command lacks the history of an old Army outfit, but it has covered a lot of territory since activation.

With one officer and one enlisted man as a start, IX TAC was on the way to becoming an outfit at Drew Field, Fla., in March 1942. Of the personnel, 65 per cent were selectees, 15 per cent volunteers and 20 per cent regular Army. It was the first XII Fighter Command, later swapping names with the IX Fighter Command.



Initial step for the command after it left the States was Africa. Commanding was Brig. Gen. A. C. Strickland, who also was Commanding General, Desert Air Task Force, headquarters in Tripoli. This became Advanced Headquarters, Ninth Air Force, later inactivated to become the Tripoli Base Command.

Then, after going to India, Suez and Egypt, the command arrived in England Nov. 5, 1943. Maj. Gen. E. R. "Pete" Quesada, (then Brig. Gen.) had been appointed CG Gt. 18. Two days later he was decorated with the Order of Commander of the British Empire, for work in Africa.

In practice, IX Fighter Command became IX Air Support Command. Fighter Command assumed control of all operations for IX and XIX Tactical Air Command in March 1944. On April 20, IX Air Support Command was officially changed to IX TAC.

The American doughfoot on the ground was enthusiastic about fighter-bombers. When Thunderbolts and Lightnings came over he waved to them. One day near Mons, Belgium, he and his buddies sat down on the roadside and watched IX TAC pilots come in to strafe a convoy, confi-

dent that the pilots would pinpoint targets and not hit U.S. troops.

When a war correspondent searched for boys from Philadelphia wanting to send Christmas messages home to the folks through the newspaper's columns, one GI gave him a piece of paper which said, "For Christmas I want some good weather so the fighter-bombers can come over and give us a hand."

Pilots are just as enthusiastic about air-ground teamwork, especially those who have served as ground controllers in tanks. They think the doughfoot is a great guy, and they're not reticent about saying so.

But it wasn't always as slick. Like any football team, air and ground had a long period of practice before they worked as smoothly as they do now. Some of the experimenting even had to take place in battle, not in a laboratory.

BEFORE D-Day, there weren't any tech manuals on "How to Dive-Bomb a Bridge" or "How to Pinpoint an 88." Pilots learned the hard way. Some of them, in their anxiety to make good, went down so low that they were caught in the blast of their own bombs. Others came back from deck-strafting with everything from branches to nuts and bolts caught in the undercarriage. At first many of them came in at the wrong angles. But at last dive-bombing was broken up into skip-bombing, glide-bombing and buzz-bombing -- each for a specific type of target. Then results of experience and practice began to show.

Toughest problem was working with the man on the ground. At St. Lo, ground officers directed fighter-bombers. They didn't know how close a P-47 or a P-38

could come to the line without hitting U. S. troops. They didn't know whether to strafe or bomb a position. But they did know that they had a tremendous striking force at their disposal.

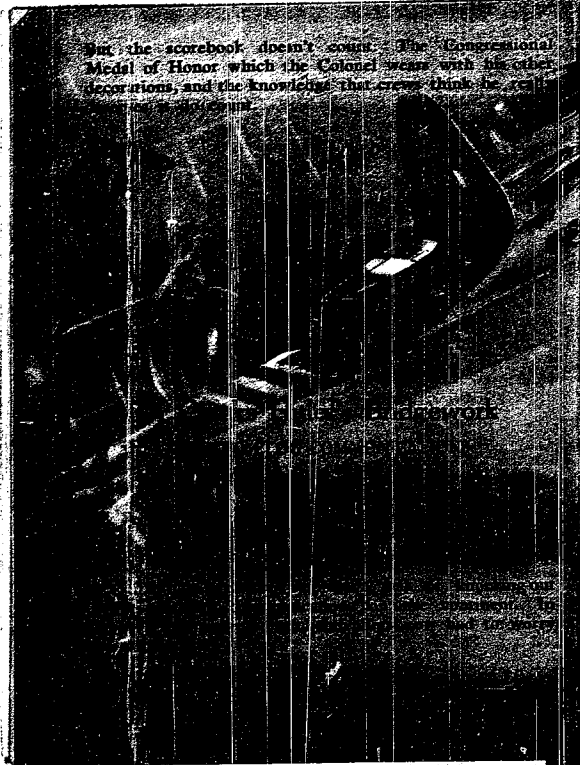
St. Lo was a good job, but more teamwork was required: a man to direct the planes, and a man to know where they were most needed on the ground. Pilots at ground controllers in tanks worked with ground officers to pick targets. This team has proven to be one of the most successful innovations of this war.

Prior to the invasion, IX TAC did escort work for the 8th Air Force. When heavies went to bomb Hanover, Dusseldorf, Cologne and the long list of strategic targets, Thunderbolts and Lightnings shepherded them to and from their objectives. On Jan. 11, near Oschersleben, Germany, Mustangs from the Pioneer Group, led by Col. James H. Howard (then Mj.) were protecting a group of Fortresses. When they were attacked by a large number of enemy aircraft, the Colonel shot down an ME-110, and became separated from his group.

Returning to the heavies, he ran into 30 FW 190s attacking the bombers. Col. Howard could have waited for his group to assemble, but he chose to attack by himself. He lit into the German formation despite tremendous odds against him and shot down three (bringing his total to four). The Nazis fled. Then out of ammunition and gas dangerously low, Col. Howard headed for home.

As soon as the bombers pulled to a stop at British bases, crews were babbling excitedly over the daredevil pilot who had saved them. They claimed Col. Howard knocked out six planes. Ninth Air Force gave credit for four.

But the scorebook doesn't count. The Congressional Medal of Honor which the Colonel wears with his other decorations, and the knowledge that across this he really



Dive-bombing by IX TAC fighters actually began March 15, 1944, when a group attacked St. Valery Air-drome. There were eight Thunderbolts, each with a 250-pound bomb. Hits were scored on runway and airfield.

Targets were bridges, railroads, trucks, troops. The Army asked IX TAC to help smash the Seine bridges, so that when the invasion began the Germans would find it difficult to reinforce their armies, or to retreat into Belgium. Gen. Quesada's pilots did such a good job that when the German was pushed out of France far ahead of schedule, U. S. troops grumbled because so few bridges were left behind.

While the Thunderbolts and Lightnings were catching Germans with their Panthers down, the unsung recon pilots were swooping down on Hitler's Atlantic Wall, photographing the beaches that on June 6 became famous in history as "Omaha," "Victor," and "Utah." One of these pilots, a captain, flew so low that his pictures showed startled workers putting in the iron stakes which failed to stem the tide of men and machines which later poured in. He got a DFC for the job.

Before D-Day, IX TAC's primary job was to isolate the battlefield—Normandy. It was broken up into two phases: paralyzing the railroads, and cutting the bridges. Both of these objectives required new tactics. When enemy aircraft appeared fighter-bombers jettisoned their bombs and engaged the Nazis. But these were merely interludes in the big job which continued day after day without letup.

Following March 15, the Germans constantly were harassed. Bridges across the Seine were so badly


shattered that during the retreat from Normandy, the Krauts were forced to build ponton bridges or to use small river boats and barges. Marshalling yards filled with priceless rolling stock were bombed and strafed unmercifully. Tunnel-busting became a fine art. When pilots spotted a train entering a tunnel they skipped bombs in to both ends to seal the train inside, then bombed the tunnel itself. Near Canisy a locomotive was shredded until it looked like a steel broom.

It wasn't as easy as it sounds. Germans got tired of having their trains shot up. They ran flak trains with ack-ack guns mounted on alternate cars. Box cars often hid camouflaged ack-ack guns.

New pilots were profiting from the lessons of Africa. As fighter-bombers turned more attention to ground targets and less to escorting medium and heavy bombers into Germany and France, the chances of becoming an "Ace" dropped to almost nothing. But compensation came later when the doughfoot, who used to regard the pilot as a glamor boy who flew up high where the going looked easy, came to love him like a brother and missed him when he wasn't there.

As operations changed, so did the planes. No longer painted olive drab, fighter-bombers went out as "silvery shapes" flashing in the sun. Although supremacy over the continent had been established, speed was more important than camouflage. The Luftwaffe still came out, but not in too great strength, not with any regularity.

The AEF (Allied Expeditionary Air Force) had five major targets in the month preceding D-Day to prepare the



ground for invasion. IX TAC concentrated on three: marshalling yards, airfields and bridges. Hitting the first would delay movement of supplies and reinforcements; smashing the second was to prevent the Germans from having fighter and bomber bases near assault areas; attacks against the third were to delay movements of supplies and reinforcements to invasion areas once the battle had begun.

During May, IX TAC planes flew 14,000 sorties, used more than 5,000,000 gallons of gasoline, dropped over 2500 tons of bombs, fired more than 800,000 rounds of ammunition. This was the preview to the big show.



Opportunity Knocks on D-Day

IX TAC TOPS ITS OWN SORTIE RECORD

If they had known that an Air Combat Control squadron was sitting out in the Channel only seven miles from Isigny on D-Day, ground troops would have been the most surprised men in the world. They were astonished to find IX TAC personnel on Omaha Beach on D plus 2.

Sitting out in the Channel on the *USS Ancon*, the combat control squadron broke its radio and radar silence at 0611 June 6. From then on, it directed fighter-bombers in the air and helped detect enemy planes. IX TAC flew more than 1400 sorties, a record in its history up to that time. TAC recon planes flew back and forth giving infor-

mation on targets. Planes reported the success of pre-arranged missions. Planes on patrol were told to stand by for targets of opportunity.

There were so many Allied planes in the air that almost every returning pilot said he had to put his hand out to make a turn. D plus 1 was worse. IX Fighter Command flew 1594 sorties.

Three groups flew 36 armed recon missions. Lt. Gen. Lewis H. Brereton, the Commanding General of the Ninth, commended them in a letter to Gen. Quesada: "On June 7, groups of your command furnished close continuous support to the Omaha Beachhead area. The situation there was critical, and by the excellent attacks and continuous support rendered by you, restored a delicate situation." Gen. Quesada added his own message to Gen. Brereton's: "It is possible, if not probable, that their efforts were in a large part responsible for the attack on Omaha Beach continuing. History may show they saved the day."

Non-flying personnel plunged ashore on D plus 2 when they stepped off into what they thought was shallow water off Omaha Beach and had to swim for shore. Life-belts didn't help much. Three headquarters squadron sergeants shuttled back and forth like lifeguards. Finally everyone landed, wet and miserable — no pup tents, no blankets.

There was fighting on the beaches, and it was more important to find a foxhole than to worry over the comforts of life. When the rest of the squadron arrived, there were enough gruesome tales ready to keep them gaping for a long time. "The Veterans" had established

themselves, and the unsung hero was a private named "Jake," who still claims he dug the first latrine in Normandy. No one has ever contested his claim.

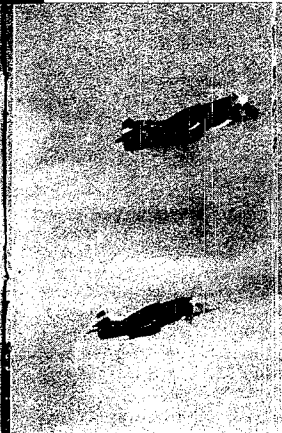
The German lines weren't too far away, and the Hun had minelaying planes darting across the area. Danger, however, was in falling fragments of Allied ack-ack. Helmets which had been shoved away under bunks in England now were treated with respect.

The Engineering Command did a bang-up job of building strips under fire. Even on D-Day an emergency landing strip was carved out of Normandy fields. Within the next week, squadrons were landing and taking off on longer strips. On June 15, planes were landing on A-1. Col. Gilbert L. Meyers' Thunderbolt group was the first to have a squadron based in Normandy on June 19.

The remainder of the command trickled over on a C-47; the plane carried everything from guns to bicycles. Once established on the continent, IX TAC moved into tents. Then came the long trek across France in the wake of advancing armies to smear the Wehrmacht's railroads and trucks. Nazi supermen had to fall back on horse-drawn vehicles.

PAYOFF was St. Lo. This sleepy, unknown little French town turned out to be the Allies' 20-yard line and called for a razzle-dazzle play to shake things loose. The High Command had the play. IX TAC took a big part in the blocking for ground troops.

Altogether, about 3000 planes set to smash German lines and break the ground forces into the clear. The area in which the fighter-bombers were to operate was



7000 yards long, 250 yards wide. In short, fighters worked closer to ground troops than ever before. St. Lo was not only the turning point in the battle for France — it was the proving ground for air support. It was the first time fighter-bombers really had a chance to clear the path to let doughfeet and tanks through.

First more than 1500 heavies of the 8th Air Force came to blanket the St. Lo-Perriers area. Then 300 mediums of IX Bomber Command attacked three areas west

of the heavies. Three thousand tons of bombs were dropped with good results. Then fighter-bombers came in—15 groups divided into two wings. (At that time, Fighter Command included XIX and IX TAC.)

Groups met over strip A-10, checked in with flying control, flew directly to St. Lo. The target area was divided into the Eastern and Western Fighter Bomber areas—and they alternated between the two. The first group in each wing attacked the Eastern area, the second group the Western. At three-minute intervals groups appeared

over the target. Five hundred planes dropped 200 tons of bombs in the initial attack. When it was over, one of the pilots described the area as "covered with a pall of smoke up to 2000 feet as far north as Carentan, where it was about 8 miles wide." The area was badly chewed up. Most of the ack-ack was silenced, because either barrels were burned out shooting at the heavies, or the Krauts were out of ammunition.

AFTER the initial breakthrough, doughfeet and tanks really began to roll. Fighter-bombers flew almost 10,000 sorties and dropped more than 2000 tons of bombs between July 25 and July 31. The mission also included direct support. Flights of four would fly half-hour shifts over the head of a tank column, and lead it down the road.

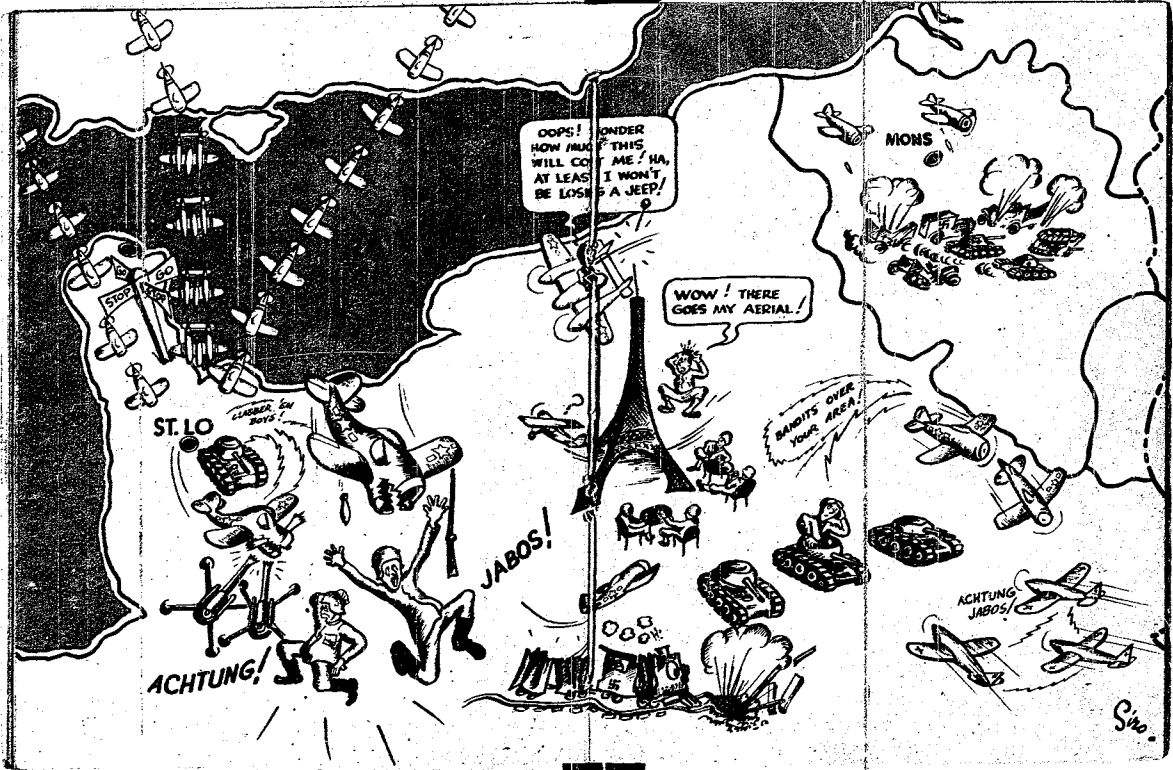
The support worked in two ways. Tank commanders either asked the planes to scout the road ahead to see if there was any opposition, or they called on planes for help when opposition was encountered.

When a single Sherman was surrounded by 13 Panzers, a flight of fighter-bombers dispersed the Panzers and saved the M-4. When a fighter-bomber swooped down on enemy half-tracks near Canisy, Krauts jumped out and began waving a white flag. The pilot radioed Army to pick up prisoners.

"Achtung, Jabos!" was already a standard alert for the Germans. Telephone conversations between members of the Nazi High Command began blaming fighter-bomber attacks for inability to advance, or to stop the U. S. attacks.

After the initial breakthrough, fighter-bombers held a field day. First they bombed crossroads. Then they





OOOPS! WONDER HOW MUCH THIS WILL COST ME! HA, AT LEAST I WON'T BE LOSING A JEEP!

WOW! THERE GOES MY AERIAL!

BANDIT'S OVER YOUR AREA

ST. LO

LANDER IN TROUBLE!

JABOS!

ACHTUNG!

MONS

ACHTUNG JABOS!

Sino.



AIR AND GROUND
COORDINATION:
DOUBLE-TROUBLE
FOR THE ENEMY



AIR AND GROUND
COORDINATION

knocked out bridges. They smacked Panzer tanks, left them burning. When tanks took off cross-country, planes swooped down on them like vultures. On July 29, pilots hung up the scalps of 37 tanks, damaged 42 and knocked out more than 200 trucks.

Nazi Field Marshal Wilhelm Keitel sent out a warning to his commanders about the effectiveness of what he called the "Anglo-Saxon air force." He didn't have to—they were well aware of it.

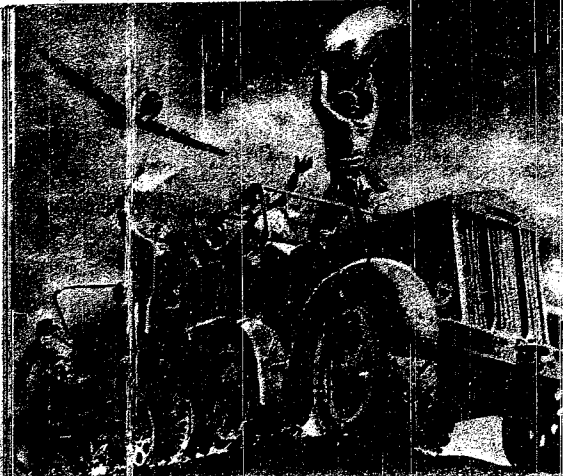
July 31 was another field day. Pilots in the air between Granville, Graverly and Avranches threw Sunday punches at the Wehrmacht. They added to their totals of ground targets, hit railroads and bridges behind German lines, knocked down 14 enemy planes, and broke up a counter-attack in the middle of the U. S. lines.

They blocked the roads. They chased Nazi convoys unmercifully up and down the highways and left so many shattered, burning and crippled vehicles that fleeing Krauts had trouble weaving in and out of the wreckage. Trucks were parked bumper to bumper like a Saturday afternoon crowd leaving a football game at the Polo Grounds. Even attempts to hide behind the hedgerows proved futile. Pilots swept down to 35 feet from the ground, smacking everything they could see.

Meanwhile German high commanders screamed at each other over field telephones. One Nazi corps commander called frantically for Luftwaffe air cover.

"It should be there any minute," he was told. "According to Col. Blowius, planes have taken off."

"I've seen only one all day," the corps general complained.



"That's one more than I have," snapped his superior.

To pilots who participated, the St. Lo operation represented an opportunity to show ground troops what fighter-bombers could do. To Germans it was a headache. Planes crippled them, snarled their supply network, smeared their plan of attack. Planes and tanks had become an unbestable team.

DURING early August, the Germans started backing up towards their own goal line. It wasn't orderly like Rommel's retreat in Africa, but a confused series of routs. Large enemy units became isolated from one another. A few made stands, falling back slowly.

As headquarters and groups pitched tents across France, fighter-bombers kept slashing unmercifully at German communications. Through the long summer days they prowled the countryside, beating convoys and railroad trains into twisted and charred debris.

German prisoners related that they spent a lot of time digging-in to escape these attacks. Vehicles moved in groups of three or four at night, with 500-yard intervals. Then they began to fall back on horse-drawn equipment.

Aerial battles were eclipsed by pinpoint bombing, which developed into a science. First Lt. Walter J. Ozment, Jr., of Cannelton, W. Va., was west of Mortain one afternoon when he saw a Nazi tank with the hatch open. He came down to 1000 feet and planted a bomb right through the opening. Maj. Robert C. "Buck" Rogers, on a mission with some Lightnings, skipped two 1000-pound bombs into the mouth of a railroad tunnel. Col. Howard F. Nichols and a squadron of his Lightnings blasted von Kluge's headquarters; the Colonel skipped a bomb right through the front door.

One dramatic incident turned out to be an errand of mercy. A tank column was trapped between the burning village of Ranes, which it had just captured, and enemy lines. A seriously injured tanker of the column was too far away from the medical station to receive help in time to save his life.



It was 1900 hours when Capt. James A. Mullen, flight leader of a Thunderbolt formation protecting another column, got the radio message. "Please have air controller send up blood plasma in a hurry."

Less than two hours after the appeal, 1st Lt. Willard R. Haines, Atlanta, Ga., roared down below tree-top level into a hail of intense small arms fire to drop a specially packed belly tank containing plasma, morphine and sulfa drugs. Lt. Haines' flap machinery was smashed, but he managed to get back safely. While Thunderbolts bombed and strafed the enemy a short distance away, the wounded tanker got a new lease on life.

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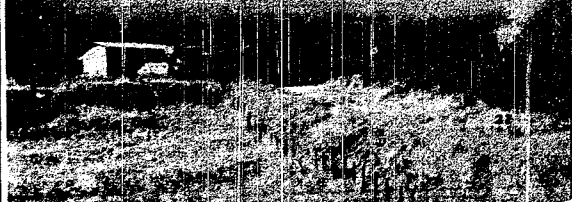
"Milk Run" Over Falaise

JABOS SLASH OPEN A POCKET

COMMUNICATIONS along the Loire had been ground down. Bridges were out. Railroads were paralyzed. At Falaise the Germans huddled together on their own 15-yard line. What happened is called the "Falaise Pocket," but IX TAC fighter-bombers borrowed a phrase from the 8th to describe it—the "milk run."

Maj. Joseph L. McCloskey, St. Louis, Mo., flew over the area one afternoon and came home biting his lips. There were 1000 uncamouflaged vehicles along a series of roads, but infantry had moved so fast the pilots were told to lay off. The U. S. could use the vehicles.

IX TAC pilots caught Germans trying to escape towards the Seine on Aug. 24 and knocked out more than 400 trucks.



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armored vehicles and horse-drawn equipment. Next day Lightnings from two of the groups shot down 41 of the Luftwaffe, but lost only nine.

In the four days from Aug. 24 to 28, Col. Gilbert L. Meyers' Thunderbolt group destroyed 426 vehicles, damaged 125. On the 25th, between Soissons and Laon, they knocked out 213, damaged 46.

But the big day was Sept. 3. Roads over the Mons-Bavai canal in southern Belgium were choked with men in green. Trucks, armored cars, staff cars, wagons and horses were all drawn up, bumper to bumper. Col. Ray J. Stecker came back from a mission to report 1000 vehicles stalled in and around Mons. The Luftwaffe was nowhere in sight. It was cold turkey.

Pilots reported the confusion as indescribable. Ground troops moved in so quickly that U. S. vehicles merged into enemy convoys. Thunderbolts and Lightnings had to be careful not to hit friendly troops.

Lt. Col. Louis T. Houck of Todd, N.C., reported at least 1000 vehicles burning and mangled along the roads and hedgerows.

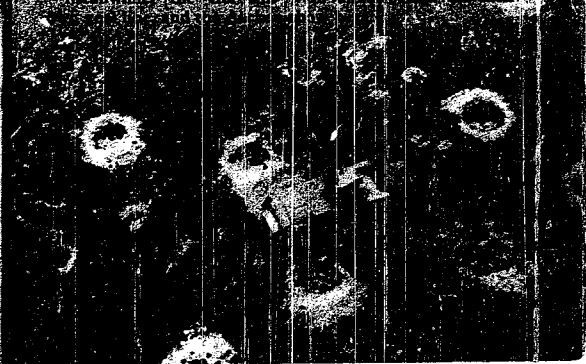
Climax of the day was the show put on by Thunderbolt pilot Lt. Zell Smith of Monroe, La. On the outskirts of Enghien, he spotted U. S. troops just about to enter a town, waggled his wings at the doughfeet below along a railroad track. Lt. Smith then put on a demonstration of pinpoint strafing, laying a gun pattern over a column of Nazi trucks. He came back for another pass at the convoy. When he waved a final farewell, the troops moved in to mop up what was left.

TAC pilots had destroyed 919 trucks and 775 horse-drawn vehicles. In a little more than 30 days, 9000 pieces of enemy transportation had been marked off the books.

To make all this possible, Signal Corps had strung enough wire to stretch from New York to Berlin. Reconnaissance pilots who flew through flak continued to be the unsung heroes, snapping pictures ahead of the Army to provide the pilots with new targets, and checking the extent of the damage. Photo recce boys took most of the pictures. TAC boys had to go down and look for themselves.

Paris was liberated and it was fun for a change to buzz the Eiffel Tower. The GI perched on top to record every plane that buzzed the famous landmark reported that every type of aircraft had made a pass except a Fortress. When that happened, he said he would be ready for a transfer.

Meanwhile, the Germans were still busy with their





Ground controllers in tanks and on foot picked out targets in front of ground troops to prevent Germans from bringing up supplies. As always they chewed up any of the Luftwaffe that put in an appearance.

Days shortened and the weather became spotty. IX TAC couldn't get planes into the air as early as formerly. Dough-
feet missed them and said so.

Near Diekirch, on Sept. 19, Maj. William D. Ritchie of Pike Bluff, Ark., and Maj. John R. Murphy of McAllen, Tex., received letters of commendation from Gen. Quesada for leading squadrons which knocked out tanks and stopped a counter-attack against First Army troops cut off on the German side of a river.

U. S. fighters had the measure of the Luftwaffe. The bugaboo was flak. It still is. Pilots found it at every altitude, from 88mm to small arms fire. It became one of a long list of targets. Flak is a belt along the entire front, extending in depth behind the German line. Light stuff, small arms and 20mm, is the pilot's greatest worry.

One of the weirdest aerial battles on record took place just south of Arnheim Sept. 28. Late that afternoon the Thunderbolt group led by Col. Carroll W. McColpin of Buffalo, N. Y., nosed into about 20 ME 109s and FW 190s.

Within 15 minutes, 2d Lt. John W. Wainwright of Marshall, Tex., who had never seen a German plane was an ace—and then some. Turning towards a group of Thunderbolts, an ME 109 slid down in front of him. He gave it a burst and it exploded. Next he caught an ME 109 in a flat spin, threw it a burst and that one blew up. What happened next made history. Two ME 109s were directly behind him. He went into a spin to escape. As he came out, he began shooting at them. They collided in front of him. The German leader, attempting a tight turn, had run into his own wing man. Lt. Wainwright ducked into a cloud, headed home, but as he poked his nose out of the cloud, two ME 109s began firing at him. Ducking back, he reappeared a moment later, in time to see them collide and burn. He got credit for six planes—with plenty of help from the Luftwaffe.

AACHEN was the five-yard line. The world was watching. Not too concerned with the town itself, the fighter bombers wanted to snag the troops and equipment coming up to defend it. As a result, 50 per cent of the missions were direct support, with planes turned over to

the ground controller for bombing and strafing ahead of first line troops.

During early October, every little town and village within 15 miles of Aachen was hit. The attack against railroads bringing up supplies from the rear also continued. Maj. Gen. Edward R. Brooks, commanding general of the First Army's V Corps, sent a letter of commendation to Gen. Quesada, praising IX TAC for its work "in repelling vicious German counter-attacks and in accounting for an appreciable number of enemy personnel and vehicles, including tanks and artillery." To his pilots, Gen. Quesada wrote: "It is a pleasure to have your exceptional performance recognized by the ground forces."

The Aachen sector was plastered for 20 long days. Surrounding towns were strafed daily. Pilots swooped low to knock out strongpoints and observation posts for artillery batteries. One afternoon the doughfeet were so grateful for this bull's-eye bombing which wiped out two dug-in mortar and gun positions outside of Aachen that by the time pilots returned an informal telephone commendation was relayed from the front to the base.

Aachen finally fell, but there was no lull for pilots. Every position in surrounding areas had to be blasted and cleaned out. Rail lines had to be cut and the enemy kept from bringing up supplies. After the city's official demise, fighter-bombers started hacking away again at German lines of communication.

The Luftwaffe came back sporadically. During the latter part of October as many as 100 a day would appear on various sections of the First Army front. Some were aggressive, but the majority fled.



When jet-propelled ME 163s made their first appearance, Capt. Valmore J. Beaudreault of New York was credited with the first, which he drove into the ground.

NOV. 16 dawned cold and clear, almost a month after the taking of Aachen. It was

another D-Day. Eleven hundred hours was another H-Hour. The Army had waited six days for good flying weather over Eschweiler, for a play through the line with air running interference.

First heavies from the 1st came in to blanket Eschweiler itself, about 30 square miles. Mediums hit nearby towns. The RAF took objectives farther to the rear. IX TAC did the close-up blocking.

IX TAC flew more than 200 sorties that day, despite a low ceiling that made close work hazardous. Almost as many planes jammed the air as at St. Lo. Bomb holes every 25 feet were outlined by the first snowfall.

Here, near the goal line, yardage gained wasn't big. But it represented perfect teamwork.

"Langerwehe is badly beaten up," reported a major



"The center of Duren is flat," said a recon pilot. Pictures proved it. Little towns whose names were only on large scale maps took the spotlight. They were hit until cleaned out, often continuously for three and four days.

American infantrymen on Nov. 18 found themselves pinned down by artillery fire a few miles southeast of Eschweiler. Thunderbolts strafed and bombed positions not more than 200 yards in front of the line. They were so close, the ground controller said he was able to describe the entire action in detail.

Near Stolberg, Capt. Robert M. Fry, Erie, Pa., led his Thunderbolts only 20 feet off the ground to attack German artillery firing at U. S. tanks.

"I could see the muzzle blast from the lead tank flatten the grass in front as the gun went off," the Captain said.

Meanwhile the Black Widow night-fighters took on a new job. In addition to patrolling and watching for enemy aircraft, they began to beat up the German railroads trying to transport troops and supplies at night. IX TAC now hits the Germans around the clock.

HEVY fog lay on the ground, seeped into the valleys, and veiled the low, steep hills flanking the Ambleve River and the villages of Stavelot, La Gleize and Stoumont Dec. 18 as a column of 200 grey-green German tanks and armored cars moved up towards vital American oil stores and communications. It was noon, and U. S. infantry divisions covering the northern flank of the German counter-offensive, which had started the day before, were not certain they could contain this spearhead as it turned north.



...had count-
...will their
...knowing that it
...their dead-
...fighter-

...contact with
...Headquarters,
...knew that
...had driven
...through the Losheim Gap
...and were hurrying to-

...Stavelot. He phoned
...George W. Pack
...commander of
...reconnaissance
...for volunteers to
...through the 10/10 fog
...being back much
...information about
...the German movement.

...the field phone, Gen.
...braced his two
... Mustang pilots
...Richard Cassidy of
...1st, 2nd and 3rd
...of the
...He told them
...that to look

...team flew

in valleys, sometimes less than 100 feet off the ground in order to see below and still miss the hills. Near Stavelot, they spotted 60 Nazi tanks and armored vehicles moving through the mist.

"We made three runs over that column, and the Germans were so surprised to see us they didn't fire until the last run," said Capt. Cassidy, who wears the DFC, the Purple Heart and the Air Medal with 13 clusters. "We could see their faces as they threw everything they had at us, from rifles to 20mm stuff."

The two pilots radioed their findings to Col. Meyers, 27-year-old combat operations chief. Col. Meyers already had organized a fighter-bomber mission using the "Hell Hawks" of Col. Ray J. Stecker's Thunderbolt group. The "Panzer Dusters," led by Lt. Col. Frank S. Peregó of Canandaigua, N. Y., likewise were alerted.

Four-plane flights took off for the target area, each carrying two 500-pound bombs. Twisting through the fog between 450-foot hills over winding backgrounds, the first flight caught more than 60 tanks and 200 trucks. They bombed 30 tanks, strafed 20 trucks. Three planes were hit by flak. One didn't come back.

Col. Meyers continued to send four-plane flights shuttling over the area until 1700 hours that afternoon, seven missions in all. At the end of the day, pilots reported 126 armored vehicles and trucks destroyed, 34 damaged. The crack Adolph Hitler Division had been stopped short of its objective. A lightly armed airborne division was assembled to finish the job. On Dec. 20, a U. S. armored division locked around the column, and the threat was ended.

Air and Ground Make a Team

QUOTE: OH, HOW WE LOVE YOU

Some are in higher echelons, the heart of IX TAC.

In a high-ceilinged dark-paneled room are officers and EM at telephones. Below is a board showing the First Army front. The men are seated in tiers. As reports come in, GIs move little standards from one grid square to another. If the colored square on the standard is yellow, it denotes enemy planes. If green, the aircraft is friendly. Those numbered designate IX TAC squadrons or groups.

The men with the phones talk with the pilots. When a man gets lost, fighter control tells him where he is and gives him a fix. If he cannot contact the ground controller, it will take him to his target and bring him back. Many a time an officer with conviction in his voice has brought a pilot home by telephone.

One pilot, whose plane was hit by flak, prepared to bail out. The controller talked him out of it, led him home for a belly landing. Pilot and ship sustained only minor damage. A few days later, the appreciative airman came to headquarters to thank the man who had brought him in.

Because of its fluid nature, TAC has had almost every group in 9th Air Force under its command at one time or another. At present all three types of fighter planes, Thunderbolts, Lightnings and Mustangs, are represented. All groups have done praiseworthy jobs.

TAC had its best day in North Africa during the rout of Rommel, when the Nazis were making a desperate effort to supply their forces by air. A group engaged 130 enemy aircraft off the coast of Cape Bon, Tunisia and destroyed 58 JU 52s, 17 ME 109s, probably destroyed one ME 109, 10 damaged. Six American planes were lost.

In the final analysis, it isn't the number of planes knocked out, nor the number of pillboxes cracked, nor the number of gun positions destroyed. It's what happened the other day when a group of Thunderbolts had just finished knocking out mortar positions. Wheeling around to go home they heard someone from the ground control call them in to be changed orders.

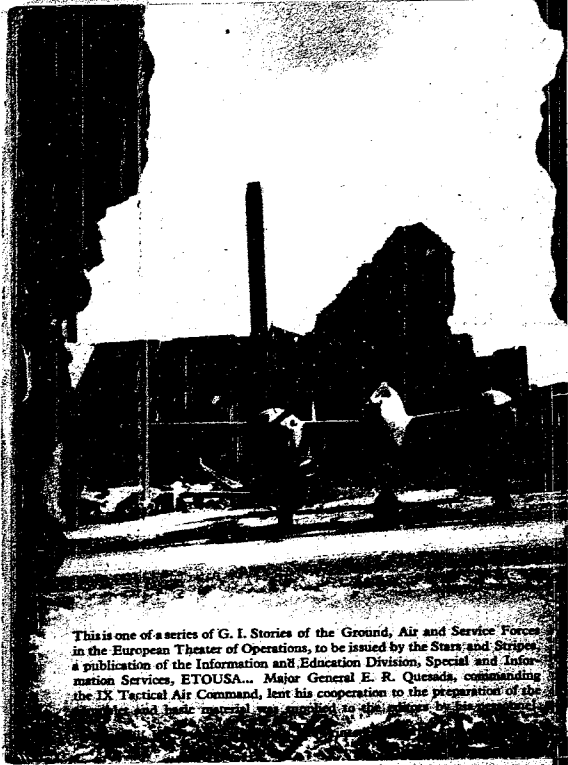
Oh, how we love you sir.



The Team



AUTOGRAPHS

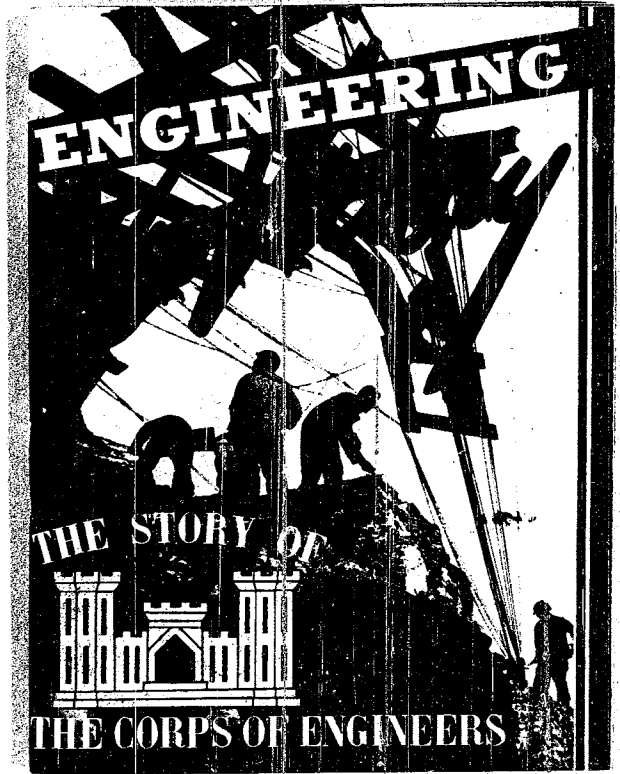


This is one of a series of G. I. Stories of the Ground, Air and Service Forces in the European Theater of Operations, to be issued by the Stars and Stripes, a publication of the Information and Education Division, Special and Information Services, ETOUSA... Major General E. R. Quesada, commanding the IX Tactical Air Command, lent his cooperation to the preparation of the photographs and basic material was supplied to the editors by his command.

ENGINEERING

THE STORY OF

THE CORPS OF ENGINEERS

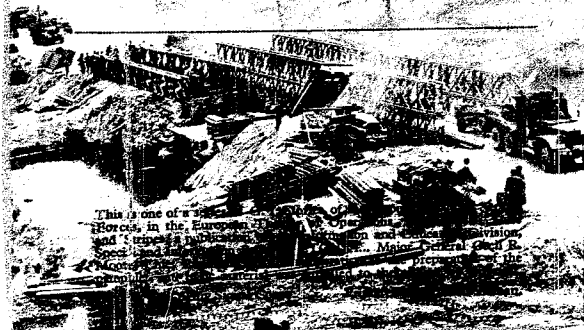


Training _____

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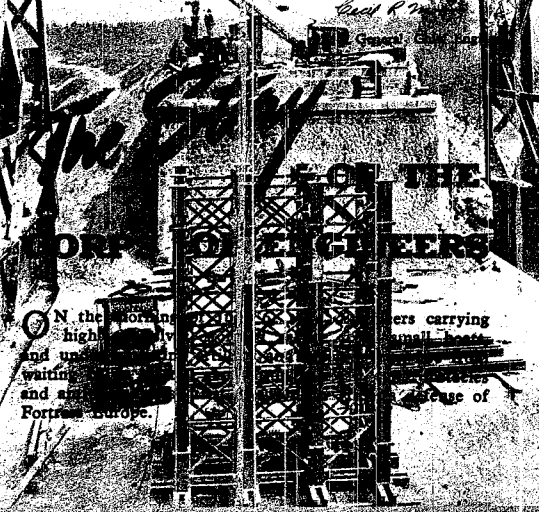
This is one of a series of photographs showing the work of the Engineers in the European Theater of Operations. It is a reproduction of a photograph taken by the Signal Corps and is published by permission of the Chief of Staff, United States Army, Washington, D. C.



THIS booklet records briefly the achievements of our soldiers in the European Theater of Operations. It does not possibly tell the complete story—a story of the great accomplishments and heroism by individuals and units of the Corps of Engineers in every element of our Army. If it were possible to fittingly dedicate this book, I would like it to be to all who served—at home and abroad—as members of what citizens of the American Democracy can and have done to defeat a determined enemy whose aggressions threaten our very existence.

Every Engineer soldier can take pride in the work he has done to help write this brilliant record. I hope sincerely that we may all rededicate ourselves to the task of speeding victory over the Nazi enemy so that we can again turn our engineering talents to the better service.

Gen. R. M. ...



The Story OF THE CORP OF ENGINEERS

ON the morning of ... ers carrying small boats and ... waiting ... and a ... of Fortress Europe.

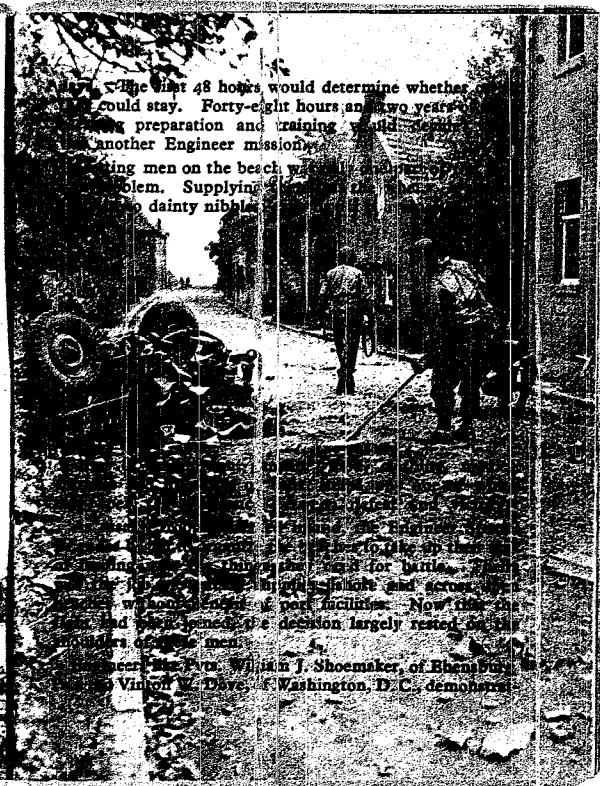
Through these gaps poured the Infantry in unending columns to come at last to grips with the enemy. The battle for the beachheads, soon to grow into the Battle for France, was begun.

Up and down the grim stretch of hostile Norman's coast, the traditional Engineer mission of clearing the way for the Armies again was being fulfilled—this time for keeps.

So well was their traditional mission accomplished that the 147th and 149th Engr. Combat Bns. were cited by the President for their excellence, courage and devotion to the cause for which they faced the grim unknown that day.

The return of Army Engineers to France was like adding another volume to a story that began many years ago. During the most trying days of the American Revolution, the friendly French had sent their most distinguished engineers to General Washington at Valley Forge to aid him in his battle. One of these men, Maj. Gen. Louis de Bégue Dupontail, became the first Chief of Engineers of the American Army. After Cornwallis' surrender at Yorktown this great engineer laid the groundwork upon which the Colonial Army was built, planned the first curriculum of the Military Academy at West Point which, until shortly before the Civil War, was primarily an Engineer School.

It seemed fitting that America's Engineers should return now to France to aid in the most difficult



The next 48 hours would determine whether they could stay. Forty-eight hours and two years of preparation and training would determine another Engineer mission.

Working men on the beach was the problem. Supplying them with no dainty nibbles.

...the Engineers...
...to the...
...for battle...
...and...
...facilities...
...the...
...rested on...
...men.

...Mr. J. Shoemaker, of...
...Washington, D.C. demonstr...

ed that. The bulldozer they alternately ran across the bloody beach was a perfect target for enemy artillery and mortar fire. Men and bulldozer showed no concern as great gey-sers of earth from bursting shells rained down. There was no protection stop the unarmored 'dozer. Yet, with the battle for the beachhead raging furiously, they calmly pushed aside capsized vehicles jamming exit roads from the beach and, when these roads were cleared, smashed farther in to batter roadblocks, to smother gaping anti-tank traps, to build roads for the Army. The citation for which they were awarded the Distinguished Service Cross put it simply:

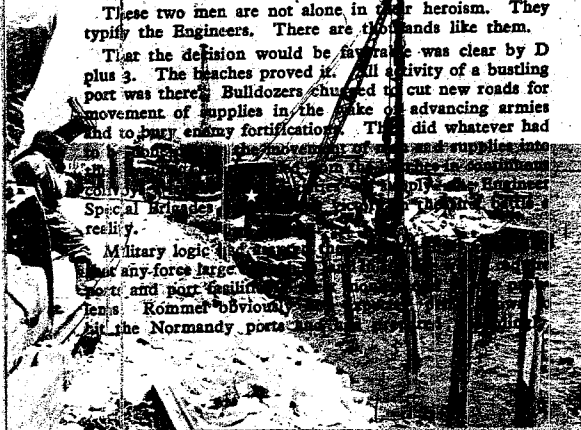
"...Their courageous actions permitted vehicles and armor to move out in support of the infantry..."

These two men are not alone in their heroism. They typify the Engineers. There are thousands like them.

That the decision would be favorable was clear by D plus 3. The beaches proved it. All activity of a bustling port was there. Bulldozers chugged to cut new roads for movement of supplies in the wake of advancing armies and to bury enemy fortifications. They did whatever had to be done to insure the movement of men and supplies into the beachhead.

Special Brigades, the Army Engineers, and the Army Engineers, they did whatever had to be done to insure the movement of men and supplies into the beachhead.

Military logic had it that the beachhead was the key to the continent. The Army Engineers, they did whatever had to be done to insure the movement of men and supplies into the beachhead.



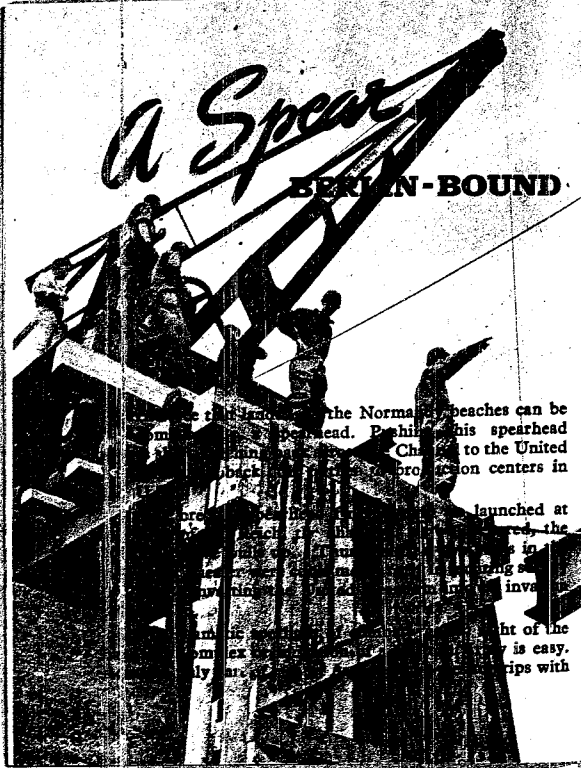
When the first Allied troops landed on the beaches of Normandy, they found a grim scene. The beaches were littered with mines and obstacles. The men of the Army Engineers, they did whatever had to be done to insure the movement of men and supplies into the beachhead.

A man-made magic made this possible. It was the same magic which had wrought miracles of American engineering—converted now from the ways of peace to the ways of war.

Three things took the beaches—air power, fire power and GI guts. But behind these was yet another power—American workpower. War is force: the side with greater force can impose its will upon the side with lesser force. American workpower—built up months ago in cities like Detroit, Philadelphia, Birmingham and Los Angeles—is the most overwhelming force in the world today. Engineers now were delivering this force to the continent and hurling it against the massed Nazi lines.

A Spear

BERLIN-BOUND



the enemy. Most of its energy is devoted simply to living and moving. Behind each yard of territory wrested from the enemy, behind each bombing raid over Berlin, are the months of preparation, often forgotten in the more dramatic climaxes of war.

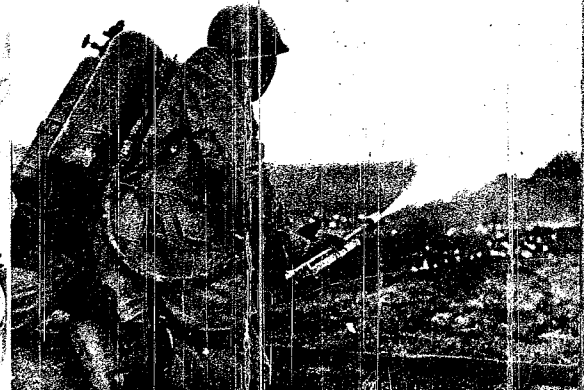
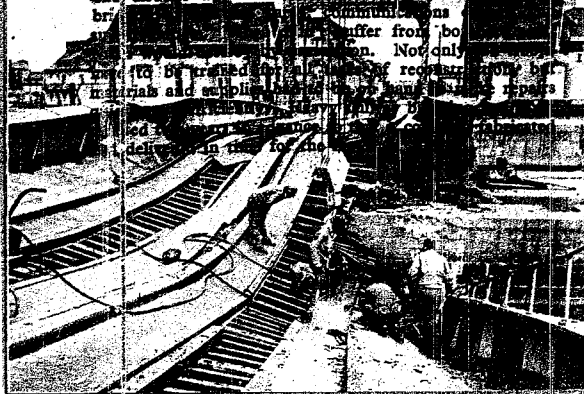
Two years ago, the Engineers began to prepare a fighting base in the U. K. From this base, the air bombardment of Hitler's industrial backbone was launched. From this base, a substantial part of the African invasion was launched. And from this base—when chips really were down—the invasion of Europe was launched.

First action against Western Europe during the two years of invasion preparation was from the air. But airpower is earthbound. It is bound to airdromes for take-off and landing. Requirements for roads, runways, and hardstandings of the U. S. Army Air Forces airdromes in the European Theater of Operations alone are equivalent to construction of a 20-ft. concrete highway from New York to Moscow. And there is more to an airport than just runways and hardstandings—there are hangars, shops, operational quarters, fuel storage, billets.

While a great deal of this construction was done by the British, much still was to be done by Engineer troops. A full year elapsed between the arrival of the first U. S. troops and the first 300-bomber raid. Nineteen months passed before a 1000-plane raid could be staged.

Engineers do all Army construction work except signal installations, also provide all quartering of troops. With huge forces marshalled for invasion and with construction demands of a great army to be met, Engineers built or requisitioned more than 100,000 buildings in the U. K.—from small cottages to sprawling hangars. Construction on this island base by Engineer troops was equal to a lifetime of work for 15,000 men—eight hours a day, six days a week, no time out for training or vacation. Billboards, workshops, training areas, storage depots: on these things are invasions built. These are the things Engineers build.

But while the base itself was being created, preparations for the reconstruction that would have to be done in Europe also were underway. Damage on the continent would be unprecedented as a result of Allied artillery and aircraft which would deliver mighty blows against



bridges, communications lines, and other vital infrastructure. Not only would the continent suffer from the damage, but the Allies would have to be trained for the reconstruction work that would be required. Engineers had provided a wealth of information to help GIs get their job done. Other Engineers taught troops

But there were other activities that also precluded the take-off. Many of the tasks confronting infantrymen today are essentially Engineer jobs—breaching obstacles, assaulting fixed fortifications, for instance. To teach doughfoot the uses of explosives, flame-throwers and Bangalore torpedoes, the Assault Training Center was set up in England under the direction of an Engineer officer well versed in enemy fortifications and assault doctrine.

When the time for assault on Normandy beaches was ripe, Engineers had provided a wealth of information to help GIs get their job done. Other Engineers taught troops



...of mine, booby traps and camouflage. Well
...of D-Day, engineers predicted where the tide
...on the beaches and the height of waves through
...which boats would have to pass. They provided
...these scale models and detailed maps of what assault troops
...would find when they hit the beaches, of the location of
...fortifications and obstacles, of roads vital for rapid move-
...ments of supplies and potential water supply points.

All these maps were prepared, printed and distributed by
...Engineers. Not since Napoleon's day had military maps
...of northwestern France been revised. Yet in less than two
...years, Engineer topographers, working with the British,
...completed maps of France, Germany and the Low Coun-
...tries. As a result Allied Armies invaded Western Europe
...with a more complete and accurate map than prepared
...for any military operation.

The planning of maps considered by U. S. field armies in
...1944 was prepared by night, bit by bit, by teams that to-
...day have the daily requirements of books and records
...of the war. In days of the operation in France, some
...of the maps were from the air.

ENGINEERS

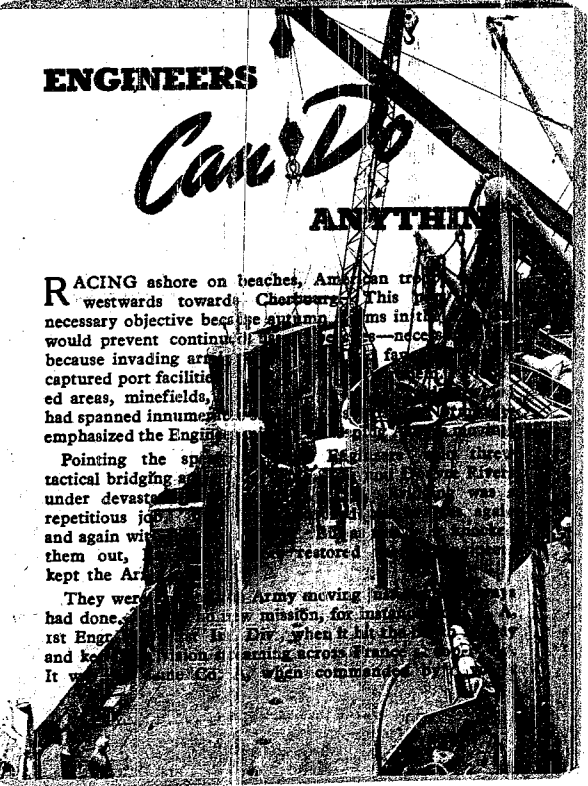
Can Do

ANYTHING

RACING ashore on beaches, American troops
westwards towards Cherbourg. This was
necessary objective because any amphibious landing
would prevent continued progress of the Allies—necessary
because invading armies need fuel, food, and
captured port facilities. The engineers
ed areas, minefields, and other obstacles
had spanned innumerable miles of water.
emphasized the Engineers' role in the operation.

Pointing the spotlights, the Engineers
tactical bridging across the river. The
under devastation. The Engineers
repetitious job of building bridges
and again with the same materials
them out, and the Engineers
kept the Army moving forward.

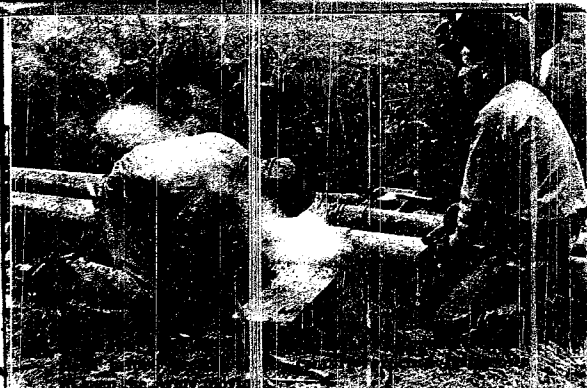
They were the Army's eyes and ears
had done a great deal of work, for instance
1st Engineer Group, 1st Army, when it hit the
and kept the Army moving across France.
It was the Engineers who were commanded by



Engineer Captain named Robert H. Lee in the Mexican War, that was largely responsible for the brilliant capture of Vera Cruz and Mexico City. It was the same Co. A that since its activation in 1846 had had on its staff at one time or another such future Civil War generals and Engineer officers as George B. McClellan, Pierre Beauregard, Joseph Johnston, Henry Halleck. Behind Co. A—as behind the whole Corps of Engineers—is a wealth of tradition. But ahead of it now was an immediate job to do; a job upon which future tradition would be built.

Other Engineers, too, were building future tradition. Men of the 2nd Engr. Combat Bn., and Inf. Div.; of the 121st Engr. Combat Bn., 29th Inf. Div.; of the 315th Engr. Combat Bn., 90th Inf. Div., kept their divisions moving. Men of the 4th Engr. Combat Bn., 4th Inf. Div.; of the 15th Engr. Combat Bn., 9th Inf. Div., too, kept their divisions pushing up the Cotentin Peninsula toward Cherbourg.

They kept highways open, filled in shell craters, blew out enemy pillboxes, and kept the German tanks from coming back.



Behind the combat line, the Engineers kept armies moving, too. They made the shaft of the spear keep pace with the spearhead, made sure no item essential to the fighting man's progress—food, ammunition, gasoline, spare parts—was lacking. With incredible speed Engineers laid pipelines from beaches to the fighting front to assure gasoline for tanks and trucks where it was needed, when it was needed, and at the same time to ease already choking traffic stretching as far as the eye could reach along the only Allied-held east-west highway in Normandy.

Pipe-laying Engineers followed the infantry so closely that they worked under enemy artillery fire. One afternoon, Maj. Gen. Manton S. Eddy, then commanding the 9th Inf. Div. pushing towards Cherbourg, arrived at a forward observation point to find a surveyor setting up his transit

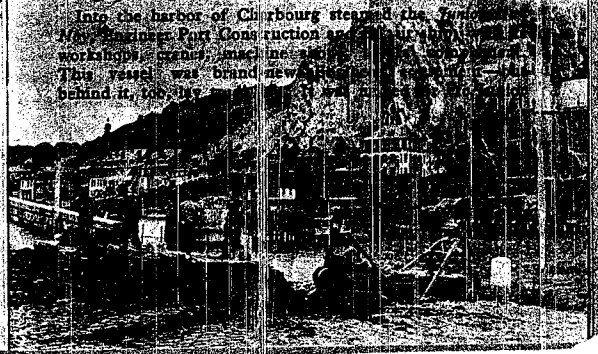


They were doing an impressive list of "firsts" in reoccupied France. At Isigny, divers of the 1055th Engineer Port Construction and Repair Group were the first to go below the surface in France to open canal locks and relieve the flooded countryside where American troops were fighting. They raised the first sunken ship there at Isigny, a German flak ship blocking a berth needed for unloading supplies. The same group built the first railroad bridge across the Taute River on the debris of the bridge demolished by retreating Nazis. They ran the first railroad train in reoccupied France, from Lison Junction to Isigny, when Lt. Gen. Omar N. Bradley needed locomotives ready for the movement of supplies.

The 1056th Engineer Port Construction and Repair Group, bolstered by the 42nd and 332nd General Service Regts., entered Cherbourg on its capture and set to work bringing order out of chaos. Debris littered the streets and dock areas. Ninety-five percent of all berths for deep-draught vessels was unusable. Even if all of it had been usable, the port (never a great freight port) would have been inadequate. Engineers still would have to enlarge it beyond its normal peacetime capacity. Other regiments were rushed in: the 347th General Service and the 333rd Special Service. They got the job done.

Five hundred and fourteen pieces of heavy equipment were used in the city. Enough two-by-four lumber to stretch from New York to Wyoming was consumed in vital construction. Six thousand piles, each 75 feet long, were driven. The real story of Cherbourg is that starting with nothing the Engineers had built in an amazingly short time a huge port capable of receiving its highest peacetime cargo.

Into the harbor of Cherbourg steamed the *Franklin D. Roosevelt*, the 1056th Engineer Port Construction and Repair Group's workshop crane, machine shop, and other facilities. This vessel was brand new, built in England, and was behind it, the *USS* *Franklin D. Roosevelt*.



Van Noy, of Preston, Ohio, first Engineer soldier to win the Congressional Medal of Honor in this war.

The Engineer mission is more than rebuilding for attacking troops, minefields, more than constructing than assembling troops.

Old with the strip job

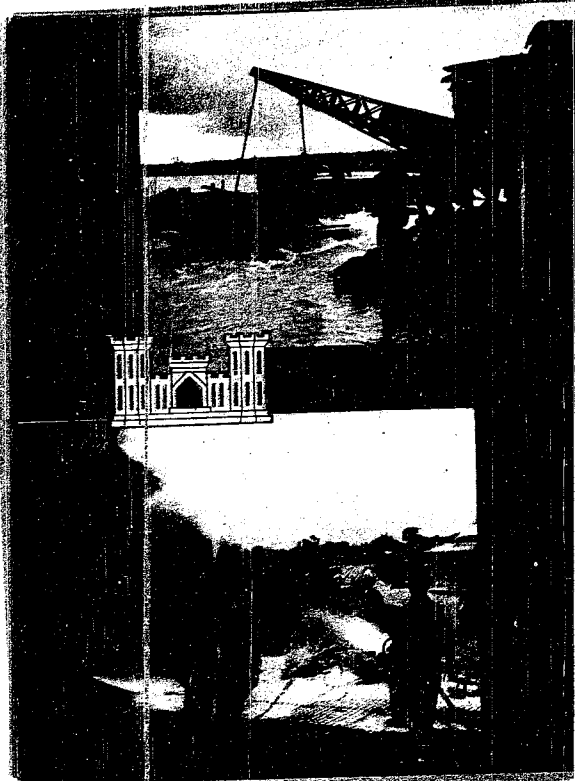
Engineer ready fields for enough





THE CORPS OF ENGINEERS

KEEPS 'EM
MOVING



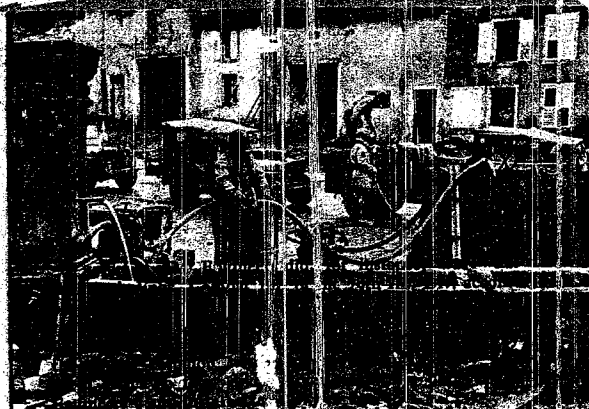
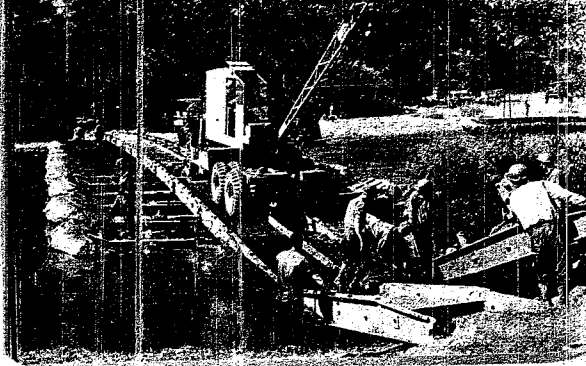
A France

INTO FRANCE

ATE in June...
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La Haye du...
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was might...
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Success of the venture depended largely on whether armor following infantry could slip rapidly through Lessay to exploit the infantry's accomplishments. But both the 4th and 6th Armd. Divs. had first to move down the one highway leading through Lessay, and Lessay was the most mined and booby-trapped town in France. Where the German soldier had failed to stem the surging tide of the Allied assault, mines and booby traps promised to win time for the enemy until it could again mass its forces for advance.

Into this situation moved the 24th Engr. Armd. Bn., 4th Armd. Div., and the 25th Engr. Armd. Combat Bn., 6th Armd. Div., which removed hundreds of land mines, neutralized over 500 booby traps, all in a few hours time. Armored spearheads that might have been delayed for days then, were able now to roll in only a few hours. As the 4th and 6th Armd. Divs. turned westward, slicing the German garrisons in escape.



Characteristic was the fighting at Fortress Neuf-Bargem before Brest. For three days, this fortress, manned by fanatical paratroops, had held up the advance of the 29th Inf. Div. Whenever doughs gained a foothold, Nazis rallied to drive them off. The job was turned over to the 121st Engineers.

Capt. Sydney W. Smith, Co. F CO, led his men under cover of flame-throwing tanks to the fort's outer wall. A gaping hole was blasted in the wall by two tons of explosive. The 121st used scaling ladders to gain the top, passed ladders along and descended to the courtyard where the paratroops surrendered after a bitter hand-to-hand fight.

The unit was cited for its action. Capt. Smith received the Silver Star.



...and them. ...
...and raising Bailey Bridges across streams for infantry and
...heavy steel treadway bridges for armored columns.
But it was not the enemy force ahead of them which concern-
ed Army commanders so much now. Supply lines had to
be built at a swift, unbelievable pace.

But if armies were tied to supply lines, Army Engineers
were determined to make the lines fluid and mobile as any-
thing Army commanders could conceive. This would
not bind if American manpower and workpower could
not make miracles. But they could.

A network of one-way highways—the famed Red Ball
Highways—was designated by the Transportation Corps as
a prime source of supply for speeding armies. Heavily
laden trucks would roll eastward along designated one-way

traffic roads, empty trucks would run back west along others.
Across France, Engineers rolled up their sleeves and went
to work, bridging, repairing highways, setting up depots
and workshops and all the essential services for such a road
system.

But no modern major military operation could be supplied
without railways. Ahead of advancing armies the Air
Force had pounded the continent's rail system to destroy
this vital link in the Nazi supply system. Railway bridges
were knocked out, marshalling yards bomb-plastered and
made useless, long stretches of track laid waste. Even
before D-Day, the Germans had given up as hopeless
repair of much of the rail system.

Nowhere was the irony of modern war more apparent
than here. The Allies had landed on the beaches and strike
inward across France to a large extent on such
destroyed lines. Over the success of the Allied
offensive would depend the fate of the very
rail lines that had been destroyed.

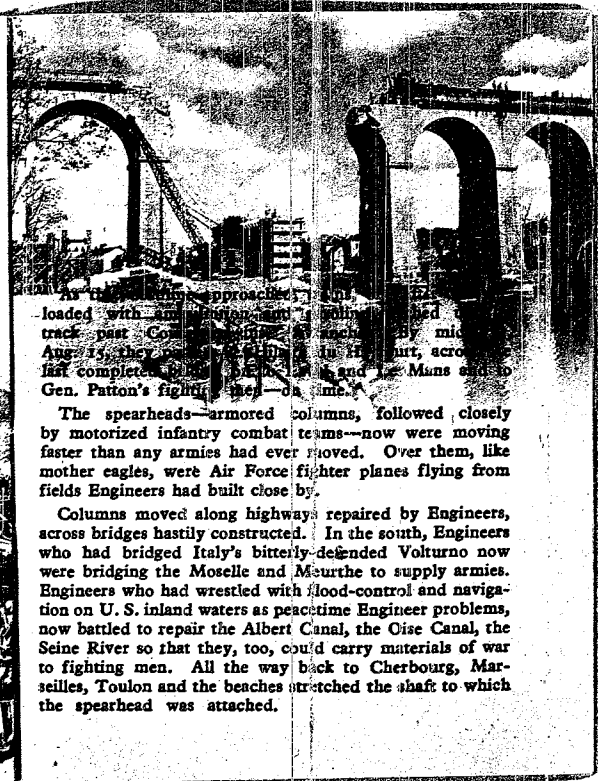
On the morning of August 24, 1944, the break-
through, Lt. Gen. George S. Patton and his Engineers



have the railroad, leading into Le Mans and Laval from St. Lo, ready to receive ammunition trains in 48 hours. Time allotted was notably short. It meant rebuilding seven railway bridges in various stages of demolition, repairing and laying new main lines in three marshalling yards, laying miles of track approaching bridges and yards, providing service and water facilities along the lines.

Two Engineer regiments, the 347th and 332nd with attached dump truck companies, were working on the stretch of road at the time. But if Gen. Patton wanted ammunition trains at Laval and Le Mans within 48 hours, Engineers were determined that no lack of railway line would prevent their being there.

Three additional regiments, the 392nd, 390th and 95th, were rushed to the area. All the heavy equipment that could possibly be spared from other equally pressing jobs was sent from Cherbourg, France, by day and by night. The 392nd and 390th were sent to the area by rail from Cherbourg, France, and the 95th was sent by air from England. The 392nd and 390th were sent to the area by rail from Cherbourg, France, and the 95th was sent by air from England. The 392nd and 390th were sent to the area by rail from Cherbourg, France, and the 95th was sent by air from England.



As the spearheads approached, the viaduct was loaded with ammunition and supplies. The viaduct was built to carry heavy loads. By mid-August, they were ready to go. The viaduct was built to carry heavy loads. By mid-August, they were ready to go. The viaduct was built to carry heavy loads. By mid-August, they were ready to go.

The spearheads—armored columns, followed closely by motorized infantry combat teams—now were moving faster than any armies had ever moved. Over them, like mother eagles, were Air Force fighter planes flying from fields Engineers had built close by.

Columns moved along highways repaired by Engineers, across bridges hastily constructed. In the south, Engineers who had bridged Italy's bitterly-defended Volturno now were bridging the Moselle and Meurthe to supply armies. Engineers who had wrestled with flood-control and navigation on U. S. inland waters as peacetime Engineer problems, now battled to repair the Albert Canal, the Oise Canal, the Seine River so that they, too, could carry materials of war to fighting men. All the way back to Cherbourg, Marseilles, Toulon and the beaches stretched the shaft to which the spearhead was attached.



shaft of this spearhead at Isle
 Grandcamp, Cherbourg, Brest, St. Malo, Morlaix,
 Morlaix, Marseilles, cargo vessels laden to the gunwales with
 supplies of war were moored to docks which, a few short
 months before, were only piles of rubble. Divers, pile-driv-
 ers, shovel and dozer operators, steel men, tophand con-
 struction men got the job done. These were Army Engineers.
 For modern construction, electricity, water supply and other
 utilities are essential. Expert utilities companies trained
 to put them to use were on the ground. These were Army
 Engineers.

Army Engineers kept equipment ranning—repairing,
 rebuilding, maintaining as it wore away under constant
 heavy duty. They set up huge supply depots of materials
 and tools necessary to get the job done. They camouflaged

installations, vehicles and bivouac areas from enemy in the
 air and from enemy in artillery observation posts.

Freight cars line docks, locomotives cling away from
 unloading areas with long trains of materials. Army
 Engineers built or repaired the track. Engineers rebuilt,
 repaired, maintained highways for the winding convoys of
 trucks rolling to the front.

Along supply lines from rear to the German border the
 same sort of work was in progress. Depots, shops, utilities,
 railways, bridges—all of the construction that a vast and
 complex Army requires—was being done by men who
 knew their jobs. Men who worked as a team by men who
 were part of a greater team.

One of the things that the Army Engineers did was to build
 the bridges that were needed to get the supplies to the front.

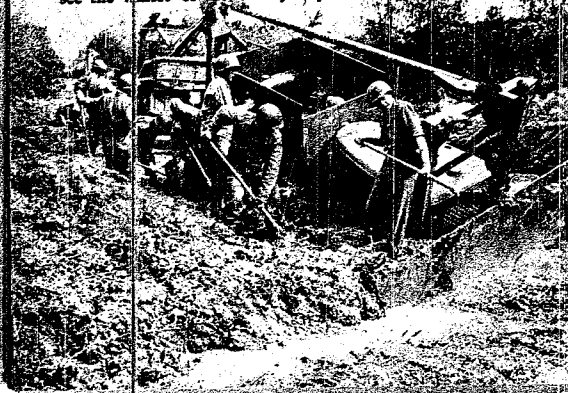


panies, Heavy Ponton Battalions, and General Service Regiments—contributed to one of the most difficult tasks every undertaken by an American Army.

American Army tradition is *ATTACK!* Primary mission of Engineers is to keep Armies moving to attack. But when the enemy counter-attacks—or as one divisional commander puts it, becomes over-ambitious—Engineers have a secondary mission: to impede the enemy's movements.

In December, 1944, when the German counter-thrust hit Luxembourg and Belgium, Engineers in the threatened areas set up barrier zones of minefields, road blocks, and demolitions, then picked up weapons to help defend them.

Typical of their activities during this period was the performance of the 159th Engr. Combat Bn. In the path of the vicious Nazi thrust, they waited until they could see the whites of the enemy's eyes. Then, opening fire,



...the German...
them in the...
but not for...
...ing Panzers met successive barriers their drive
was slowed, stopped, finally turned from a triumphant
moment to a costly debacle.

Engineers batted von Rundstedt groggy. Should some German military apologist write the story of the Battle of the Bulge, he can blame the Wehrmacht's failure on U. S. Army Engineers.

East of Bastogne, the 108th Engr. Combat Bn. dug in the night of Dec. 17 as the German juggernaut came crashing forward. It met the attack head-on and for two days, by skillful shifting of forces, hurled back every enemy attack, thereby allowing the 101st Airborne to move in for its famous defensive stand.

Typical of the 138th's heroes was Pvt. Bernard Michin, Providence, R. I. From his foxhole, Michin watched an enemy tank advance cautiously through the night, withheld his bazooka fire until the tank was only 10 yards away. Realizing the blast might wipe him out along with the target, he let go, completely destroying the tank and its crew.

Blinded and burned by the explosion, Michin crawled back to a covered position from his shallow foxhole, now raked by enemy fire. Infiltrating Germans were machine gunning his fellow Engineers. Still blinded, he located the machine gun beyond and, as the citation awarding him the Purple Heart reads, "with complete

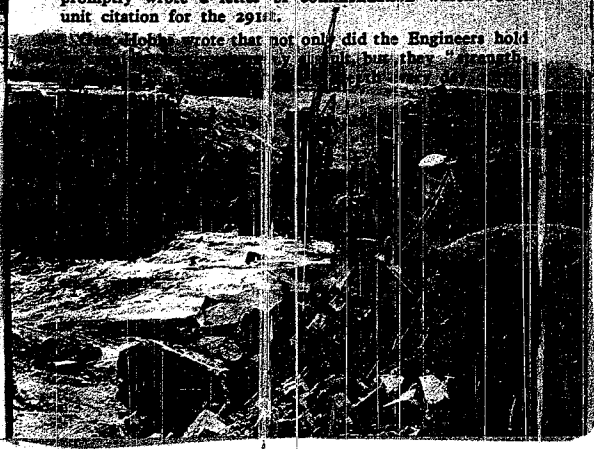


They constructed and manned road blocks, evacuated civilians and wounded and held out against savage enemy attacks from Dec. 17 to Dec. 26. Barred by its own and enemy artillery and aerial bombardment, the 291st plugged it out 24 hours a day. Fighting fires and digging for wounded was a sideline.

Simultaneously, elements of the battalion set up and defended road blocks south of Stavelot and Trois-Ponts where the destruction of the lead vehicle in a German armored column southeast of Werbomont marked the halt of the German prong in this direction.

When Engineers at Malmedy finally were relieved by the 30th Inf. Div., Maj. Gen. L. S. Hobbs, Div. CG, promptly wrote a letter of commendation which won a unit citation for the 291st.

Gen. Hobbs wrote that not only did the Engineers hold



the desperate action. The 51st Engr. Combat Bn., ordered to prevent Germans from crossing the Ambleve and Sella Rivers, held Tross-Ponts against artillery-supported enemy attacks for three days until the 82nd Div. arrived.

At Hatten, the 51st held the bridge against overwhelming German odds, using every available weapon to fight Nazi armor to a standstill. One private manned a 37mm gun while his CO passed the ammunition. In the face of such resistance, Germans moved away before it became necessary to blow the bridge.

All up and down the line it was the same. The 36th Engineers fought and built their way across Africa, Sicily, Southern France and Italy, and they are now in Anzio and Salerno.

ONE MORE



has a long history of bridge building. In 1850, the Engineers built the first bridge across the Rhine. In 1855, they built the first bridge across the Nile. In 1860, they built the first bridge across the Amazon. In 1865, they built the first bridge across the Congo. In 1870, they built the first bridge across the Niger. In 1875, they built the first bridge across the Senegal. In 1880, they built the first bridge across the Chad. In 1885, they built the first bridge across the Congo. In 1890, they built the first bridge across the Niger. In 1895, they built the first bridge across the Senegal. In 1900, they built the first bridge across the Chad. In 1905, they built the first bridge across the Congo. In 1910, they built the first bridge across the Niger. In 1915, they built the first bridge across the Senegal. In 1920, they built the first bridge across the Chad. In 1925, they built the first bridge across the Congo. In 1930, they built the first bridge across the Niger. In 1935, they built the first bridge across the Senegal. In 1940, they built the first bridge across the Chad. In 1945, they built the first bridge across the Congo. In 1950, they built the first bridge across the Niger. In 1955, they built the first bridge across the Senegal. In 1960, they built the first bridge across the Chad. In 1965, they built the first bridge across the Congo. In 1970, they built the first bridge across the Niger. In 1975, they built the first bridge across the Senegal. In 1980, they built the first bridge across the Chad. In 1985, they built the first bridge across the Congo. In 1990, they built the first bridge across the Niger. In 1995, they built the first bridge across the Senegal. In 2000, they built the first bridge across the Chad. In 2005, they built the first bridge across the Congo. In 2010, they built the first bridge across the Niger. In 2015, they built the first bridge across the Senegal. In 2020, they built the first bridge across the Chad. In 2025, they built the first bridge across the Congo.

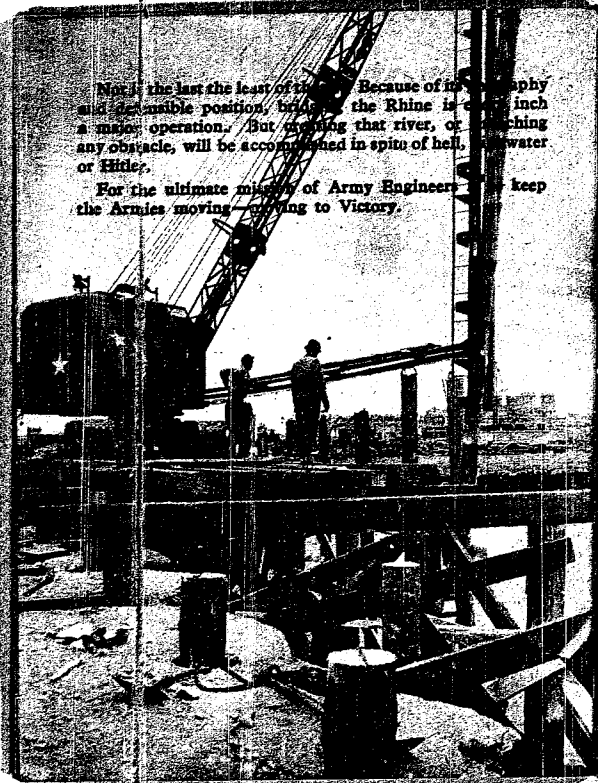
The scientists said that it was a damned fool Engineer who went ahead and built it.

So, the Engineers are the best at building bridges.

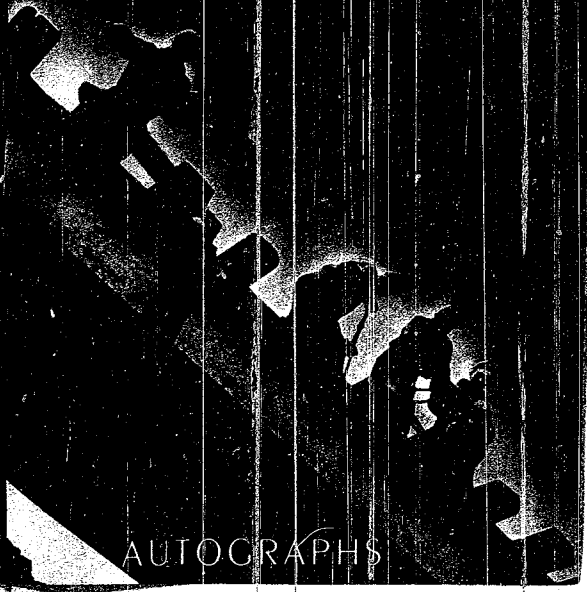
Roughly, the Engineers are the best at building bridges.

Not in the least the least of them. Because of its geography and defensible position, bridging the Rhine is certainly a major operation. But crossing that river, or reaching any obstacle, will be accomplished in spite of hell, of water or Hitler.

For the ultimate mission of Army Engineers is to keep the Armies moving—onward to Victory.



The Team



AUTOGRAPHS





This is one of a series of G.I. Stories of the Ground, Air and Service Forces in the European Theater of Operations, to be issued by the Stars and Stripes, a publication of the Information and Education Division, Special and Information Services, ETOUSA. Major General Clarence R. Huebner, commanding the 1st Infantry Division, lent his cooperation to the preparation of the pamphlet, and basic material was supplied to the editors by his staff.

Name _____

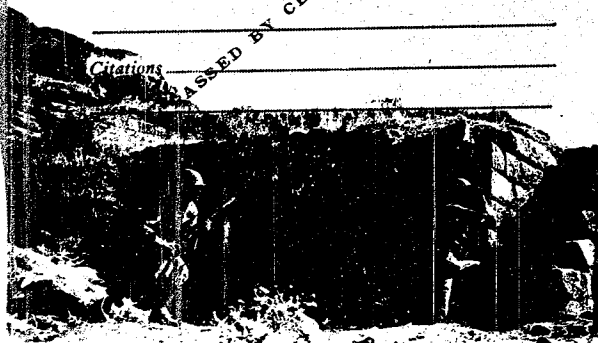
Date Enlisted _____

Assigned to 1st _____

Training _____

Battle Actions _____

Citations _____



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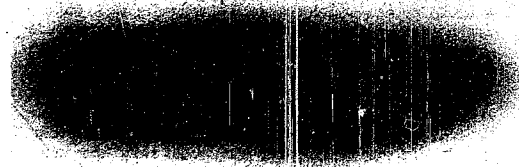
THE story of the Division and its units is printed herein in factual writing.

Our record lives up to our motto: "No mission too difficult, no sacrifice too great." The press and the historians have, and will always pay tribute to the "Fighting First" as a great division; but I want to take this opportunity to recognize you as individual soldiers. Your courage, your eagerness, your teamwork, and your spirit are ever present. The German has learned to fear the wearer of the "Red One." The unmerciful beating you have given him in many engagements; your desire to close with him and kill have made it so. As long as we continue to have men like you, we will go forward — always forward — forward to the next objective.



Clarence R. Huebner

Major General, Commanding



ON April 22, 1944, General Field Marshal Erwin Rommel issued an order to all troops defending Western Europe: "We must succeed in the short time left until the offensive starts, in bringing all defenses to such a standard that they



was there a defense of such an extent with such an obstacle as the sea. The enemy must be annihilated before he reaches our main battle field!"

Along the strip of coast near Colleville-sur-Mer, Normandy, France, Der Fuehrer's chain gang boys, the Todt workers, must have smiled confidently when they read the order. If the Allies struck here, they also would strike sharpened stakes, ramp obstacles, steel "Element C" obstacles, "hedge-hogs," tetrahedra and curved rails. They would be blown to bits by floating mines, wired mines, mines buried in light sand and gravel. If infantry managed to smash through, it would find itself on a beach flat as a billiard table except for a two-foot embankment on the land side where the pebbly

shale met the turf. In front would be a double-apron wire, concertinas and knife-rests criss-crossing carefully laid mine fields. It also would find itself facing a 100-foot cliff harboring sunken concrete pillboxes. From them, 57mm and 75mm anti-tank guns and 20mm machine guns would pour enfilading fire up and down the beach area. Defiladed behind the ridge were mortars. Manning the defenses at all times was at least a battalion and a half of seasoned infantrymen. In reserve were three full regiments, a mobile brigade and three mobile battalions.

The commander of the 1st Inf. Div., the unit selected to land here, knew all this. He also knew that in the Cerisy Forest, 15 miles to the rear, the 352nd Inf. Div. was on the alert as a reserve.

What he didn't know was that two days before June 6, 1944, the greater part of this enemy division had bivouacked in the Colleville beach area for anti-invasion maneuvers.

MANY accounts have been written of the June 6 assault on the West Wall, and stories will continue to flow long after the D-Day tumult has died away. But it was of the 1st Div. landings that Ernie Pyle spoke when he said, "Now that it is over it seems to me a pure miracle that we ever took the beach at all."

There was confusion, yes. Many units had 30 per cent casualties in the first hour of fighting. Assault boats, mined and shelled, piled upon obstacles and formed additional obstructions. Men were cut down as their landing craft





Most supporting weapons were pinned down on the beach. It would be futile to minimize the destruction or deny the disorganization. It was hell!

But what is significant is that the division came through the interlaced system of obstacles to destroy the entire German 352nd Inf. Div. and it pushed ahead until ordered to stop. The 1st came through on knowledge based on experience, on planning and guts.

The sea-borne invasion of the continent started June 6. When the 2nd and 3rd Bns. of the 18th Combat Team debarked from transports to landing craft at 0630 they assaulted Omaha Beach north of Colleville-sur-Mer. The men knew it wasn't going to be easy when they saw the pattern of flying metal at the water's edge, heard the whoom! whoom!

of 88s, and the crack of automatic guns. The haze of drifting cordite smoke already partly obscured the beach.

Leading the assault, the 2nd Bn. was pinned down on the beach by furious fire from those fortifications which had withstood severe naval and air bombardment. The 3rd Bn. landed on the left of the beach and, disregarding mortars and machine guns, fought inland up a deep draw, destroying strongpoints as it went along. The 1st Bn. landed behind the immobilized 2nd. Reorganization of the scattered and riddled units was accomplished under continued heavy fire. Meanwhile, casualties continued to mount. It was at this critical moment that Brig. Gen. George A. Taylor, assistant division commander, then Colonel in command of the 18th Inf. Regt., expressed the too-dogged-to-quit spirit saying, "Hell, we're dying here on the beach. Let's move inland and die."

ONE group of the 1st Bn. blasted a gap in the wire; what was left of the unit crawled through minefields to capture the ridgeline overlooking the beach. The 1st and 2nd Bns. cleared Colleville-sur-Mer. Behind this driving point the division picked itself up from the sand and surged inland, still meeting stubborn resistance from the outnumbering Germans.

When elements of the 7th FA Bn. landed at H-Hour, half of its guns had been destroyed. Eight hours later it fired its first mission. In the meantime, men grabbed their rifles and fought with the infantry.

At 1300 the 18th Combat Team landed. By mid-afternoon the 2nd Bn. of the 18th was in Colleville-sur-Mer. Firing batteries of the 32nd FA Bn. went into position at 2045, al-

though 35 vehicles and two guns had been lost in the surf. The 286th Combat Team came in at 1700 through mortar and artillery shells still showering the beach. The 1st and 2nd Bns. were abreast with the 3rd in reserve. Despite heavy losses, the 3rd Bn. was the first unit of the division to take its Army objective.

During the next week the 1st Div. slashed inland 23 miles to Caumont, making the farthest southern penetration of the beachhead, and halting only to allow friendly units to draw abreast and cover its dangerously exposed flanks. Other units never did pull onto line; for one month the division held its narrow salient. On June 21 Field Marshal Bernard L. Montgomery complimented Maj. Gen. C. R. Huebner,

stating that the action of the division in seizing and holding Caumont so upset the Germans' plans that it was necessary for them to alter their prepared plans and commit their hoarded counter-attack forces. The first phase of the offensive had ended with the destruction of one German division and disruption of all elements initially opposing the assault.

On July 2, when Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower presented decorations to the men who made the initial assault, he said, "I know your record from the day you landed in Africa, then I am beginning to think that the 1st Div. is a sort of Praetorian Guard..."



THEY were not new to combat, these men who drove through the West Wall and chewed up the "supermen" defending it. They were members of an infantry division only too well known in the archives of the German Army, a division which had never failed to take an objective or accomplish a mission, a division which had been last in nothing except its departure from the field of battle and whose record is appropriate to its name.

The oldest in the Army today, constituted during World War I, the 1st Div. was first to arrive in France. In the last war it was the first to fire a shell against the foe, first to suffer casualties, first to capture prisoners, first to repel a German raid, first to stage a major American offensive, first to enter Germany and cross the Rhine. It was the first division to be cited in General Orders. It was the last division to return to America after Germany's occupation had been completed.

During World War II it was the first infantry division to arrive in England, first to invade North Africa, Sicily and France, and first to smash through the supposedly impregnable fortifications of the Siegfried Line. Maj. Gen. Terry



...en, its fighting commander
...ough three decisive cam-
...ons, once said, "Nothing
...h must stop the 1st Divi-
... Nothing has.

The insignia carries a past
... symbolizes the spirit of
... fighting doughboys. At
... of Soissons in World
... a 1st Div. man cut a
... of red cloth from the cap
... enemy he had killed,
... ed it to his sleeve. A
... ment that it looked like
... flannels showing through
... n coat brought the present
... compact design.

REGIMENTS which stormed
... into France that June day
... and previously taken many
... erly-held objectives. The
... Inf., organized in 1798,
... ight its way through the
... of 1812, Mexican War,
... War, Indian insurrection,
... Philippine uprising, Mexican
... rder incidents, World War I
... since Nov. 8, 1942, World
... War II.

The 18th Inf. Regt. first ap-
... ed in the War of 1812. On

May 4, 1861, by direction of Pres. Lincoln, it was reorganized to participate in the Civil War. Afterwards it was identified in numerous Indian skirmishes leading to the conquest and settlement of the American frontier. In the Philippines it marched against insurrectionists and Moro headhunters, and, following the Spanish-American War, served tours of duty there.

The 26th Inf. Regt. arrived in Manila, March 18, 1901, and fought Philippine Insurgents until order was restored. The regiment was recalled to the U.S., July 16, 1903, for duty along the Mexican border. Again, on May 28, 1907, it sailed for the Philippines, serving a tour of duty there until its return to the States on June 18, 1909. Stationed in Michigan until 1913, it was afterward posted to Texas, where it patrolled the Mexican border until war was declared against Germany.

The call to arms came to the newly-formed 1st Inf. Div. on June 3, 1917. Among the original members were men from every state of the Union, and others from Alaska, Hawaii, Guam, the Philippines, Panama Canal Zone and Puerto Rico.

Landing at St. Nazaire, France, June 26, the division began intensive training for battle. On Oct. 21, it entered a quiet sector of the lines on the Lorraine front between Luneville and Nancy for its first experience in actual warfare. After 30 days of typical trench fighting, it was relieved for an additional period of training.

On Jan. 18, 1918, it entered the lines again, this time relieving the French Army's 1st Moroccan Div. and occupying a sector from Bouconville to Seichprey during three terrible winter months.

The division took and held Cantigny against repeated savage counter-attacks. This was a hard-won victory and important in that it marked a turning point in the conduct of the war, from defense to attack.

Relief of the division was completed July 8, after 72 days in the line. Five days later the men were again in the front lines, this time in the Marne salient. From July 18 to 23, they overcame the strongest resistance the enemy could offer and succeeded in cutting the main supply route of the salient. At Soissons, the division took its objective only after casualties had reached a desperate total. Two companies were wiped out, and the 2nd Bn. came out of action commanded by a sergeant.

The next offensive began on the heels of the previous one: reduction of the St. Mihiel salient.

On Oct. 4, the Meuse-Argonne offensive got under way. During one phase, the division marched and fought for 55 hours without rest or sleep, and the 18th Inf. covered a distance of 71 kilometers. At the Armistice the division was at Sedan, farthest American penetration of the war. Gen. John J. Pershing cited the 1st as "never broken by hardship or battle." Marshal Foch conferred upon many of its units the Fourragere. Today men still wear the red and green shoulder piping of the award.

LATE Nov. 7, 1942, 22 ships, part of the Center Task Force, Operation "Torch," swung into position near Oran to disembark troops. Operation "Torch" was the joint invasion of North Africa by British and American troops. For 1st Div. men, it was a baptism of fire. For them it was more than a trial; they were the vanguard of a new American Army.

Volunteers and regular army men, they were eager for the job ahead. Combat was a new experience but they had been prepared by two years of intensive maneuvers at home, in England and Scotland.

Training of the division had begun with its consolidation at Ft. Devens, Mass., early in 1941. It had the same pride and long traditions as the old outfit, but it had been shaken down for speed and stamina. The 28th Inf. had been cut away and supporting units had been trimmed to a close-knit, hard-hitting organization. Division artillery was reduced to four battalions, the 5th, 7th, 32nd and 33rd.

The 5th FA Bn. was the oldest outfit in the division, tracing its history back to 1776, when Capt. Alexander Hamilton formed what is known today as Btry. "D," 5th FA Bn. The battery was then called "The Provincial Company."



the Artillery of the Colony of New York." The first round ever fired in defense of the United States blazed from Hamilton's guns July 12, 1776, at Ft. George, N. Y. The last round of the Revolution also was fired by this battery. One of the most memorable occasions of the war was the battery's crossing of the Delaware with Gen. George Washington, Dec. 25, 1776. At the close of the war, it was stationed at West Point. Its complement of 40 comprised the entire American Army.

In 1861 the battalion was reorganized under the name of the 5th U. S. Artillery Regt. and during the ensuing years,



it participated in the Indian, Mexican, Civil, and Spanish-American Wars, and the Philippine Insurrection. In 1916, it was selected as part of the 1st FA Brigade to serve with the newly-activated 1st Div.

The first American shells to land on German positions in World War I were fired from its guns on Oct. 25, 1917.

THE division spent the winter of 1941 loading and landing on beaches near Buzzards Bay, Mass., New River, N.C., and in Puerto Rico. Units of the 16th and 18th made landings near Martinique. The following summer, landing operations were practiced at Onslow Beach, N.C., and in the autumn all units participated in First Army North Carolina maneuvers. After Pearl Harbor, training was intensified. In February the division moved to Camp Blanding, Fla., and later to Ft. Benning, Ga. On June 21, at Indiantown Gap Military Reservation, Pa., came the order, "Prepare for overseas movement."

The division sailed from New York, Aug. 2, 1942, crossed the Atlantic unescorted, landed in Scotland on Aug. 7, and entrained immediately for Tidworth Barracks, England.

There ensued a concentrated period of maneuvers, including more amphibious training near Glasgow. By Oct. 16, all personnel had been loaded on ships to be used in the projected invasion. There was one more landing operation, on Oct. 18 and 19. By the 26th the convoy was headed out to sea. Operation "Torch" had begun.

INDIANTOWN Gap, Tidworth and Glasgow were far away at 0100 Nov. 8. This was the real thing and as the boys came in low under artillery shells, machine gun tracers, and small arms fire, their motions became automatic reflexes: organize—spread out—stay down—move ahead..... By morning the African beach had been taken, and the baptism was over.

Combat Teams 16 and 18, commanded by Maj. Gen. Terry Allen, landed near Arzew, east of Oran, at 0057 and 0103, Nov. 8. La Macta and Port-aux-Poules fell, St. Cloud was invested and contained; the teams advanced west to Oran.

Simultaneously, Combat Team 28, commanded by Brig. Gen. Theodore Roosevelt, came ashore at Les Andalouses, captured Bon Sier and Ferme Combier, and pushed east to take the heights of Djebel Murdjadjjo, dominating Oran. The city fell Nov. 10 and the campaign was over the next day.

The initial landing operations successful, the division underwent intensive training near Oran, and from Nov. 19 to Jan. 15, Combat Teams 18 and 28 operated under various French

and British commands in Algeria and Tunisia. While on detached service near Medjez El Bab, the 1st Bn. of the 18th Inf. made its famous assault on Long Stop Hill, Christmas Day. Combat Team 18 remained in the lines 48 days, then shifted immediately to Sbiba to stem a German breakthrough. Combat Team 28 was broken into groups, fighting in Central Tunisia near the Kairovan and Faïd passes and in Ousseltia Valley. Combat Team 16 went into training and garrison duties until Jan. 24, when it went into action around Siliana. Units remaining under division command were chiefly occupied with holding operations in the Ousseltia Valley from Jan. 16 to Feb. 19. A withdrawal and move to Kasserine Pass was ordered Feb. 19.

Mid-February a strong German attack had developed near Faïd Pass. Enemy forces, after overrunning American positions at Sidi Bou Zid, split into three columns and continued to snake to Sbeitla, Feriana and Kasserine. By Feb. 18, leading elements of the German force had overrun Sbeitla, arriving in the vicinity of Kasserine. Next day a savage attack developed from Kasserine toward Thala. Down the long valley came tanks of Rommel's 21st Panzer Div., overrunning forward positions of the 26th Inf. and forcing a withdrawal westward. Aided by rain and fog, Germans infiltrated through the Pass and continued northwest. But their sands were running out. Combat Team 16 and Combat Command "B" of the 1st Infantry Div. counter-attacked and forced the enemy through the Pass.

THE first strike had been called on Rommel. The second followed March 17. For the first time since Oran, the units were brought together under division control. After a spectacular 40-mile night move, the 16th and 18th Combat Teams launched an attack which engulfed Gafsa and the territory around Feriana. The 26th pushed on toward El Guettar, in the face of full-scale counter-attacks and continuous aerial bombardment.

El Guettar was attacked March 21 after the 26th Inf. with the 1st Ranger Bn. and Co. "D" (Provisional), 1st Engr. Combat Bn. attached, marched 10 miles over rugged mountain terrain to occupy a covering position previous to the attack. At 0300, Combat Team 18 was in attack position with the 1st Bn., 26th Inf., alongside.

The assault was a complete success. Commanding high ground was taken, 700 prisoners were captured. The division sustained four attacks from German 10th Panzer Div. March 23. Although two battalions were cut off and German tanks were between the 16th Inf. CP and the 5th and 32nd FA Bns. positions, the infantry clung to its position. One battery of the 5th FA Bn. was cut off, six howitzers were put

out of action. All guns of Cos. B and C, 601st TD Bn. and seven M-10s of the 899th TD Bn. were lost. Thirty, possibly 40, enemy tanks were knocked out. From March 28 to April 14, advances continued over difficult mountainous terrain.

Strike two spoiled Rommel's hopes of cutting Allied supply lines, forced him to continue his retreat northwest. Marshal Montgomery's Army was cracking the Mareth Line, and the British near Tunis had a stranglehold on Gen. Von Arnim.

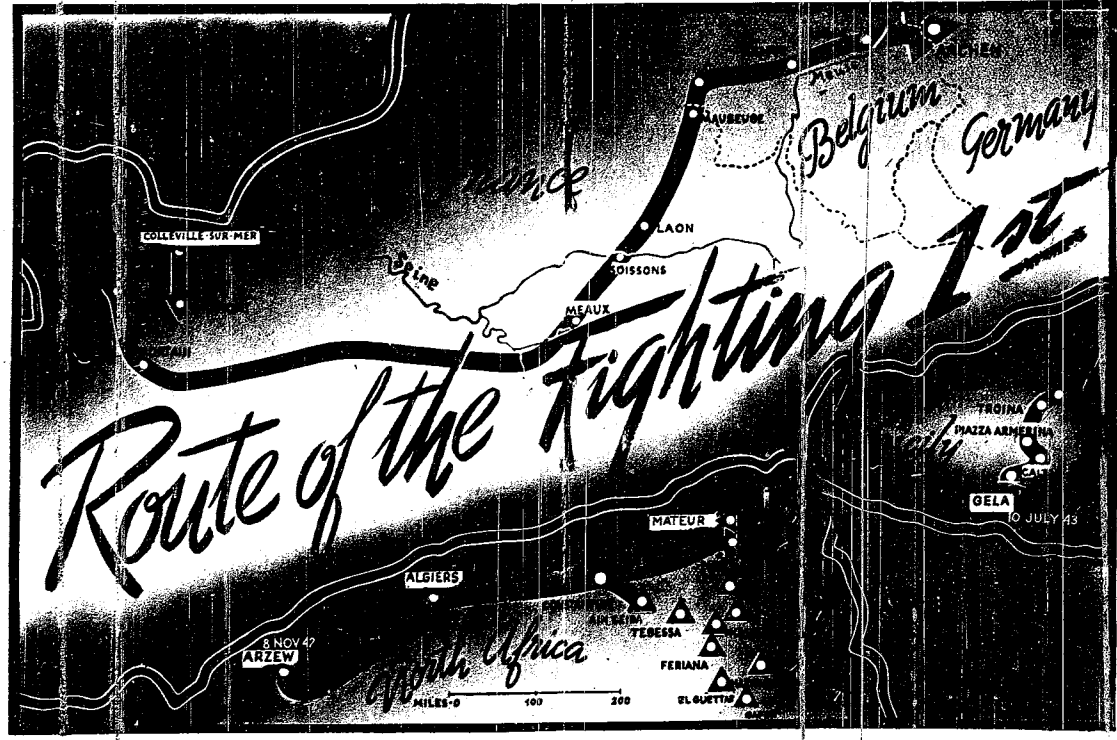
The time was ripe for a combined third strike by all Allied units. The 1st Div. shifted north to Beja and went into battle near Mateur, April 19. The attack was aimed at Mateur and launched over broken, rocky hills which tore shoes and clothing. Hill 523 was taken by the 18th Inf.'s direct assault in one of the dirtiest, bloodiest battles of the campaign. Hills 350 and 409 fell to the 18th Inf. The end came quickly. On May 7, the day the division was relieved, tattered remnants of Rommel's desert fighters filed down from Cap Bon Peninsula. The Afrika Korps was no more.

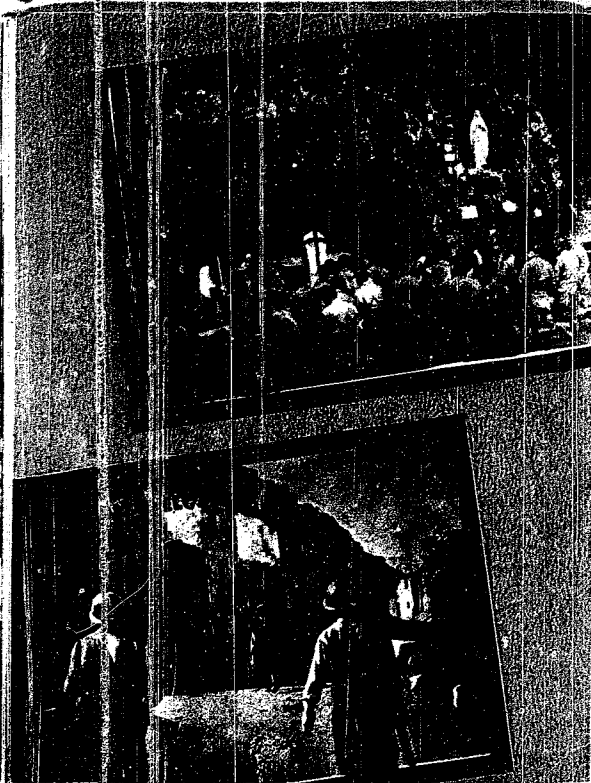
Of this final stage, Ernie Pyle wrote: "It was a war of such intensity as Americans on this side of the ocean had not known before. It was a battle without letup. It was a war of drenching artillery and hidden mines and walls of machine gun fire and even of the barbaric bayonet. It was an exhausting, cruel, last-ditch kind of war, and those who went through it would seriously doubt that war could be any worse..."

Yet, because of those who slugged it out on the dust-whipped plains of northern Africa, the division had passed through its novitiate and become a skilled, mature, battle-wise organization.

There were some who said that the landings at Gela,







Sicily, were easy, but for men who storm ashore in dawn, landings never are easy.

Assault boats were lowered into the water just after midnight July 10, hit the beach at 0245. Initial resistance was overcome; the town of Gela was taken much as was Arzew on the previous landing.

Operations proceeded smoothly until 1030 on July 11. Gela overlooks a coastal plain sloping toward the sea. Far to the north could be seen approaching the first formation of the Hermann Goering Panzer Regt.—50 heavy and medium tanks. They continued until they had pushed within 1000 yards of the beach itself. Doughboys held their ground, even with tanks to the rear of their positions. Supporting fire became stronger. By 1400 the assault was smashed, the Germans withdrew.

Then began a campaign remembered not only for the rapid succession of short, fierce battles which marked the division's progress north and east, but for the hills and cliffs up which men, like herculean ants, inched their way, sometimes climbing only by the aid of ropes and cleats. Passes were few, trails so narrow and tortuous that often only mules could negotiate them.

Despite these obstacles and bitter enemy resistance, the advance never stopped. Successively, Niscemi, Ponte Olivo Airport, Mazzarino, Barrafranca, Villa Rosa, Enna, Alimena, Boumpietro, Petralia, Gangi, Sperlinga, Nicosia, Mistretta, Cerami and Gagliano fell.

Mazzarino was taken July 14. Two days later, capture of the heights around Barrafranca severed the main east-west road and railway lines of Sicily. From here to Gagliano,



Resistance by the enemy attempted to extricate himself from the threatening trap in the west.

Troina was the hardest battle of the campaign. The Germans had dug in on excellent defensive terrain. They commanded the city from the north, west and south. The town itself was an excellent OP and artery for communication and supply. Using Troina as a shield to cover withdrawal of forces from the south and central sectors, the Germans staged one of their last ditch defenses. Division units attacked along ridge lines from east and west, storming sheer rocky hills and mountainsides against savage fire from all types of weapons, and took the town after six days of fighting. On Aug. 6, the 18th Inf. turned the flank of the enemy on Mount Pellegrino, overlooking Troina after a frontal assault by the 16th Inf. The 26th cut the Troina-Randazzo road and the enemy fled north. During the battle, the 7th FA Bn. alone fired 9565 rounds and the division withstood 21 counter-attacks.

This was the 1st's final action in Sicily, although it later advanced to Randazzo against light enemy resistance. The

campaign ended Aug. 16. In 37 days of continuous fighting, the division had taken 18 towns. Palma di Montechiaro served as the rest and training area while the division awaited further orders.

THE division sailed from Augusta for the British Isles, Oct. 23. Maj. Gen. Clarence R. Huebner, who had assumed command on Aug. 7, 1943, immediately inaugurated an intensive training program.

Rifle marksmanship, street fighting, river crossings, artillery practice, anti-aircraft and night fighting; long marches, close order drill, schools in chemical warfare, radio communication, identification of aircraft and armored vehicles, and waterproofing; CP exercises, amphibious warfare, hardening exercises—all were stressed. There was little time for play, less for passes to London.

Intelligence believed the West Wall of France would be hard to crack. Nothing was left to chance. Particular emphasis was placed on pillbox assault, and a new method for reduction of concrete emplacements was devised and practiced. Two landing exercises, complete in every detail, were staged.

More and more attention was given to the big guns. German prisoners in previous campaigns had expressed fear of American "automatic" artillery and testified to the effectiveness of the 105s and 155s. The four FA battalions, under the command of Brig. Gen. Clift Andrus, had more than once proved their superiority to German weapons and their ability to smash a counter-attack, or soften and crumble stubborn strongpoints for assaulting doughs. Like the regiments they supported, they knew the score.

The battle of Normandy was strategically divided into three parts—first, the assault; then the securing of the beachhead and the build-up of supporting forces; finally, the most spectacular operation of all—the breakthrough. Again the 1st led the parade.

Plans called for a breakthrough west of St. Lo to capture Marigny and then a swing west to Coutances. The object was to bottle up approximately 30,000 troops in the pocket formed, open the route south down the Cotentin Peninsula to Brittany. For a month and a half, personnel and supplies had been funneling into the beachhead, and by July 25 it was ready to burst.

An aerial bombardment of the immediate front preceded the jumpoff. At 1000, July 25, planes began to come over—heavy bombers, mediums, fighter-bombers and fighters. Three thousand planes, including escorts, dropped 6000 tons of bombs on a saturation area two miles wide. Artillery took over and maintained a heavy barrage in front of assaulting troops. The 4th and 9th Divs. forced a gap, and the 1st, with the 18th Inf. spearheading, passed through the 9th, captured Marigny and rolled west to Coutances, reaching



the objective within three days. The German defense was broken and Germans already showed signs of disorganization which was to increase steadily in the next month as the Allied juggernaut rolled through France and Belgium.

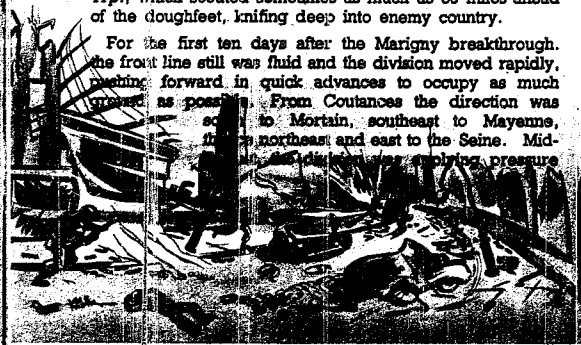
The story of the following month's fighting is one of blitzkrieg warfare at its most effective continual movement, constant pressure, rapid surprise by armored and motorized combat teams and by-passing of strong points, later cleaned out by follow-up troops. For the footloggers it was a weary succession of foxholes all the way across France; removing mines and road-blocks, building and repairing roads and bridges, mopping up nasty little pockets of machine gun and mortar fire, destroying or capturing vehicles, ammunition and stores; and always sniper fire, ambushes, prisoners and forced marches with little sleep or rest. A recitation of localities exploited is a travelogue from

Brittany east across France to Belgium: Gavray, Brecy, Juvigny Le Tertre, Mortain, Mayenne, Lessay, La Ferte Mace, L'ampes, Corbeil, Melun, Meaux and Soissons.

The Germans stumbled backward, commandeering every possible means of transportation, both civilian and military, laying mines and booby traps, blowing up bridges.

THESSE delaying devices failed to stop the division for long. One reason was the efficient work of the 1st Engr. Bn. Like other members of the team, the engineers were not rookies in combat. They are, in fact, the oldest engineer outfit in the Army. The battalion saw its first service in Mexico during the Vera Cruz expedition, later participated in the Civil and Spanish-American Wars. As the First Regiment of Engineers, it joined the 1st Div. at Monaucourt, France, Sept. 2, 1917. Final reorganization was in October, 1939, when the 1st Bn. of the regiment became the 1st Engineer Battalion (Combat). Another reason for the speed of the cross-country hike was the 1st Recon. Trp., which scouted sometimes as much as 50 miles ahead of the doughfeet, knifing deep into enemy country.

For the first ten days after the Marigny breakthrough, the front line still was fluid and the division moved rapidly, pushing forward in quick advances to occupy as much ground as possible. From Coulances the direction was south to Mortain, southeast to Mayenne, then northeast and east to the Seine. Mid-



from the south on the famed "Falaise Gap." On Aug. 24, all units moved 110 miles to the vicinity of Chartres, and in the next six days advanced to the Seine. The historic crossing of this river was made on the 27th at Corbeil and Melun. Two days later, the division crossed the Marne and on the 31st Soissons fell—Soissons, where the division had lost 9000 men in four days a quarter of a century before. For Gen. Huebner, it was the second campaign through the area. In the last war, he commanded a battalion in the 1st Div.; this time he commanded the division itself.

Average daily moves were 20 miles. The last week of August alone carried the division 300 miles across northern France. Only scattered resistance was made by the remnants of the German Army of the West. Mute evidence was seen along the route in the columns of smashed enemy vehicles and equipment.

The liberation continued in September from Soissons across the Aisne River, and included Lagny, France, and Maubeuge, Bavay, Charleroi, Namur, Liege and Herve in Belgium.

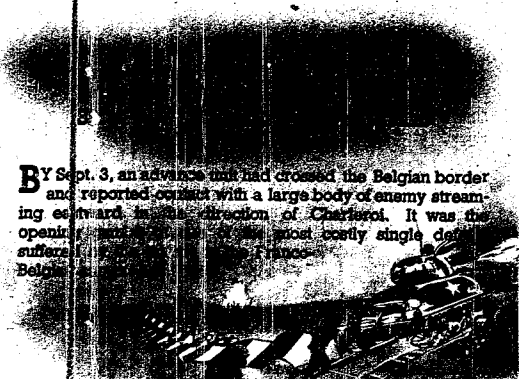
On Sept. 1 an estimated 120,000 enemy troops still remained south of the Belgian border. The Germans, however, made only slight attempts to hold coordinated positions; their main objective



apparently was to reach the Reich border before American units. Many of the foe were left behind in the rapid withdrawal, and the 1st was kept busy mopping up as well as sorting out a vast amount of enemy materiel, including gasoline, tires and food. Several units lived on German rations for more than a week. During the first days of September, 390 prisoners of war, representing 24 different units, passed through the PW cage, an indication of the enemy's confusion. These men were picked up in small actions as the division progressed northward in the direction of Mons.

The steamroller advance was so long and so rapid that Special Troops at times had great difficulty maintaining service for the front lines. Nevertheless, they succeeded. The 1st Medical Bn., despite tremendous problems incident to moving its installations every few days, kept all casualties moving through its clearing stations at high speed.

BY Sept. 3, an advance unit had crossed the Belgian border and reported contact with a large body of enemy streaming eastward in the direction of Charleroi. It was the opening of the most costly single day of the campaign. The 1st suffered its heaviest losses in Belgium.



This was the situation: the 3rd Armd. Div., operating on the 1st's right on Sept. 2, had pushed a long finger north into Belgium east of Mons, cutting across the intended escape route of five German divisions. Three had been drawing back into the 1st Div. sector, the other two were retreating on the left. These units had been directed to make an orderly withdrawal and occupy the Siegfried Line before the Americans arrived.

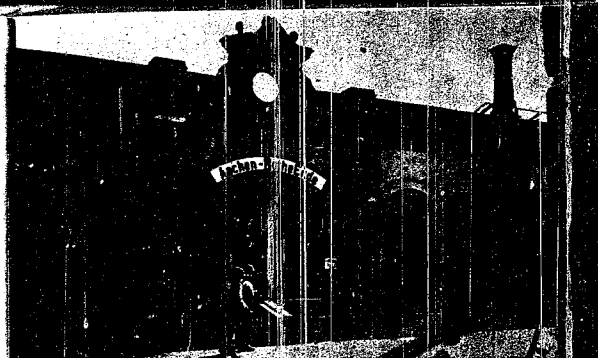
THEY were well on their way when they collided with the flank of the 3rd Armd. Div. southeast of Mons. As they attempted to punch through, their southern flank was suddenly attacked by the 1st Div. combat teams in the vicinity of Bavai, Riez de Lerelle and Maubeuge. Late Sept. 3, enemy casualties were estimated at 7000—5000 captured and 2000 killed and wounded. What resistance was set up centered around Bavai and Maubeuge; otherwise, enemy action was chaotic. Almost equally disastrous was the loss of materiel, including a Mark V tank, which, during the height of the confusion, obligingly followed a column of division transport into a motor pool at the signal of an American MP. Large groups of enemy were left wandering around the division area. Eighty anti-aircraft personnel led by a major mistakenly attempted to march through the division CP in an effort to get out. At Bavai, one company of the 1st Bn., 18th Inf., in five hours of fighting, killed or wounded 200 Germans, captured 460 prisoners and much equipment. During a night assault by a whooping, fanatical enemy, the 28th Inf. netted 700 PWs.

Throughout the ensuing three days, there were no front lines. Enemy units continued to fight their way out of the division area. Some finally arranged meticulous surrenders.

The 2nd Bn. of the 16th Inf. took more than 2000 prisoners in one negotiated surrender and felt itself repaid in some measure for D-Day. Other hostile groups made stray counter-attacks in an attempt to break out. On Sept. 7, the total number of PWs taken during the Mons operation was 17,149, of which more than 300 were officers. These last included General Wahle, 712th Inf. Div., his staff and Col. Hess, former commandant of the Seine District and a close friend of Field Marshal Rommel.

The division closed upon objectives in the vicinity of Namur Sept. 8 and found the path to Liege open. Although opposition was light, the Germans were beginning to organize a defense. Their problem, however, was to gain time to set up an effective line. Mines were reported for the first time near Verviers. As the division crossed the Meuse at Liege and moved on towards Herve, the enemy maintained a heavy reconnaissance screen. Hostile artillery appeared for the first time since the entry into Belgium. After the fall of Liege, and as the division pushed on toward Aachen and the Siegfried Line, more rehabilitated enemy units reappeared. The advance began to bog down. Resistance was ineffectual. Co. C, 16th Inf., pushed to the Siegfried Line Sept. 12 and at 1515 crossed the last frontier. Deployment of division forces on this day was international—a battalion in Germany, an outpost in Holland, the main body of the division in Belgium, a rear echelon in France. A reinforced battalion continued the drive forward, and the same day pierced the first belt of defenses six kilometers west of Aachen.

Some pillboxes were fully occupied, more were unmanned, a few were unoccupied. Apparent, too, was that



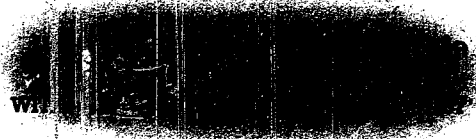
Some of the troops were no longer in the line. Some PWs were taken alongside perfectly good pillboxes.

Progress was slow. The division cleared the dragon's teeth, part of the defenses of the second belt east of Aachen, Sept. 14. Next day the Siegfried Line was entirely breached. The break came at a fortuitous time. Enemy defenses were being built up, artillery was more active, new units were appearing, repeated counter-attacks were launched.

A new German division, the 12th Inf., appeared Sept. 17 and immediately attempted a powerful counter-attack. The objective was high ground east of Ellendorf. The attack was beaten off with heavy enemy losses. Next day another unsuccessful counter-attack was tried south of Verlautenheide.

Meanwhile, the 1st's own punch into Stolberg was being heavily opposed. The defense was well-coordinated and stubborn, the terrain well-suited to delaying tactics. Every house in Stolberg was contested. Enemy artillery was more and more in evidence. Division patrols were blocked as soon as they crossed the lines. Yet in one attack by the 18th Inf. in the Eilendorf sector, Sept. 19, a single company neutralized 19 pillboxes while seizing its objective, Crucifix Hill.

In spite of the enemy's tenacious defense, reports of PWs and deserters indicated morale was not sound. Defeatism was spreading among smaller, makeshift units, little groups were prepared to surrender at the proper opportunity. Even so, the Germans continued to launch local counter-attacks.



WHEN the battered city of Aachen surrendered under the grinding pressure of a direct assault by the 1st. Oct. 21, Germany lost more than a cultural and historical landmark, an armament and coal-producing center, a key point in Siegfried Line defenses. Aachen also was a symbol of heroic resistance for the Germans, as Stalingrad had been for the Russians. Its successful defense was to have been



a guarantee of the Reich's invincibility. The German people had been positively assured that it could not be taken. Its defenders had been ordered by the commander of the Seventh Army to hold to the last man: "Your fight for the ancient imperial city is being followed with admiration and breathless expectancy. You are fighting for the honor of the National Socialist German Army." But unlike Stalingrad, Aachen crumbled and Nazi honor received a shattering body blow.

From the beginning, the Germans, expecting the major attack to develop from the south, had massed their strongest

forces there. Even after Oct. 1, when the city had been contained on the west, south, and east and division patrols were probing the inner defenses, the Germans maintained strong positions in the south, counter-attacking mostly only to prevent complete encirclement. But the plan came apart at the seams.

A counter-assault preceded by 3500 rounds of heavy artillery hit the 16th Inf. from the east Oct. 3. When the bitter close-in fighting was over, half the attacking force were casualties and half the big guns were knocked out. Five days later the 18th Inf. retaliated with a ferocious assault on Crucifix Hill, commanding ground northeast of the city. Each pillbox was taken separately after its defenders had been flushed with flame or by direct artillery fire. At the same time, the 26th Inf. moved into Forst and Beverau Wood. With these and the Verlautenheide ridge securely held, the last escape road to the north was brought under fire.



Again a savage counter-attack was launched from the east. The ferocity of the fighting can be judged from the fact that after Co. I, 16th Inf., had beaten off an assault with bayonets, more than 250 dead

Germans lay in front of the company positions.

The city surrounded, even more bitter fighting for its rubble-strawn streets was in prospect. An ultimatum for its surrender was carried into Aachen by the S-2, 26th Inf.,

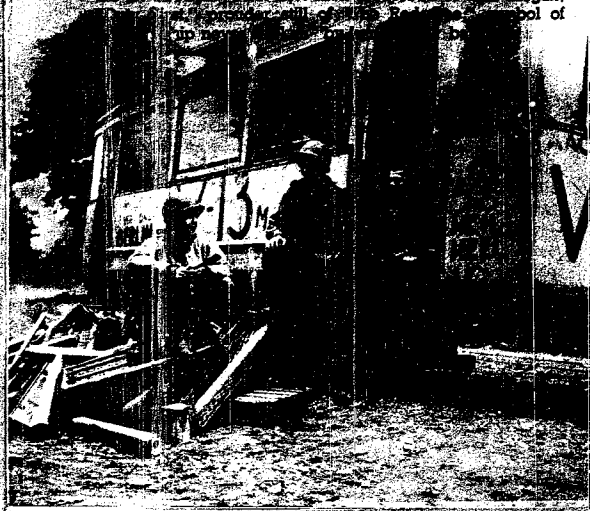
Oct. 10. No answer led the beginning of main attack. Fighter-bombers hammered defense positions and artillery pumped rounds into the eastern part of the city. For the next three days the men moved slowly forward, house by house, street by street.

Meanwhile, counter-attacks continued. Another bitter struggle centered against the 18th Inf. around Crucifix Hill. An even stronger attack was launched, Oct. 15, by the 3rd Panzer Grenadier Div. against the 16th Inf. For two days Germans threw tanks and infantry against the dominating ridge of Observatory Hill on the northern edge of the city. Miserable weather prevented use of air support and limited artillery shoots, but close-in fighting with bayonet and hand grenade finally beat the attackers to their knees.

While the division parried with one fist it socked hard with the other. From Oct. 18 on, the enemy was reduced to parachuting supplies to its garrison defenders. By Oct. 20, remaining resistance centered around Technical High School on the western edge of town. Next day Col. Gerhard M. Wilck, commanding officer, surrendered unconditionally.

Big guns were silent over a dead city—a devastation of burst sewers, broken gas mains, bloated animals, of shattered glass and dangling power lines, of masses of shapeless rubble. Not one building remained intact.

SUCH is the story of the 1st Div. Its continued battle success is based on training, capable leadership and courage. But men of the 1st, always fighting for their country's ideals, sometimes fighting merely as an aggressive reaction, or simply to stay alive, have another motivation: that mysterious mixture of pride and ambition called esprit de corps. In moments of grave crisis when all other motives have broken down, as during the bloody five days of Soissons a quarter of a century ago, and on D-Day beach of Omaha this time, it has been a cohesive esprit de corps that carried the 1st through. First Div. men are proud of their slogan, "The 1st is the Best." They are proud of their symbol of



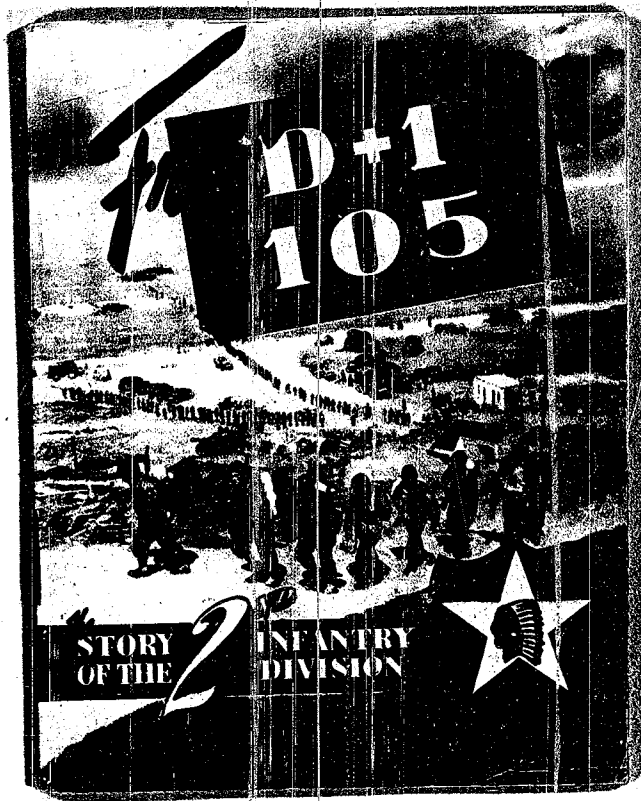
THE TEAM *Autographs*





"Perhaps even greater de-
mands must yet be made, but
even they may be, and
but there will be
Division that
service in
scale which
by hardship on
our dead; we
we sympathize with
wounded; and with in
we salute the vic
living of the
Division

— Gen. C. P. ...
General ...
to try message to
C. ...





THIS booklet contains a sketch of our 2nd Infantry Division during its first five months of active operation in World War II.

Your division entered upon these operations backed by traditions and military achievements "Second to None" in our Army. Your division has fully lived up to these traditions and has added new victories and valorous acts as standards for the future. You have maintained unblemished your record of never having failed to take and hold your objective. Your outstanding loyalty and devotion to duty is attested by innumerable acts of gallantry and sacrifice throughout our entire campaign. Your esprit and morale under adverse conditions have been an unfailing inspiration to me. I deem it a high privilege to have served as your commander.

With deep humility I dedicate this brief story as a tribute to our brave comrades who have fallen in action in its making. We must justify their sacrifice by our unswerving determination to carry through to new victories, to new traditions, to complete victory.

W. M. Robertson

Major General, Commanding

MAY, 1918: the 2nd Div. fought at Château Thierry. May, 1944: the 2nd Div. fretted for action at a marshalling area in southern England. July, 1918—Soissons. July, 1944—St. Jean des Baisants. September, 1918—St. Mihiel, September, 1944—Brest.



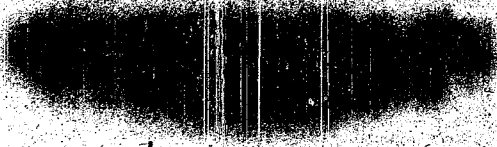
... that won the tournaient of the Croix de
Blanc Mont in 1918 remains the same.

Fighting in France is not new to the 2nd Div. In every major engagement of the first World War where American troops participated. It left its mark at Belleau Wood. It left its dead, too. The 2nd Div. captured one-fourth of the entire number of prisoners taken by American Expeditionary Forces, one-fourth of the total guns. It suffered one-tenth of all casualties in American armies. It won more decorations than any other American division. It fought 56 consecutive days without rest—the longest period for any American unit.

For 23 years between the two wars, the 2nd Div. was garrisoned at Ft. Sam Houston, Tex. Many of its officers and men are Texans. During the years of peace, it was transformed into the first "streamlined" division. Gone now are the 5th and 6th Marines, the victors of Belleau Wood. In their place is the 38th Inf. Regt., the "Lock of the Marne." The 9th and 23rd Inf. Regts.

remain, as do the 12th and 15th F.A., now reconstituted as the 12th, 15th, 27th and 38th F.A. Bns.

For the invasion of France, the 2nd Div. brought with it a great tradition. Later, the record was to speak for itself that such heritage was upheld.



Plus 1, June 7, 1944: in the teeth of vicious, accurate enemy shellfire which blanketed the shoreline, the Indian Head boys hit the beach at St. Laurent-sur-Mer. Preassigned assembly areas, when eventually located in the confusion of battle, were packed with snipers. Before moving in, one regiment was forced to blast out a company of Germans.

Vehicles, infantry supporting weapons and communications equipment remained aboard craft off the beach. Three days were to pass before these vital supplies began rolling inland. Communications were established with salvaged wire found on the beach and abandoned enemy equipment. The only vehicle in the division was a jeep.

loaned by another unit to Division Commander Maj. Gen. Walter M. Robertson.

By midnight, the CP had been established and assembly areas largely cleared of enemy. The silence of darkness was shattered by heavy anti-aircraft fire when German planes zoomed overhead. The division staff already had planned the attack on the first objective, Trevieres, a communications center 16 kilometers inland. Field orders were acrawled in longhand on German stationery.

Snipers remaining in the area were killed the next day and, at one time, a fusillade of sniper bullets spattered into the division CP. One sniper was shot down from a tree some 50 yards away from division headquarters.

Near midnight, June 8, the last infantry regiment began to unload and a staff officer reported to headquarters that the unit was ready to move to an area previously selected. He was told that the area, far in advance, had not been cleared according to plan—that it now was occupied.

"By whom?" he asked.

"By the 353rd Inf. Div.," was the reply.

"Never heard of them, sir. Who are they?"

"Germans."

Although lacking supporting weapons and communications, one regiment attacked the strongly defended town of Trevieres June 9. Knowing that the infantry possessed only the minimum of necessary transportation,



the valley, pumped in shells as well. Battle plans called for the regiment's second battalion to approach from the north while the third battalion was to cross the Aure River and flank the objective from the west. A second regiment was to attack on the east. Trevieres was defended by an infantry battalion which had been ordered to fight to the last man.

After the jump-off, one platoon got inside the city. Heavy sniper and automatic weapons fire held up the other attackers. The third battalion waded the waist-deep river, stormed the defenses to the south, then smacked the enemy from the west flank of the town. So tenacious was the German grip that the objective was not entirely outflanked and secured until the next day.

Only a limited number of hand grenades was available. Not until the closing stages of the battle were machine guns brought up from the beach area. To replenish the meager supply of ammunition, a French two-wheel cart was commandeered. But the ammunition still had to be hand-carried across the river. Wounded were hand-carried on the return trip across the stream.

One officer and six men were pinned inside a house four hours during the first day of the fierce assault. They were armed only with pistols and carbines while Germans were within grenade-throwing range on three sides.

Liberation of Trevieres marked the fall of the first major obstacle as the expansion of the V Corps bridgehead struggled forward.



THE push neither stopped nor hesitated at Trevieres. Spearheaded by the 9th and 38th Inf. Regts., the division ploughed through Le Molay and the Forêt de Cerisy until it struck the first definite enemy defense line running west from Brigny through St. Georges d'Elle. In two days, the division ripped overland 16 miles but had advanced 19 miles as the crow flies.

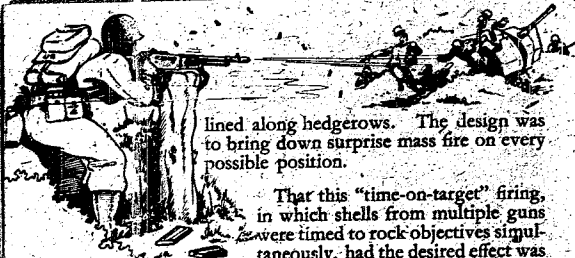
A well-defined German defense line was struck June 11 in the Berigny-St. Georges d'Elle-Ivon sector. Here, the "Second to None" had its first encounter with the 3rd Parachute Div. of the Wehrmacht, took its first

prisoners. It was the beginning of a grudge-fight which was to be renewed many times—much to the sorrow of the paratroopers. Between then and June 15 when a halt was ordered to prepare for the attack on Hill 192, the division's tentacles wound around nearby villages and consolidated gains. St. Georges d'Elle, the town that was to change hands several times, was entered by battalions of the 23rd and 38th Regts. The 23rd also captured Berigny, while St. Germain d'Elle fell to the 9th.

Fighting throughout this sector was fierce. The battle of the hedgerows was on—and with all stops out. Mounds of earth, sometimes as wide as three feet and almost as high as a man's head, divided the fields. Behind and between these the Germans dug in and waited to spray machine gun and automatic weapon fire on the first American to step into the field. Most fields were no larger than a house lot back home. Sunken roads wove in and out of the fields, providing excellent enemy cover.

In the battle for St. Germain d'Elle, fighting grew extremely severe. Casualty lists mounted steadily. One company lost 17 men one day, 13 the next. A company commander told of knocking out seven machine guns in one field and five in another only to have them replaced from a seemingly endless chain.

During the entire struggle which preceded the smashing of the forces defending Hill 192, artillery played an important role in holding the Nazis inside holes they had



lined along hedgerows. The design was to bring down surprise mass fire on every possible position.

That this "time-on-target" firing, in which shells from multiple guns were timed to rock objectives simultaneously, had the desired effect was attested to by patrols. At any minute, a barrage would batter a position. The Germans quickly learned to crouch in their holes.

Once, when an infantry regiment was staving off a counter-attack, an artillery liaison officer hurriedly called back for fire. Asked the nature of the target, he replied: "Call it machine guns, call it tanks, call it anything. Just give me fire." He got it—from four battalions—and in time.

In the fight for St. Georges d'Elle, Pfc Ralston A. Shepherd, 23rd Inf., saved three companies from mass slaughter. Cornered in an area 30 by 100 yards, with hedgerows skirting both sides, the companies lay in direct line of fire from a flak gun. Shepherd placed his BAR over a gate post and fired more than 1000 rounds, dispersing the Nazis gun crew before it had the opportunity to go into action. The companies took advantage of the precious time, reorganized and fought their way out of the trap. For his action, Shepherd was awarded the Silver Star.

There were many such heroes. Pvt. Joe Marez, an aid man with the 9th Regt., disregarded a hail of machine gun and rifle fire during an attack when he ran forward to attend two wounded riflemen. As he applied a tourniquet to the first man's leg, a bullet struck his head. But Marez didn't quit. He started for the second man, then suddenly collapsed. He was evacuated just in time to save his life. For his heroism, Marez got the division's first Distinguished Service Cross.

There was one corporal of the 38th Inf. Regt. who was wounded and couldn't be evacuated. When German forces advanced near his position, the corporal, unable to stand, pulled a gas protective covering over his body for camouflage and began sniping at them. Although without food, he kept this up for two and a half days until relief finally came. The bodies of two Germans he had killed and the bloodstains of one he had wounded during this time were found.

It was during this fighting, in which green troops came to grips with seasoned German soldiers for the first time, that "88 Corner" became the best-known crossroad in the area. German artillery had zeroed in on the much-used intersection of the St. Lo-Cerisy La Foret roads. A day never passed without shells landing nearby. Division MPs constantly braved the fire to direct traffic.



This battle for Hill 192, vital strongpoint on the way to St. Lo, was next. One rifle company succeeded in reaching the crest June 16 only to be driven back in the face of a withering counter-attack. The division's 2nd Engr. Combat Bn. hurriedly was rushed up to fight as infantrymen.

From then until July 11, when the Indian Head boys roared to success on the heels of a tremendous artillery and aerial bombardment, the division got ready for more of the same.

Thickly covered with heavy foliage, the hill commanded a six-mile area. When "Second to None" wrested the precious territory from the Nazis, the breakthrough at St. Lo, vital communications center just six miles away, was set to follow two weeks later.

The enemy had been fortifying Hill 192 for months. It was studded with foxholes, machine gun nests and expertly camouflaged observation points. Hedgerows sprouted along its gradual slope. Behind these, Germans huddled in dugouts.

Every crossing and road in the vicinity had been zeroed in by enemy artillery emplaced on the rear slope. German camouflage suits blended softly with the foliage so well that one Nazi sniper remained in a tree only 150 yards from American lines an entire day before he was located and killed.

Here, T/Sgt. Frank Kviatek gained fame for his skill at picking off snipers. A veteran of 27 years in the army, Kviatek used a bolt action Springfield with telescopic sight to account for 21 Germans, mostly snipers. His goal was 25 for each of two brothers killed in Italy. Later wounded, he returned to combat to boost his total to 36.

Opposing forces were so close together at this stage of the struggle that infantrymen propelled hand grenades with slingshots made from abandoned intertubes.

In one raid preparatory to the drive over the hill, 1st Lt. Ralph Winstead, 38th Inf., led a combat patrol that blasted its way through enemy hedgerow positions and killed or seriously wounded at least 11 Nazis. With clock-like precision, the patrol poured through three holes cut out of the hedgerow by engineers before returning to their



lines. Every member of the 16-man raiding party received either the Silver or Bronze Star. Only one man was seriously wounded.

The taking of Hill 192 finally was achieved through coordinated efforts of infantry, artillery, tanks and engineers. The Air Force also helped by softening up the heights with dive-bombings. Simultaneously with the main assault, the regiment on the left flank executed a diversionary attack to mask the action that was to take place on a division front.

Shortly before daybreak, July 11, eight battalions of division and corps artillery laid down a heavy concentration which shifted to a rolling barrage as the attack knifed forward. Artillery shells screamed and shook the earth until the objective was secured that afternoon. Many Germans who surrendered had been dazed by the intensity of the shell fire. They admitted it was worse than fighting on the Russian front.

Meanwhile, engineers blasted holes in the hedgerows through which tanks rumbled to spray the next hedgerow with cannon and machine gun fire. This kept the Nazis down until infantry, following behind the tanks, could pick off or capture them. Tank dozers, their mammoth scoops poised in front, filled in sunken roads or ploughed over machine gun nests.

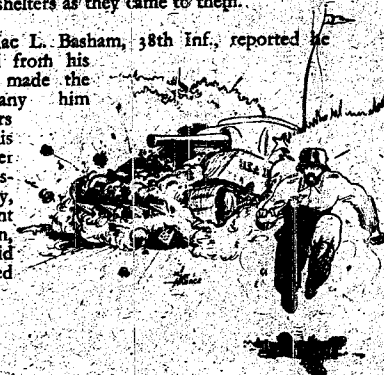


One dozer operator, Pvt. John R. Brewer, 741st Tank Bn., saw three Germans behind a hedgerow blazing away at the advancing troops with their burp guns. He smashed the hedge over the trio, burying them alive.

It was the engineers' job, once they had blown openings in the hedgerows, to guide the tanks to good firing positions. Telephones were attached to the rear of each tank but they often failed to operate. Pvt. Alton N. Jones, 2nd Engr. Bn., was one of many engineers who sought to remedy the situation. Exposing himself to enemy fire, Jones crawled atop one tank and gave directions by tapping on the hull.

Although tanks and artillery were of inestimable value, it was the doughboys who captured Hill 192—advancing yard by yard up the slopes, digging the Germans out of the shelters as they came to them.

Second Lt. Mac L. Basham, 38th Inf., reported he routed one Nazi from his hole and then made the Kraut accompany him to other shelters to order out his comrades. After taking seven prisoners this way, the Lieutenant turned them in, secured the aid of two enlisted



men and together they drove five more from dugouts.

By late afternoon, "The Hill" belonged to the men of the 2nd. The division, its immediate mission accomplished, faced south to await the great breakthrough.

Hill 192, then St. Lo were the first symptoms. Like a volcano, the entire Normandy front had come alive—from Caen to Granville, from one coast of the Cherbourg peninsula to the other. The feverish flow of artillery, tanks and supply trucks, rumbling from the beach and from Cherbourg, had filled to bursting the tiny space occupied by men and materiel. Soon it erupted.

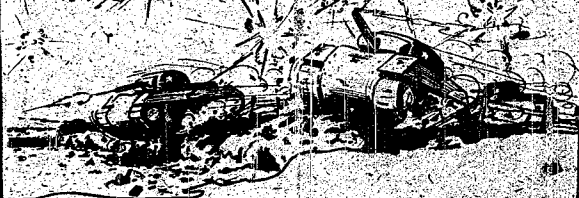
The 2nd now stood astride the St. Lo-Berigny highway, and, with the key city of St. Lo in American hands a few days later, the division attacked again on July 26 with regiments abreast. The objective was St. Jean des Baisants. In the lull since Hill 192, the Germans frantically had dug defenses three hedgerows deep.

Tank-infantry teams had evolved new methods of attacking the miniature fortresses. No longer did tanks carry dangerous satchel charges on their backs. New devices, invented by ingenious GIs overnight, ripped open the thick earth walls of the hedgerows while infantry-tank-artillery coordination stunned the enemy to make easier the task of the doughfoot.

Buttoned-up medium tanks charged into the attack under time-fire of artillery to search out openings and routes of approach. Their guns spat steel into enemy machine gun nests. When the time-fire lifted, tanks whirled around to their own lines behind a smokescreen to be joined by infantry, which came up with close support from the artillery—this time firing ground impact-bursts.

The Germans were making a last desperate stand and every hedgerow was bloodily defended between the St. Lo-Berigny road and St. Jean des Baisants.

Capt. George R. Michell, commanding Co. K, 23rd, went ahead of his two assault platoons, fired five shots into one machine gun nest to kill the crew, and then charged another emplacement under withering fire, emptying a clipful of Gabaad ammunition to silence it.



The 60 men left in his company after coming through the barrage, stormed fortifications manned by 300 Germans. They took 40 prisoners, killing or routing the remainder. Capt. Michell was awarded the DSC for his action.

The fight was on. Doughfeet battered stubbornly through German rearguard actions—so relentlessly that at times they fell exhausted against hedgerows, only to rise and slog wearily forward again. But what they paid in sweat, they saved in blood. The enemy had no time in which to dig in deeply and catch his breath for another stand.

The Germans were tricky. Once 50 of them advanced, hands held high in surrender. Suddenly they dropped flat to the ground, while their machine guns opened up on unwary GIs taken in by this treachery. Minefields always were to be reckoned with. Heavy artillery occasionally lobbed in death and destruction.

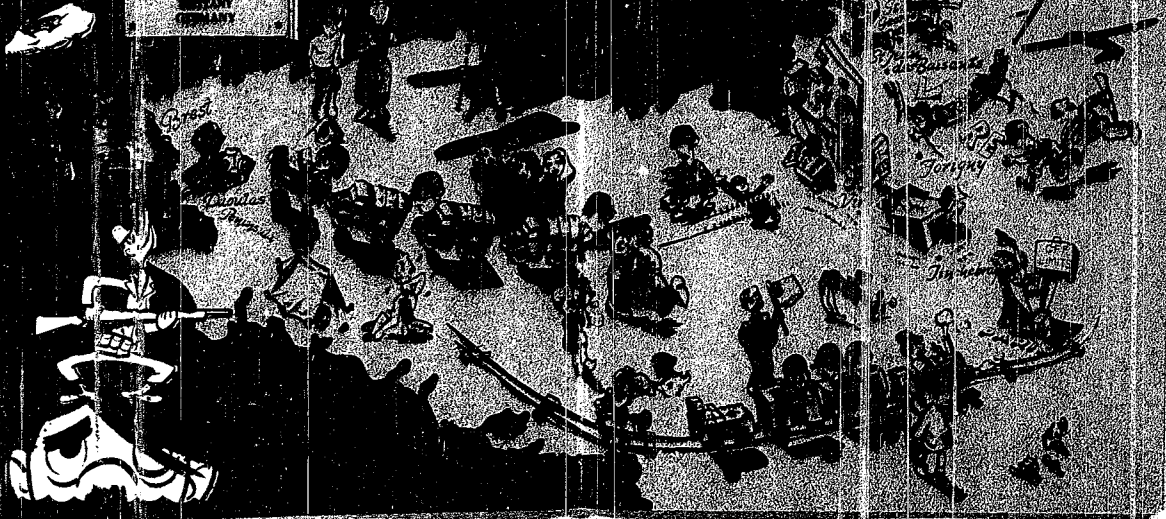
But the disintegration of the enemy, became more apparent. By Aug. 2, the division had crossed the Vire River—still spearheading the attack of V Corps south to the ruins of Vire and on to Tinchebray.

Aug. 15 saw the infantry slam into Tinchebray and advance to the outskirts of the far side to guard against possible counter-attack. Next day, the division drew out of action and for the first time in the battle of the hedgerows, the 2nd no longer had the enemy to its front.





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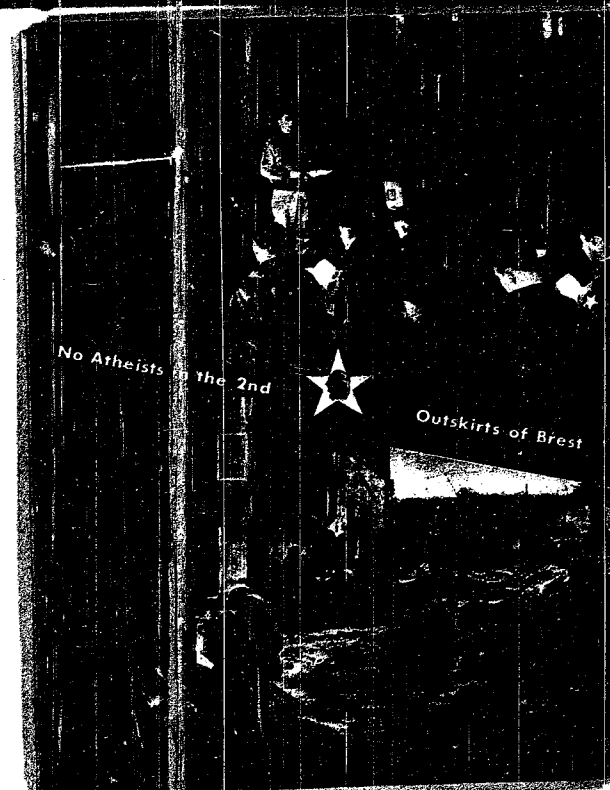
1914

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It had come 40 kilometers in 20 days. The breathing spell came none too soon.

IN World War I, the division had set a record of 136 consecutive days of fighting. That mark was now eclipsed. World War II saw the Indian Head combat soldiers in the front lines 70 straight days—from D plus 1 to D plus 71!

Contributing valuable support to the division in crushing the Wehrmacht during the Normandy campaign were the 462nd AAA (AW) Bn., 612th and 893rd TD Bns., 741st Tank Bn., 192nd Cavalry Recon. Sqdn. and 81st Chemical Bn.

Of the part the division played in the Battle of Normandy, Maj. Gen. L. T. Gerow, Commanding General, V Corps, said:

"The record of the 2nd Inf. Div. from its arrival on the beaches of Normandy until the capture of Tinchebray has been one of hard, relentless fighting against a stubborn enemy. It was largely through the persistent determination and unflinching courage of the officers and men of the 2nd Inf. Div. that the battle of the hedgerows was won."

"For more than two months of continuous fighting, they were to a great measure responsible for the success of V Corps."

Almost immediately after the fall of Tinchebray, the 2nd embarked on a 300-mile journey and the Battle of Brest.

ONE writer has likened the Battle of Brest to the Siege of Sevastopol. Both once were prosperous commercial ports, later converted by the Nazis into key naval stations. Both were left as piles of rubble, torn walls and twisted steel when war's fury ceased.

Brest housed the submarine pens from which U-boats threaded their way into the Atlantic to attack Allied shipping. As a port it was needed by the Allies, who were hard-pressed for harbors through which to feed the growing armies in France.

Knowing this, the German High Command had ordered the Brest garrison to hold out for at least 90 days. Pillboxes and emplacements of steel reinforced concrete, plus the bitter defense of the paratroop garrison, testified that the Germans had determined to make the port another Stalingrad.

Hitler demanded three months. Brest fell in 39 days.

For generals and commanders, Brest was notable because it involved street fighting technique. The GI

remembers it best because, while it was a deadly, bloody business, he could at least sleep in a bed for the first time since D plus 1, enjoy fine wines and liquors and investigate German billets, storehouses and canteens filled with Nazi loot.

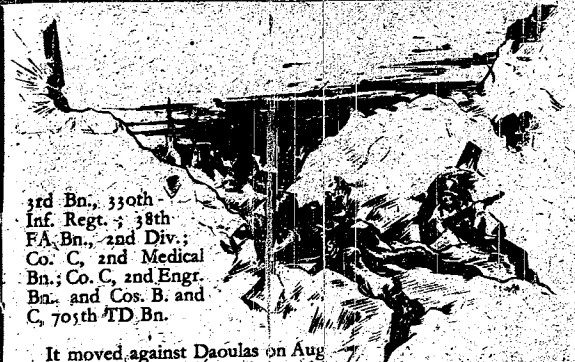
But he had to come a long, hard way before enjoying these luxuries—through hedgerows as thick as roads sunk as deep as those in Normandy, past heavily defended concrete emplacements, and against a vicious weapon, the flak gun fired at point blank range.

Brest proper lies on the northern side of the harbor, cut in half by the Penfield River, flowing south into the harbor. Across the harbor to the southeast of the port the Daoulas Peninsula juts out and to the southwest,



the Crozon Peninsula. Both the city proper and the two peninsulas were heavily defended.

Three divisions, with a large amount of supporting corps artillery, were assigned to reduce the garrison. The plan for the 2nd Div. was to drive south through the easternmost part of the city to the harbor. On the right (western flank), the 8th Inf. Div. was poised to whip south through the center of Brest. Farther to the west moved the 29th Inf. Div., heading south to clean out the western tip of the Brittany Peninsula. A task force, composed of the 18th Regimental Combat Team and other units, was scheduled to reduce the Daoulas Peninsula.



1st Bn., 330th
Inf. Regt.; 38th
FA Bn., 2nd Div.;
Co. C, 2nd Medical
Bn.; Co. C, 2nd Engr.
Bn. and Cos. B. and
C, 705th TD Bn.

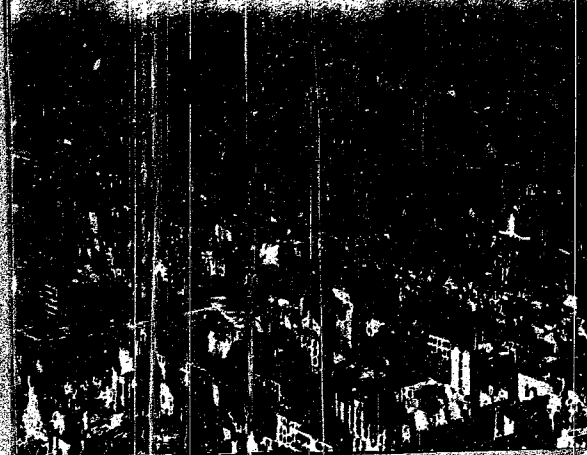
It moved against Daoulas on August 22 and soon overran the first major objective, Hill 154, highest point on the peninsula. The tactic was to creep Indian-fashion through low-lying bushes which the enemy had failed to cut down around the hill, to encircle and surprise.

One PW taken from a concrete emplacement said: "I knew you were coming but I couldn't do anything. I could see no one to shoot. The first American soldier I saw was the one who captured me."

Too late the Germans attempted to reinforce the concrete pillboxes, barbed wire entanglements and trenches encircling the hill's peak. One infantry company held off reinforcements while another bagged the position. Entirely the doughboys' show without benefit of artillery

of air support, the maneuver was highly successful. Hill 154 commanded the entire harbor area and was a valuable observation post.

Although much hard fighting lay ahead, capture of Hill 154 was the beginning of the end for the Daoulas Peninsula. Seven days later the task force swept to the tip to clean out pockets of resistance around Plougastel, and reap a harvest of over 3000 prisoners. The 38th Inf. returned to the division, which now closed in on the main defenses of Brest.



FALL of the Daoulas Peninsula produced an immediate advantage. TD artillery and heavy machine guns now could be set up along the shore, pouring direct, harassing fire across the harbor into the city. Observers on Hill 154 and liaison planes made it increasingly difficult for the enemy to use artillery without revealing his position. While the battle for Daoulas raged, the division crashed Brest's outer defenses. A key objective was Hill 105, which was to the outer defenses what Hill 154 was to Daoulas. There the similarity ended, for 105 was taken only after slow, painful fighting. Hill 105 was larger, more heavily manned, more bitterly defended both in the approaches and on the slopes. Buttressed by concrete dugouts and positions, the Krauts defended it foot by foot.

Attacking the hill's approaches, one company inched its way toward a group of six bunkers. A platoon crossed the Guipavas-Brest road, and one squad reached the first bunker when a loud explosion, followed by three successive blasts, rocked the terrain. Huge boulders, sharp chunks of concrete and debris burst in all directions. One man said later he "just kept climbing" even though he was buried to the waist. Others were not so lucky.

Force of the explosion left craters 100 feet wide and 50 feet deep. One man-sized piece of concrete smashed a trucksize hole in a thick hedgerow 100 yards away.

The squad which reached the first bunker was completely wiped out. Only two members of the platoon's

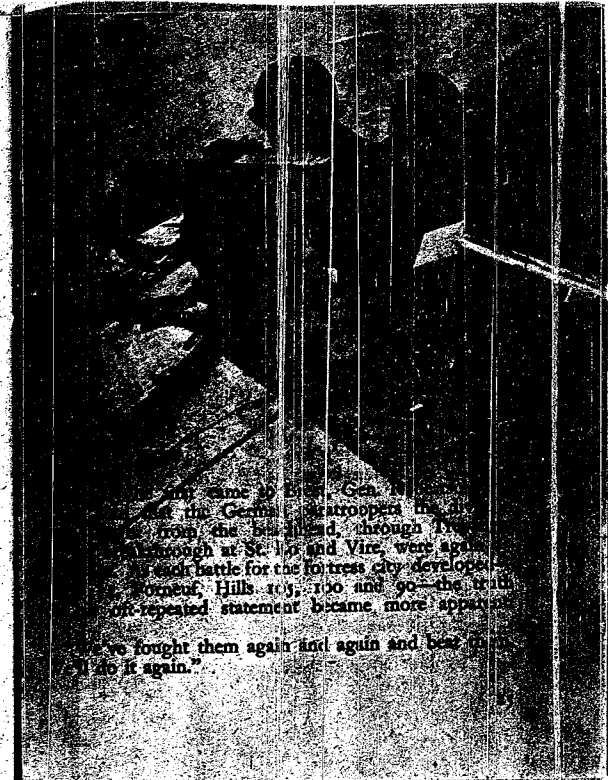
remaining squads were battle fit. Although few were killed, many were stunned and hurt. The company commander gathered 22 men together and pressed on for 400 yards more before being stopped.

Two days later another company met its day of trial with sacrifice and courage. Enemy paratroopers at Fournief held a ridge threaded with tunnels, pillboxes, foxholes and camouflaged gun emplacements. Because little protection was offered by this terrain, a smoke screen was thrown up to cover the advancing infantry. One platoon struck out blindly through the smoke, each man aware of the danger of the mission. They were found later, lying in a field along a sunken road, still in perfect platoon formation. All but three were dead, but bloodied bayonets, and 28 German bodies in one field grimly told the full story of the battle.

That night the enemy withdrew 500 yards.

The fortunes of war were kinder to Co. E, 23rd Inf., as it attacked a similar stronghold on Hill 105. Boldness, luck and surprise were accompanying features. GIs blasted a flak gun with mortar fire and charged into a pitted road with fixed bayonets, kayoing machine guns on both flanks, and forcing the Nazis to surrender.

Artillery and air bombardment softened up Hill 195, but it was the hard-hacking hedge-to-hedge infantry slugging which finally took it. Hill 105 commanded the outer defenses of Brest and the city itself. Hills 90 and 100 still had to be taken, but after the highest—195—had fallen, the others were doomed.



... came to Brest. Gen. ...
... the German paratroopers the day ...
... from the beachhead, through ...
... although at St. 100 and Vire, were again ...
... each battle for the fortress city developed ...
... Fournief Hills 105, 100 and 90—the truth ...
... on repeated statement became more apparent ...
... we fought them again and again and beat them ...
... do it again."

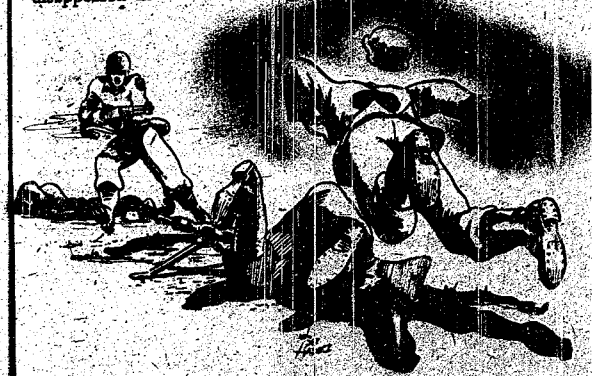


As soon as riflemen had secured both slopes of the hill, tank destroyers again went into action, stabbing into the hills on the same ridge and into the city's outlying suburbs. Division and corps artillery also wheeled into position, constantly lobbing accurate high explosives, interspersed with smoke shells, to mark targets for sweeping fighter bombers.

Brest Airfield was the scene of another bitter struggle. South of the field the infantry was pinned down by concrete emplacements which had resisted three days of heavy shelling. To start the attack rolling on one company sector, flame-throwers were brought up to fire into embrasures of an enemy machine gun emplacement. Heavy losses in the company demonstrated that no man experienced in using the weapon was available. Company commander Capt. Cameron A. Clough strapped the equipment to his back, crossed the open field under heavy fire and destroyed the emplacement. His action enabled the company to breach the main line of resistance and outflank positions menacing companies on either side. Capt. Clough was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross.

In Brest itself, pillars of smoke billowed constantly from fires set by artillery and aerial bombardment. Traces of gunpowder and burnt wood lingered in the air. Only skeletons of buildings remained—some blackened by fire, others hollowed by concussion blasts. Here and there blocks of apartments or stores stood untouched. Piles of debris spilled, slopped into deserted streets.

The silence was oddly accentuated by the random chatter of machine guns and the sharp crack of rifles. Shells whispering overhead to crash in the distance added to the ghostliness. When a French civilian ventured among the wreckage, his footsteps echoed blocks away. At night the silence mounted until an occasional shell descended and burst. Pale lights from flares quickly disappeared in the surrounding darkness.



This was the scene as the 2nd Div. entered Brest for the final battle. The original tactical plan had been altered so that the division sector now included all of the city east of the Penfield, while the 39th Div. advanced to capture the area west of the river. The 8th Div. had moved around to the south to assault the Crozon Peninsula. The stage was set for the final blow.



THE swath cut by the GIs veered north into St. Marc, moving so swiftly that lighted cigars and hot dinners left by the Krauts were found in hastily abandoned German CPs. Final victory, however, lay beyond a maze of streets and buildings—fighting far removed from hedgerow warfare. Traditional methods of street fighting were useless. These streets were death traps swept by machine and flak guns set up at intersections. Positions were gained by the "ladder route," through back doors, gardens, up and down ladders, and over walls and hastily improvised catwalks. Another expedient was to chop a path through the middle of the block by blasting interior walls.

First Lt. Pichegru Woolfolk, 23rd Inf., told how a squad in his platoon had to bore through seven buildings before reaching an enemy stronghold. But the trick saved lives. Favorite approach to a building was from above, because lower floor entrances invited showers of hand grenades and rifle fire from the upper floors.

Direct fire from the 705th TDs, emplaced on the front lines knocked out many strong points. Men of the 2nd Engrs. punched holes through walls or pushed paths through rubble as much as 15 feet deep in some places.

Surrounding, flanking, working their way from block to block, sometimes knocking out a machine gun from an upper story window, or engaging in grenade and fire fights within buildings, the infantry inched forward. One of the sharpest fights occurred in the cemetery on the southern edge of town, where the Germans had set up machine guns for cross-fire, protected by ornate French tombstones. One platoon wormed its way into this macabre battlefield, but had to withdraw until holes could be blasted in the cemetery walls. Buildings on both sides were in American hands before the cemetery finally could be taken.



The division eventually reached the old wall of the inner city. Patrols probed the ancient moat, searching for an opening. The wall measured 60 feet across in some places—too wide for demolitions. Two plans were considered—a crossing of the Penfield west of the wall through the 29th Div. sector, or a penetration of the wall itself.

To Lt. Col. William F. Kernan's 2nd Bn. went the credit for finding a way through. Co. I, which had distinguished itself at Forneuf, discovered the unguarded weak spot. While the company trickled through this hole, other elements of the battalion found another opening near the river, overwhelmed the guards and



to permit surrender of the garrison. By that time, the 29th Div. had swept past the submarine pens to the Penfield to end all resistance in the western sector.

Now it was nearly 1300. From holes, caves and underground dugouts Germans straggled into the Place du President Wilson. Some wore well-tailored, fancy uniforms, in sharp contrast to the more practical battle dress of the Americans. Dirty, ragged clothes hung on others. Collected in little groups in the enormous square were the grey-haired labor troops, the conglomeration of naval personnel who had been fighting as infantrymen, the scrawny youths and the stiff, well-dressed officers.

Groups were led off as new ones appeared. At one time nearly 1000 troops packed the square, over which an American flag danced lazily in the breeze.

At 1400 the German commander formally surrendered the garrison in the presence of Gen. Robertson. Fortress Brest had fallen.

In six weeks of fighting, the 2nd Div. had captured 13,000 prisoners, including 3000 taken by Task Force B on the Douaies Peninsula.

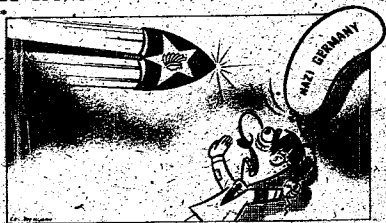
But all of this would not have been possible without the invaluable assistance rendered by units attached to the division during the Battle of Brest. Units which blended their efforts to make the 2nd Div. so effective

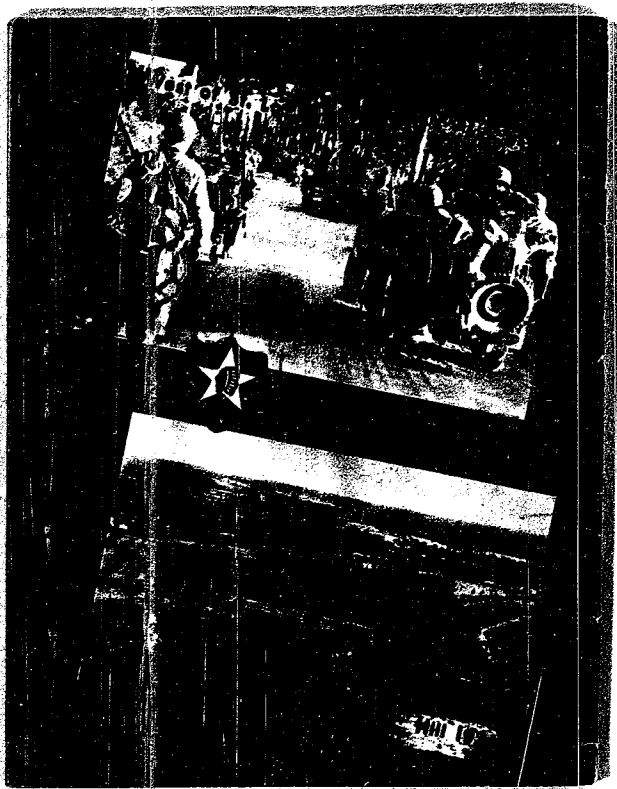
were the 612th TD Bn.; Co. B; 705th TD Bn.; Co. D, 709th Tank Bn.; Co. C, 86th Chemical Bn.; 687th FA Bn.; Cos. A, C, E, 5th Ranger Bn.

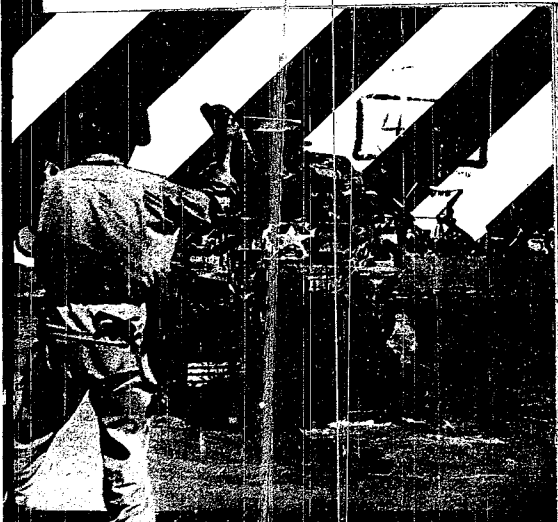
Now, the 2nd Div. is poised for the all-time showdown. Hundreds of miles to the east of Brest, where the thunder of war reverberates, men of the 2nd, inside the blood-stained, snow-swept Siegfried Line still slug their way forward.

When there is time to reflect, memories revert to the other weary hours of the past and especially to those men who helped put the 2nd in Germany—those who now remain behind in Normandy and Brittany. Recent deeds only have enriched the heritage created by the forefathers of the 2nd Div. who cut the pattern of courage in World War I.

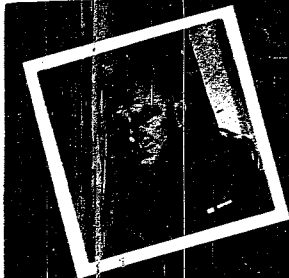
In achieving its successes during the current campaign, the going has been tortuous, back-breaking. But this story is only a larger replica of the saga of 25 years ago. Whenever obstacles loom on the road to ultimate victory, Gen. Robertson's reminder answers the challenge: "We've fought them again and again and beat them. WE'LL DO IT AGAIN!"







BLUE *and* WHITE
DEVILS



Major General, Commanding

Name _____

Date Enlisted _____

Assigned to 3rd _____

Battle Actions _____

This is one of a series of G.I. Stories of the Ground, Air and Service Forces in the European Theater, issued by the Orientation Branch, Information and Education Services, Hq. TSFET. Major General John W. O'Daniel, commanding the 3rd Infantry Division, lent his cooperation, and basic material was supplied by his staff.

United States Army Forces in the
THE STORY OF THE

European Theater
3rd Infantry DIVISION

It was Adolph Hitler's birthday and three platoons of proud troops presented arms at the Hitler Platz in Nurnberg as a flag was raised to the top of the pole at one end of the square. A general made a short but dramatic speech.

But the ceremony was a shocking insult to Nazism. The troops were American; the flag, the Stars and Stripes; the general, an officer in the United States Army.

This was a small measure of the 3rd Infantry Division's contempt for the Nazis—the 3rd which began its war against the Germans early Nov. 8, 1942, off the coast of French Morocco.

Thirty months later, May 8, 1945, when the Nazis surrendered unconditionally, the 3rd boasted three additional amphibious landings, eight campaign stars, 33 Congressional Medal of Honor winners and such memorable milestones as Casablanca and Tunisia in Africa; Palermo and Messina in Sicily; Monte Lungo and the Volturno River in southern Italy; the Anzio beachhead, Cisterna and Rome in central Italy; the Riviera, Rhone River Valley, Montelimar and Besancon in southern France; the Vosges Mountains, Strasbourg, the Colmar Pocket, Siegfried Line, Rhine River, Bamberg, Nurnberg, Munich, Berchtesgaden, Salzburg.

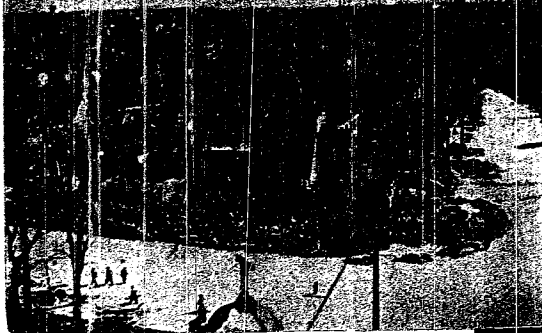
There were few veterans of the initial D-Day on

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hand for V-E Day in Salzburg and Berchtesgaden, a solemn day for both veterans and recruits alike. For during those 30 months, the 3rd had sustained 34,000 casualties—more than any of the 60 divisions in the European Theater—in its 3200 mile trail from Casablanca to Salzburg.

April 16, 1945: Nurnberg was the goal and the 3rd knew it would have a tough fight on its hands. Captured Wehrmacht and Volksturm troopers indicated a stand would be made at Nurnberg which Hitler had selected to play host to the yearly celebration of the Nazi party.

The same 150 AA guns which protected the city against air raids were put into use as the 3rd closed in from the north and the 43rd Inf. Div. swung up from the east and southeast. Approximately 80 of the guns were in the division's position.



Under cover of darkness, 1st Lt. Sherman Pratt, North Little Rock, Ark., who was a first sergeant only four months previous, led Co. L, 7th Regt., against the outer ring of the 88s. A terrified gun crew put up a sharp fight, then folded under the relentless pressure. The first position of 12 guns was kaput.

Simultaneously, 2nd Bn., 15th Regt., under Lt. Col. Keith L. Ware, Glendale, Calif., slashed into the city from the northeast, with 3rd Bn., commanded by Lt. Col. John O'Connell, New York City, entering on its right. In the next 36 hours, 43 dual-purpose 88s were captured and the Blue and White patch troopers were well inside the city.

Veteran campaigners never experienced more accurate enemy sniper fire. Luftwaffe troops, crack SS panzer grenadiers and Volksturm held on for three days, finally retiring behind the old city's 20-foot thick wall. A 155 howitzer, hauled into position 500 yards from the wall, could no more than nick the outer plaster.

The job was one for the doughs again. Scaling the walls, rushing the two gates and probing their way through pitch-black, narrow passageways, infantrymen reached the inner city, then raced for Hitler Platz and the royal castle in the northwest corner of the old town.

At 1000 hours on Hitler's birthday, April 20, a scout from Lt. Col. Jack Duncan's 2nd Bn., 7th, reached one side of the Platz and met a member of the Lt. Col. James Osgard's 2nd Bn., 30th Regt.

Two hours later, Maj. Gen. John W. "Iron Mike"

O'Daniel, division commander, was notified that Maj. Kenneth B. Potter's 1st Bn., 15th Regt., had cleared the last resistance in the old city. Engineers swept rubble from the streets with a tank dozer, then erected a flag pole at one end of the square at Hitler Platz.

At 1800, "Iron Mike" addressed the men who had captured the city. His remarks were short, merely thanking the men for again accomplishing their mission and noting that the twilight of Nazism was approaching, total blackout.

Two days later, in Zeppelin Stadium, a regiment of the division stood at attention while more history was made. Five heroes of the 3rd received the Congressional Medal of Honor from Lt. Gen. Alexander M. Patch, Seventh Army commander. Never before had five men of one division been awarded the Medal of Honor at a single ceremony.

After taking Nurnberg, the 3rd was promised a rest, but orders were switched when the 12th Armd. Div. captured a Danube River bridge at Dillingen. The division was picked to exploit this entry into the Redoubt area. Within three days, the 3rd moved 140 miles on organic transportation and was again in contact with the enemy.

The *Stars and Stripes* reported April 28: "A German underground anti-Nazi organization came into the open this morning and handed the city of Augsburg to the 3rd Division, just as news of the Munich revolt against the Hitler government swept the city."



... of Hitler's ... 1923, and three days after the fall of Augsburg, troops of Lt. Col. MacKenzie Porter's 1st Bn., 30th, and Maj. Rulph Flynn's 3rd Bn., 7th, entered Munich's outskirts.

The city was the scene of weird fighting. Along one block the 30th received wild acclaim from the civilians; on another block the 7th fought what Col. John Heintges termed "more like a game of cops and robbers" against 14 to 16-year old Hitler youth.

There was no hesitating at Munich; a 30th task force rolled southeast along the autobahn, covering 50 miles in a single day to capture intact a bridge across the Inn River at Rosenheim.

Prisoners were taken by the thousands. Rear echelon troops took charge of them because fighting men were

in too much of a hurry. When Maj. Jim Watts, Eugene, Ore., Division Provost Marshal, spotted an air field that he could use for a PW cage, he found three generals, 100 German Wacs and 1500 Luftwaffe personnel inhabiting it. They were promptly made prisoner. Lt. Col. George Fezell, Pittsburgh, Division Signal Officer, captured three towns, a corps headquarters and 2200 prisoners as he sought a division CP site.

Most of the glory of the last two days of the war went to Col. Heintges' 7th Regt. Second Bn. rolled into Salzburg, while 1st and 3rd Bns., commanded by Lt. Col. Kenneth Wallace and Maj. Flynn, raced to capture Berchtesgaden. There they raised the American flag at Hitler's Eagle's Nest while in Salzburg Lt. Col. Duncan waited with Brig. Gen. Robert N. Young, Asst. Division Commander, to accompany a German armistice commission to division headquarters.

When Gen. Young had all but given up hope of the Germans appearing, Lt. Gen. Roertsch, German First Army Commander, arrived at the Bristol Hotel and was rushed to Ober Siegsdorf, division CP.

Next morning he was taken to Munich, where Gen. Jacob Devers dictated surrender terms. The surrender complete, Associated Press Correspondent Howard Cowan wrote:

"'It's all over on my front,' beamed Devers.

"Grasping Gen. Patch by the hand, he said, 'Sandy, this is a joy to me. Congratulations. You've done a magnificent job—and you, too, Mike.'

"Devers took two strides and shook hands with O'Daniel, whose veteran 3rd Division Friday smashed into Salzburg and Berchtesgaden."

After 30 months of campaigning, after fighting through seven countries, eight separate campaigns, the war was over for the 3rd. No wonder Lt. Richard Ford, 10th Engr. Bn., said: "It's amazing to think it's over. I feel a little let down."

"ROCK OF THE MARNE"—

A *Tribute* TO STRENGTH

WHEN the late President Roosevelt and former Prime Minister Churchill decided on the invasion of North Africa they told their army chiefs to select crack divisions for the amphibious operation, the toughest operation in the books. The 3rd was picked to hit the west coast of French Morocco and capture the highly important port of Casablanca.

Both the 3rd's history in World War I and its state of readiness in this war governed its selection. Along the banks of the Marne in 1918, the 3rd stood fast while two German divisions pounded it from three sides. But the 3rd held, the enemy was forced to retreat and the peril to Paris was eliminated. Thereafter, the 3rd became known as the "Rock of the Marne" Division.

The 3rd took part in the fighting at the Somme, Chateau-Thierry, Champagne-Marne, St. Mihiel, Meuse-Argonne, and Aisne-Marne. In August, 1919, after 2

stretch as occupation troops, the division left France for the States and was demobilized.

Reactivated in September, 1921, at Fort Lewis, Wash., the 3rd remained in Washington and California until it went to Camp Pickett, Va., in September, 1942, to prepare for the invasion of North Africa.

The division's background was rooted in the history of its regiments. Their battle honors include the campaigns of 1812, Spanish-American War, Indian Wars, Mexican and Civil Wars. The 7th Regt. was first organized in 1798, mustered out in 1800, reorganized in 1808 and has had continuous service since. Its long list of battle honors begins with the Battle of Tippecanoe in 1811.

The 15th Regt. was organized as a regiment of volunteers to fight the British in 1812. It also saw action in the Mexican War and took part in six major battles during the Civil War. The regiment served twice in China, first during the Boxer Rebellion and later for a 26-year period ending in 1938, when it returned to the States and was assigned to the 3rd.

The 30th Regt. participated in the War of 1812 and in the Civil War, but the history of the present regiment began with its formation in 1901 at Fort Logan, Colo. It and the 7th were part of the division in World War I.

"Blue and White Devils" is only one of the nicknames belonging to the 3rd. That name is a grudging tribute from the Germans who were defeated at the Anzio beachhead. Nazis also called the 3rd the "Sturm" Division, a name often applied to their own units.

The 3rd's invasion off Fedala, French Morocco, in the inky blackness of Nov. 8, 1942, was far from being a perfect landing. Amphibious landings were new and when the ships' deployment in the transport area became mixed, H-hour was set back 45 minutes. A dangerous shore line, rocks and a heavy sea, capsized many boats. Once inland, friendly naval gun fire occasionally hit advancing troops.

But it was a start and it was successful. While the division prepared its assault on Casablanca, Nov. 11, the French asked for an armistice. Gen. George S. Patton, Jr., commanding Western Task Force, told Maj. Gen. J. W. Anderson, then CG of the 3rd: "Thanks for the birthday present, Andy."

Next followed a long period free from combat. The 30th sent troops northward to patrol the borders of Spanish Morocco. One battalion, commanded by Col. (then Maj.) Charles E. Johnson, acted as honor and security guard at the Casablanca conference.

Gen. Anderson left the division Feb. 22 and was replaced by Lt. Gen. Lucian K. Truscott, later Fifth Army Commander. A vigorous training program followed. Gen. Truscott made it his business to see that the division could march five miles an hour for the first hour, and four miles an hour thereafter. The pace was called the Truscott Trot; it made the 3rd famous.

Other American divisions, the 1st, 9th, 34th and 1st Armored, were fighting for Tunisia. When the Afrika Korps was about to collapse, the 3rd's 15th Regt. was

committed to action. It hadn't fired a shot when the Germans surrendered.

"Hell," said 1st Lt. Don G. Taggart, current division historian. "We got that battle star for maneuvering into position."

That star was the only gift the 3rd ever received without working for it.

Sicily -

SPRINGBOARD TO ITALY

NEXT amphibious operation for the Marne Division was Sicily. It was rough. Not only were Italians and Germans fighting to hold on to Sicily but it was mid-July, hottest time of the year in a hot country. Water was scarce; climbing one mountain meant only another mountain to climb.

Licata was the scene of the 3rd's invasion. Marne-men exhibited their Truscott Trot immediately. In the drive for Palermo they covered 90 miles in three days, all on foot. During the attack, the 30th's 3rd Bn. covered, by marching over mountainous terrain, 54 miles in 33 hours—a record the division believes still stands—then attacked the town of San Stefano Quisquina.

Outside Palermo the Army commander drew a line where foot troops were to stop; entry was to be made by armored forces. Gen. Truscott received permission to "patrol" the town, however, and 3rd Bn., 7th,

entered the city to be met next morning by tankers from the 2nd Armd. Div.

He called himself "The Old Goat" but there was nothing old about the way Lt. Col. Lyle Bernard loaded his 2nd Bn., 30th, into Higgins boats and Ducks to make two landings behind enemy lines as the 3rd pushed up the Sicilian coast toward Messina. For these two invasions, the battalion won the Presidential Unit Citation.

Again, at Messina, Marne-men were first into the city. Again it was the 7th, climaxing a drive against stubborn German rear guards that resulted in the bloodiest fighting of the entire campaign.

Thirty days after the fall of Messina (Sept. 17, 1943), the 3rd headed for Italy and crossed the recently won Salerno beachhead. Three days later, elements of the 30th met German troops south of Acerno. Forgotten was the Truscott Trot in the rugged mountains, the biting rain, and against the powerful, stubborn German army.

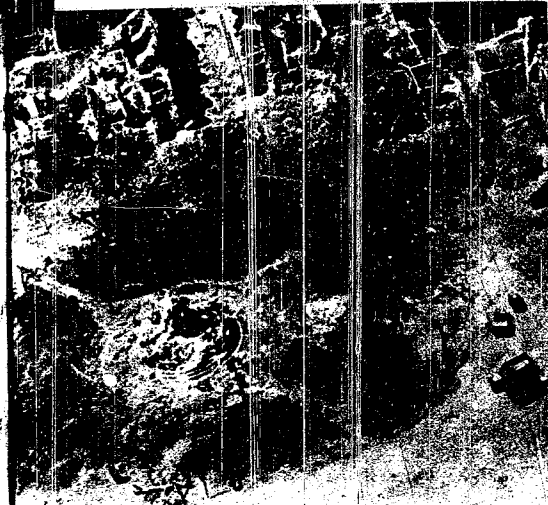
The division made an audacious crossing of the Volturno River Oct. 13. The river valley was perfectly flat, fringed with mountains affording the enemy excellent observation, cross fire and strong artillery support. Without stopping to take a breather, the 3rd plunged into the icy waters, crossed the river. Casualties were high. The situation was tense once during an enemy tank counter-attack, but the division crunched ahead to the mountains to upset the German timetable.

It was in the mountain approaches to Cassino that the division met its toughest opposition and displayed its greatest offensive prowess. Heavily reinforced, the Germans sat on Monte Rotundo, Monte Lungo and Monte la Difensa, ringing Mignano on the north, determined to hold at all costs.

Every foot of the way was heavily mined. Jeeps were replaced by pack mules. Men died who might have lived if they could have been transported over the long arid tortuous trails to aid stations. Co. K, 7th, once had 23 casualties from AP mines while climbing a hill to relieve another company. Mules were forever straying off the paths, exploding mines and wounding badly needed men.

As winter approached, the 3rd captured Monte Rotundo, the south nose of Lungo and all of steep, barren La Difensa, except one summit guarded by a 200-foot cliff.

It was on Monte Rotundo that Capt. Maurice L. "Footsie" Britt, Lone Oak, Ark., former Detroit Lions' football star, CO Co. L, 30th, became a legendary figure through his exploits. Despite painful grenade wounds, he inspired his company of 40 to stand off three separate counter-attacks, throwing "at least 30 grenades," firing his carbine, a Tommygun, anything he could shoot to beat off the enemy. He was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor. Previously, Capt. Arlo Olson, Baton Rouge, La., 15th, drove his men through a vastly superior force in 13 rugged days. Killed by a mortar fragment at San Felice, he also was awarded the CMH. This type of grim fighting had its



results. The first approaches to Cassino were forced, a toe hold gained for succeeding troops.

The 3rd came out of the line Nov. 17, 1943, rested until the end of December in the knee-deep mud near San Felice. Practice river crossings on the Volturno indicated that Marne-men would force the issue at the Rapido which flowed through Cassino.

Anzio, AND THE RACE TO ROME BEGINS

But with the new year, a switch in plans sent the 3rd to the Naples staging area to prepare for a landing 30 miles south of Rome, an operation that was to roll back the enemy on the southern Italian front. The 3rd and a brigade of the British 1st Div. landed Jan. 22 near the little resort towns of Nettuno and Anzio. Winston Churchill once spoke of "tears, sweat and toil." Anzio was paid for in guts—American and British guts. More than 6000 men died during the next few months to protect 100 square miles of beachhead. In that hallowed niche reserved for names like Bataan and Guadalcanal, Anzio will live forever. Anzio always will be a vivid memory to the men who fought there... and survived.

Three regiments landed abreast, each spearheaded by an assault battalion. By mid-afternoon next day, they were 10 miles inland. The enemy's reaction was swift. Instead of withdrawing, he raced fresh troops from the Rome vicinity and northern Italy and hurled them into battle. When a 45th Inf. Div. combat team landed on the beachhead D plus 6, an equivalent of three divisions loomed in front of Cisterna on Highway 7 as the 3rd regrouped for its first assault.

The brick-wall defense stopped the attack which began Jan. 29 and ended early Jan. 31. When the 7th's 1st Bn. finally was relieved, less than 200 men were left;

2nd Bn. had 400; 3rd Bn., 600. Closest to Cisterna were 1st Bn., 30th, and 2nd Bn., 15th, which had to swing to the defense only 1500 yards from the objective.

Anzio was barely 14 miles wide and 10 miles from sea to front at its deepest penetration. The enemy squatted around the beachhead's perimeter and in the Colli Laziali Hills with perfect observation of every square inch of beachhead.

Sally, the Berlin broadcaster, knew what type of rations men ate. Among songs she dedicated was, "Don't Get Around Much Anymore." Among her remarks was, "As long as there is blue and white paint, there'll always be a 3rd Division." The blue and white paint outlasted Sally.

When VI Corps ordered defensive emplacements dug along the Mussolini Canal—the beachhead line—wary, battered Marne-men doggedly refused to let the Krauts push them back. The Mussolini Canal plan was discarded. That line, won during the first Cisterna assault, was to be held. Men like T/5 Eric Gibson and Pfc Lloyd Hawks would have approved the decision, the former if he hadn't been killed when he left his field kitchen to lead a squad of recruits into their first battle; the latter, if he hadn't been near death in a Naples hospital after saving the lives of two buddies although he had been wounded in the head, suffered a shattered arm and leg. Both men won the Medal of Honor.

The first defensive battle occurred Feb. 16 when Hitler tried to remove the thorn in the side of Italy. Main weight of the attack was pressed against the

45th Div. and British 1st Div. near Aprilia. When the line receded but didn't disintegrate, Col. Lionel C. McGarr's 30th Inf. and the 1st Armd. Div. counter-attacked across the flat Pontine marshes to steady and re-establish the beachhead line.

Maj. Gen. (then Brig. Gen.) John W. O'Daniel assumed command Feb. 17 when Gen. Truscott went to VI Corps. Men well remember his classic retort to Field Marshal Sir Harold R.L.G. Alexander's question in the War Room. "I believe it is true that your division did not give an inch. Is that right?" asked the Commander of Allied Armies in Italy. "Not a God-damn inch!" replied "Iron Mike."

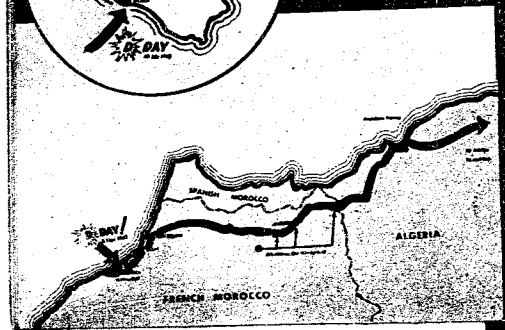
For a while, the fight simmered down, then flared again Feb. 29. Field Marshal Kesselring flung three divisions and elements of a fourth against the 3rd. Wave upon wave of enemy infantry stormed positions. Supported by seven tanks, a regiment struck a company of the 7th, only to be whipped back in retreat. Next morning, two tanks from Ponte Rotto barreled through Co. L, headed for the battalion CP. Co. K stemmed their advance. It was the same all along the line.

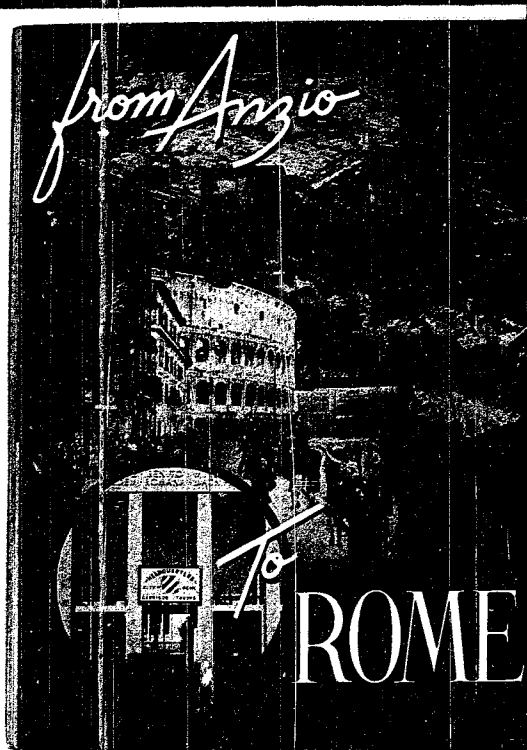
Fourteen tanks grinding from Cisterna toward Isola Bella, held by the 15th, were slapped down by TDs or turned tread and fled. Because reserves were thin, front line doughs had to hold. Second Bn., 30th, made the main attack, wiping out an enemy penetration of 1000 yards at Carano; the 5th restored its positions between Carano and Ponte Rotto. Krauts stacked their dead, covered them with a bulldozer.

Bravest *of the*



Route of the BLUE and WHITE DEVIL





The push of Yank forces on the southern front of the Italian boot was the signal to break out of the beachhead. The date was May 23, an indelible mark in the minds of Marne-men. The 3rd bore the brunt of the attack. Cisterna, key to the enemy's defense, its approaches sewed with mines and anti-tank ditches, latticed with trenches and emplacements, had to be taken.

Late May 21, all three regiments shifted into place, spent a restless day under the scant cover of the Mussolini Canal and adjacent ditches. H-hour was 0630, May 23. The plan demanded the 30th encircle Cisterna from the left, the 15th to by-pass it to the right; the 7th to crash it head-on.

On the 23rd, the division suffered 993 battle casualties, believed to be the highest ever sustained by a single division in one day's fighting. Marne-men kept slugging it out. By nightfall, most companies had lost key personnel; less experienced carried on. Heroes were legion, four won the Medal of Honor for the first two day's fighting. Pvt. Henry "Kraut-an-Hour" Schauer killed 17 Germans in 17 hours with his BAR; Pvt. Johnny Dutko wiped out two machine guns, then charged and silenced an 88; Pvt. James Mills, first scout, led his platoon in his initial combat; Pvt. Patrick Kessler charged an enemy gun after 20 of his buddies were killed or wounded, knocked out a strongpoint, picked off two snipers to help his company advance.

The 7th plowed into Cisterna. By noon of the 25th, the city belonged to the 3rd Div. while the 30th raced ahead to Cori. Pushing on to Artena, "Blue and White



Devils ripped into the Germans, Green Div. crashing in a battle that matched Cisterna for ferocity. Near Highway 4 was crossed, cutting the enemy's escape route to the south; Valmontone taken. The race to Rome began. Preceding the capture of Valmontone was an incident that is an epic in the pages of the 3rd's history.

Pvt. Elden J. Johnson and Pvt. Herbert Christian were in a patrol from the 15th ordered to scout enemy positions. No sooner did the patrol run into an ambush than the leader was killed, a zomm slug tore off Christian's left leg, machine gun bullets ripped into Johnson's stomach. Both men went down. In the blackness of night lit only by the vivid scars of red and green tracers and German flares, both men struggled to their feet to charge the enemy while 11 uninjured doughs withdrew. They were awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor posthumously.

First Lt. Frank Greenlee, Nashville, Tenn., led his platoon of the 3rd Recon Troop into Rome at 0800 June 4 in a photo finish with the 88th Recon Troop. By nightfall, the first capital of a Nazi nation had fallen. To the 3rd fell the honor of garrisoning the city. New uniforms were issued to troops who became garrison for the first time in 14 months.

June 6 was D-Day in Normandy, but for Marne-men, who experienced four D-Days, it was just another invasion. The Rome interlude was brief. The time had come to stab at "the soft underbelly of Europe." To gird itself for the assault on southern France, the 3rd, along with the 36th and 45th Divs., returned to the familiar staging grounds at Naples.

BLUE AND WHITE

Devils

PIERCE "UNDERBELLY OF EUROPE"

AUG. 15, 0800: VI Corps poured more men on the Riviera beaches than splashed on the Normandy shores at H-hour. Military experts labeled it a perfect amphibious operation. It couldn't have been otherwise. For the 36th, it was the second; for the 45th, the third; for the 3rd, the fourth D-Day. So expert was the landing that within the first 24 hours, "Blue and White Devils" rounded up 1000 PWs and began dashing parallel to the coast toward Toulon and Marseille. Sealing off the two ports later captured by the French

for landing of additional troops, the 3rd now whipped north along the Rhone River valley. Nazis withdrew towards the Belfort Gap but they weren't fast enough.

Lt. Col. Clayton Thobro's 2nd Bn., 7th, by-passed Montelimar, which fell to the 15th, and was scrambling along the ridges east of the Rhone when the men's attention was gripped by a scene below them. Within easy 60 mm mortar range, Germans were fleeing northward in more than 1000 vehicles, jammed bumper to bumper, 1000 horse-drawn carts, on foot. The frantic retreat had been caused by Task Force Butler's action in partially blocking their escape route to the north. Pounded relentlessly by the 3rd's Div Arty and the Air Force, the 18-kilometer stretch of highway soon was littered with the smoking hulks of wrecked vehicles, dead men and animals. Nine hundred Krauts were captured.

The German 159th Inf. Div. was rushed into Besancon to man the seven Vauban forts surrounding the city. Its orders: hold for 10 days to protect the retreat. As they approached, Marne-men were deployed for action. The 15th snagged a bridge across the Doubs; 7th Regt. and 3rd Bn., 30th, crossed to Besancon's north side; 1st Bn., 30th, closed in from the south.

Those 10 days were whittled down to three. By the time the last bit of resistance was crushed in Besancon the 15th was lashing out towards Vesoul. It took only one day for Vesoul to fall, but its capture wasn't easy for 1st Lt. John Tominac, Lincoln, Nebr., Co. I, 15th. When his platoon ran into bitter opposition,

Lt. Tominac mounted a blazing Sherman rumbling driverless down the road and poured .50 caliber slugs into the enemy. Wounded in the shoulder, he led his platoon's remaining squad in an assault on the town. Lt. Tominac was awarded the Medal of Honor.

In 30 days, the division covered 400 miles, its units stretched more than half that distance. Tracks fell off tanks, trucks begged for repairs, men plowed ahead, hot on the enemy's heels. The division had reached an area on D plus 10 that was scheduled to be taken on D plus 40.

Associated Press Correspondent Kenneth Dixon once quoted an officer to the effect that winter campaigns were the acid tests of a division. The Marne Division reached the Vosges Mountains for its second winter in combat. It rained, it snowed. Vehicles slid slowly over icy, mountain roads. Tree bursts made enemy mortars doubly effective. Progress was agonizingly slow.

A sneak crossing of the Mortagne River was followed by a drive that put Marne-men, who had scaled the rugged Italian heights, on high ground overlooking St. Die before Germans were aware of the breakthrough. Unopposed, 3rd Bn., 30th, made an 8000-yard dash to strike a position deep in the enemy rear. First and 2nd Bns. followed, sustained innumerable counterattacks in savage mountain fighting.

The battles for Les Roches Eaux and Les Hautes Jaques came next, the latter wrenched from a highly efficient mountain outfit hurried from Austria to stem

the drive down the valley to St. Die. The four-day stalemate finally was broken by Co. B, and Bn., 7th, in an action which earned the company the Presidential Citation.

The 15th, meanwhile, swung north onto the Meurthe River plain. When white flags appeared in La Salle, 1st Lt. Charlie Adams led Co. L. onto the plain to accept the surrender. Krauts unleashed withering fire but a TOT artillery shoot crashed into La Salle, enabling Co. L. to walk in. Other cunning devices employed by the enemy were treated similarly until all territory west of the Meurthe was free.

With another river crossing in prospect, with no bridges intact, 15th patrols probed the river line nightly until two companies of the 10th Engrs. succeeded in erecting ponton bridges under the Krauts' noses late Nov. 20. When one crew lost its boat, a staff sergeant tugged the heavy anchor chain, leaped into the water, and pulled the boat ashore.

Two regiments, the 30th and 7th, crossed the ponton foot bridges without tipping off the enemy, then jumped off in the attack next morning. Seven days later, they reached the Rhine, first troops to reach the river banks.

A night assault through bunkers and trenches at Saales and Saulxures broke the enemy's back. Civilians later said Germans had prepared to stay in Saales all winter. A sensational one-day dash to Mutzig by 3rd Bn., 15th, set the stage for the final drive to Strasbourg. Policing and garrison duties in Strasbourg were comparatively pleasant for Marne-men, but this mission was short-lived, lasting only three weeks. *Yank* Magazine chose T/Sgt. Joe Hodgins, Detroit, 7th, as its "Man of the Year" and ran his picture on the cover of its Jan. 1 issue. Highlight during this period was the 7th's scrap in "The Battle of the Apartments," a tense room-to-room struggle for an enemy-held bridgehead in Strasbourg.

In mid-December, the Wehrmacht launched its last, desperate counter-attack. While von Rundstedt broke through the Ardennes, the enemy increased his pressure north from the Colmar Pocket toward Strasbourg. Third Division was transferred to the First French Army, relieving the hard-pressed US 36th Division, inheriting a sector 20 miles wide on the perimeter of the Colmar Pocket. It was Anzio in reverse.

Snowshoes, skis, white snow suits, Goum mule teams, everything suitable for winter warfare, made its debut. Some sectors were so thinly held, a foot

patrol required three hours to go from one platoon to another. Towards the close of January, the 3rd was selected to spearhead the attack to nip off German troops in the Colmar Pocket. The Ardennes flare-up rated so much news space that the Colmar front was termed "the forgotten war." When the fury of the battle subsided, however, and the 3rd's part of the action revealed, it was called "the best bit of maneuvering on the Western Front."

Kick-off was Jan. 22, anniversary of the landing at Anzio. The play was a double feint, and went something like this: first, 30th and 7th spanned the Fecht, then Ill River and struck east toward the Rhine-Rhone Canal. When the enemy shifted to meet this thrust, 7th and 15th swung south across the Colmar Canal. A lightning jab at Colmar, resulting in the capture of Horbourg, led the Germans to believe a subsequent drive on the city was imminent. But Marne-men turned southeast toward Neuf-Brisach, and Colmar was spiked by the 28th Division and French armor.

The operation was more difficult than words convey. Two battalions of the 30th had crossed the Ill River and the first tank was lumbering across the Maison Rouge bridge when the span collapsed. Lacking tank support, temporarily out of communication with their artillery, doughs of the two battalions suddenly were struck by waves of enemy tank-infantry forces. Lashing out with a fury born of desperation, the men inched back to protect the dwindling bridgehead while some companies held until overrun by Nazi armor. The

clothes of men who waded and swam the flooded rivers turned to ice. Despite the disastrous turn of events, the bridgehead held, and the 15th Regt. snapped out of reserve to attack through the battered 30th.

During this action 2nd Lt. Audie L. Murphy, Farmersville, Tex., 20-year old CO, Co. I, 15th Regt. leaped aboard a burning TD, and manning its 50 caliber machine gun, turned back an assault of 250 Krauts and three tanks. Reorganizing his company, he audaciously chased the enemy. For this action, Lt. Murphy added the Medal of Honor to his decorations that included the Bronze Star, Silver Star and Distinguished Service Cross. When he later was awarded the Legion of Merit, he became the most decorated soldier in the Army, topping Capt. Britt, who lacks the Legion of Merit.

The 3rd wound up the Colmar Pocket campaign by capturing Neuf-Brisach, site of the Germans' main bridges across the Rhine from the Pocket after all three regiments had sealed the escape routes leading to the Rhine bridges east of the city. A former fortress, Neuf-Brisach was surrounded by a moat and wall. Finding the moat empty, a patrol from 1st Bn., 30th, razed through a tunnel located in the wall, emerged in the town's center, captured its garrison with ease.

For its work at Colmar, Gen. de Latre de Tassigny, First French Army Commander, presented the 3rd with the Croix de Guerre with Palm Unit citation. A second Croix de Guerre was awarded for its achievements in the Vosges. With these honors, Marne-men earned the right to wear the French fourragere.

Six months after the Southern France invasion, on Feb. 18, after 188 days of constant contact with the enemy, the 3rd's last troops were pulled out of Neuf-Brisach to a quiet area at Pont-à-Mousson, half-way between Nancy and Metz.

GERMANY — THE END OF

1942-45

Victory MARCH

ALTHOUGH few divisions had more combat days, the 3rd was one of the last outfits to enter Germany's pre-war boundaries. The 45th and 100th Inf. Divs. teamed up with the 3rd as the spearhead force for Seventh Army's drive through the Siegfried Line.

Since the attack was secret, patches and vehicle markings were removed. Second Bn., 7th, infiltrated through enemy mine fields to reach the town of Utweiler, just inside the border south of Zweibrücken.

Then disaster struck. Reported the *Chicago Tribune*, March 18, 1945:

"Five of our tanks had been knocked out by mines trying to enter Utweiler, and the rest of the column had to turn back," related Lt. John Ananich, Jr., Flint, Mich., one of the survivors.

"The Krauts rolled six of their tanks to the high ground north of the town. They had us caught, and caught bad. We had only the weapons infantrymen carry. One of the German tanks worked its way down into

the town and the others followed and started knocking down the buildings with direct fire. Some of our men were being buried alive in those buildings.

"We tried to get some men out of the trap to guide our own armor, but those men never got through. The Krauts were chasing us from one building to another. Finally, there were no buildings left. Now our men made attempts to dash across the open ground for refuge in a wood on the ridge south of the village. Some of them made it."

The battalion had 600 men when it started the attack. Two hundred got back. Third Bn. came to the rescue shortly before noon of the same day and drove the enemy from Utweiler, killing more than 200 foot troops and capturing 200 others.

Simultaneously, 1st Bn., under Lt. Col. Don Wallace, Modesto, Calif., successfully maneuvered to pocket a group of the enemy, then swept forward in a coordinated attack with 3rd Bn., 30th, herding 200 more prisoners to the cage. So fast did the 30th move up on the right, Nazis had no time to counterattack.

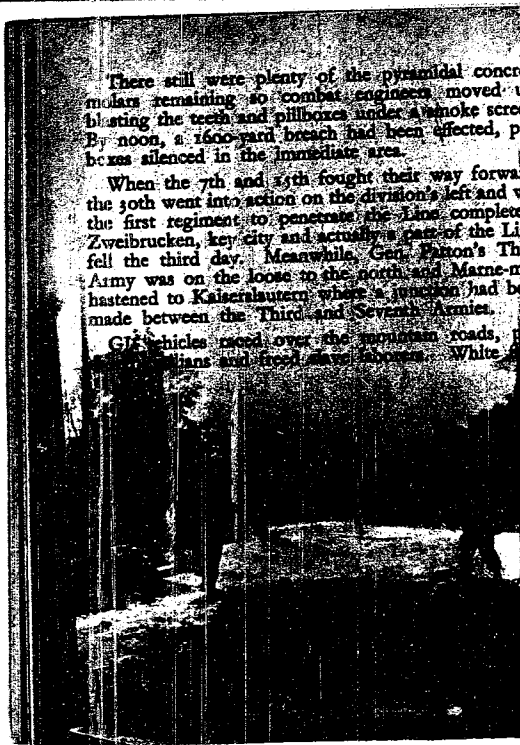
Although the Germans spent two months preparing positions along the border, the 3rd nullified this labor by hurtling into the Siegfried Line a few miles south of Zweibrücken.

Then, after a three and a half hour artillery preparation during which 15,000 rounds ripped the pillboxes and dragon's teeth the final 30 minutes, the 7th and 15th Regts. roared forward.

There still were plenty of the pyramidal concrete mounds remaining so combat engineers moved up, blasting the teeth and pillboxes under a smoke screen. By noon, a 1600-yard breach had been effected, pillboxes silenced in the immediate area.

When the 7th and 15th fought their way forward, the 30th went into action on the division's left and was the first regiment to penetrate the Line completely. Zweibrucken, key city and actually a part of the Line, fell the third day. Meanwhile, Gen. Patton's Third Army was on the loose to the north and Marne-men hastened to Kaiserslautern where a junction had been made between the Third and Seventh Armies.

GI's vehicles raced over the mountain roads, pushing the Germans and freed slave laborers. White



appeared in hundreds of small villages. Kaiserslautern was a picture of utter confusion — wrecked buildings, homeless civilians, troops from at least four infantry and two armored divisions, and thousands of German prisoners.

All opposition west of the Rhine in Seventh Army's sector had collapsed.

Moving as rapidly as it could be fed gasoline, Seventh Army's one-two punch — the 3rd and 45th Divisions — swept across the Rhine late March 25. The Remagen bridge gave First Army a foothold, while Ninth Army and British troops had crossed after a thunderous barrage. Third Army sneaked across. Now it was Seventh Army's turn.

Preceded by a 10,000-round artillery barrage, the 3rd raced northeast through the Odenwald Forest near captured Worms. The snaky Main River was tackled four times, first at Worth, twice near Lohr and again at Haszfurt. Operating with the 14th Armd. Div. was a new experience for the 3rd, which had provided its own armored spearhead and infantry mop-up teams.

Lohr, Gemunden and Bad Kissingen fell. Regiments leap-frogged forward, division CP advanced from 15 to 25 miles daily, wire communication was a luxury when obtainable.

Enemy resistance stiffened. The German high Command ordered fanatical "last man" stands at every town in order to give the Nazis time to prepare defenses

in larger cities. The rapid push continued after the 3rd held up two days while the 42nd Inf. Div. reduced Schweinfurt.

Bamberg was next. When it elected to fight, the 3rd and 45th left the town a smoking ruin. This was the last bastion before Nurnberg where the division had a mock celebration of Hitler's birthday. It was only a matter of days before Augsburg, Munich, Salzburg and Berchtesgaden belonged to the 1st.



At noon, V-E Day, men of the division broke into Hitler's private champagne stocks outside Salzburg and Berchtesgaden. Combat was over. Four days later, the first group of 500 men left for the States.

The division newspaper, *The Front Line* editorialized:

Now that the active campaigning is over in Europe, we must look back and tally the cost of all this glory. All of us have lost someone in this war; a friend, a brother, a son, someone whom we loved. It is to these men whom we look back today in our moment of triumph. We cannot look back to them with honor if we do not look forward to the future for which they fought — and died.

The cost has been great — almost at times, it seemed, too great. It is now our task to build the future on the solid foundation laid by those who have left us... We shall go forward in our traditional way, never forgetting those who march with us in memory.

Proud wearers of the Blue and White patch were the division's attached units, the 756th Tank Bn., 601st TD Bn. and 441st AAA Bn. The mediums of the 756th always worked in support of the doughs. When 2nd Bn., 7th., was cut off at Utweiler, it was chiefly because the entire platoon of supporting tanks had been immobilized by a mine field; when the battalion was rescued, it was chiefly because the tanks were able to get through and knock out six more SP guns.

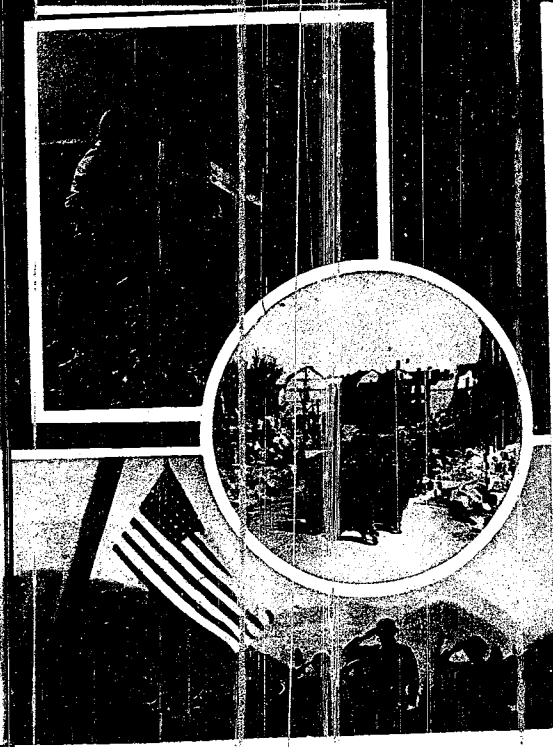
The 601st, which was awarded the Presidential Unit Citation for its work at El Guettar, lived up to its reputation in its 20 months with the division. In two days at Anzio, the battalion knocked out or stopped an estimated 20 enemy tanks, once downed a plane. At Cisterna, one platoon knocked out three AT guns at less than 50 yards.

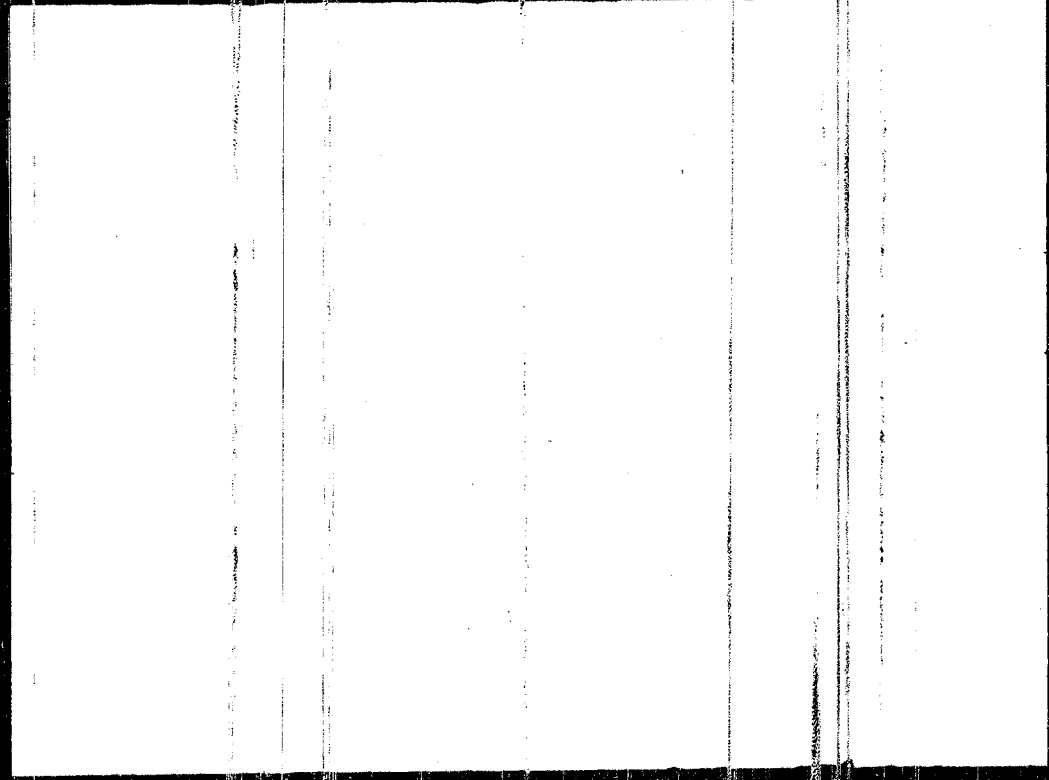
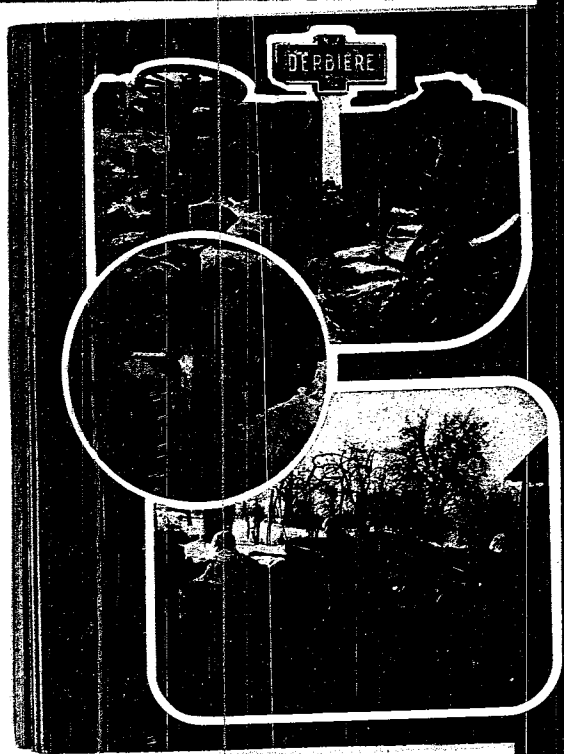
The 441st, one of the first ack-ack units to lend close support to ground troops, performed nearly 200 ground support missions in France and Germany. One flak-wagon attached to the 39th FA Bn. was the big punch in rounding up 132 Germans near Vesoul, France. Seven Nazi planes in one day was the battalion record on the Volturno in October, 1943.

During the Italian campaign, the division was supported by the 751st and 191st Tank Bns. Another unit was the 36th Engr. Regt., which formed the nucleus of the beach group for each of the four amphibious operations.

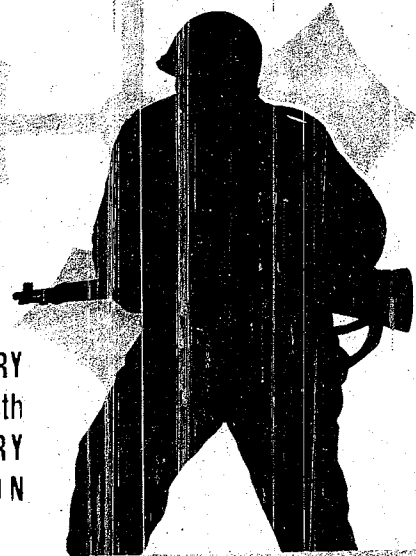
Today, the 3rd Inf. Div. holds its head high. Victory is no hollow word for only fighting men know the real meaning of the word. Men of the 3rd know full well the meaning of victory from 1942 to 1945. Victory was paid for in full.

The 3rd Division says to the world: "Let us not swerve from our determination that never will it be necessary for us to do this kind of job again."





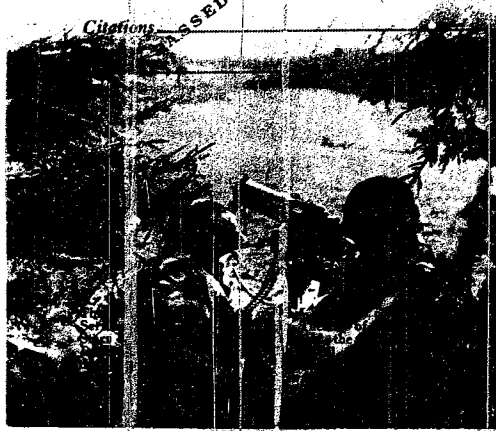
FAMOUS FOURTH



THE STORY
OF THE 4th
INFANTRY
DIVISION

Name _____
 Date Enlisted _____
 Assigned to 4th _____
 Training _____
 Battle Actions _____
 Citations _____

CENSORED BY CENSOR FOR MAILING HOME



THE 4th Infantry Division is built around three of the oldest and most distinguished infantry regiments of the United States Army. It is heir to the history of the 4th Division in World War I. Based on these traditions, we have been building a tradition of our own, one of accomplishment of assigned missions in spite of enemy, weather, fatigue or shortages of personnel or supplies. This booklet is an unfinished story. When the story is finished, may we be able to say, "We never failed."

H. W. Blakely

Major General Commanding.

THE STORY OF THE 4th INFANTRY DIVISION

"It will be easy to take Dickweiler," the German battalion commander told his men. "It is held by only two platoons."

He was right about the two platoons. The Fourth Infantry Division was widely dispersed along a 35-mile front in Luxembourg—a depleted company every two miles or more. But the Germans didn't take Dickweiler. They were slashed to ribbons trying.



...the
12th... enemy
as five to one. But your boys fought on dog
holding each isolated town until reinforcements came.

At Hecternach and other places when reinforcements didn't get through, the 12th held anyway. Without these towns, the Germans couldn't use the roads. Without these roads, the Nazi drive for Luxembourg City was doomed to failure.

Lt. Gen. George S. Patton, Jr., wrote to Maj. Gen. Raymond O. Barton, then Division Commander:

No American division in France has equalled the... of the 12th Inf. Div., which has kept... in every... of the German thrust into the... of Luxembourg, is your... of accomplishment.

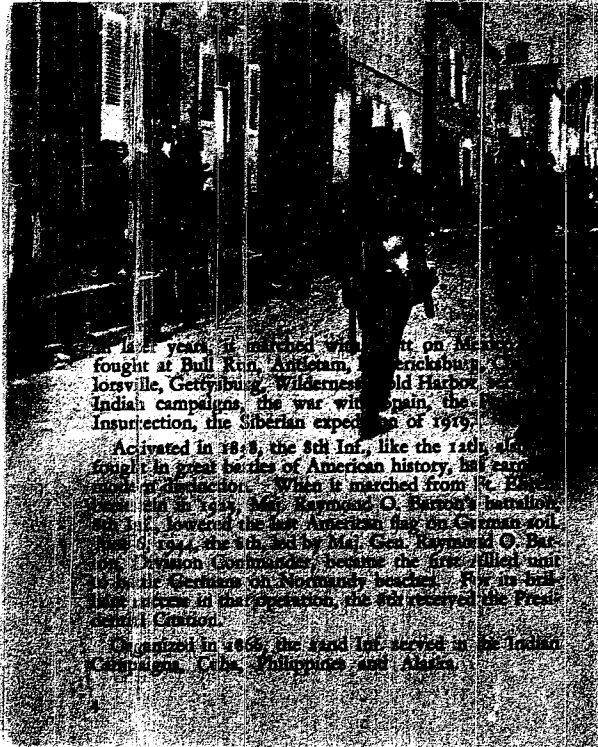


The defense of Luxembourg was a triumph for the fighting men of the Famous Fourth who stood their ground regardless of the odds. They took literally Gen. Barton's statement: "The best way to handle these Heinies is to fight 'em!"

Fighting 'em ever since the invasion of Europe, the Famous Fourth was the first unit to cross Normandy beaches. Battling without rest all the way to Cherbourg, the division then wheeled to punch hedgerow defenses south of Carentan. After spearheading the Normandy breakthrough, these same Joes helped thwart the German counter-thrust which tried to split Allied armies. First American unit to enter Paris, the 4th rolled through the capital, roaring across France and Belgium in pursuit of fleeing Nazis.

After blasting a gaping hole in the Schnee Eifel, the division cracked through Hurtgen Forest. It stopped the German attack in central Luxembourg, then helped drive back the enemy. Again reaching the Siegfried Line in the Schnee Eifel, the 4th pushed deep into Germany. In March, 1945, it moved south to a new zone of action.

DIVISIONAL fighting spirit is backed by a great tradition. Its three infantry regiments have been fighting outfits for generations. One of the oldest regiments in the U.S. Army, the 12th Inf., was organized in 1798, taking part in the defense of Ft. McHenry in 1812.



In later years, it marched with Grant on Mexico, fought at Bull Run, Antietam, Fredericksburg, Vicksburg, Gettysburg, Wilderness, Cold Harbor, Indian campaigns, the war with Spain, the Boxer Insurrection, the Siberian expedition of 1919.

Activated in 1848, the 8th Inf., like the 12th, also fought in great battles of American history, but came into its own in 1944. When it marched from England to France in 1944, Maj. Raymond O. Barton's battalion, 8th Inf., lowered the last American flag on German soil. In June 1944, the 8th, led by Maj. Gen. Raymond O. Barton, Division Commander, became the first Allied unit to reach Germans on Normandy beaches. For its brilliant action in that operation, the 8th received the Presidential Citation.

Organized in 1865, the 12th Inf. served in the Indian Campaigns, Cuba, Philippines and Alaska.

Double Deucers

CRACK A WALL

As lord of Europe, Hitler had boasted that American soldiers would not last nine hours if they landed in France, but—

June 6, 1944, 0630: Four companies of 8th Inf. doughs felt landing craft jar to a stop on the Normandy coast, heard ramps go down with a splash, saw German pillboxes in the dunes. Then, charging through the water in a long, howling line, they stormed beach defenses.

Commanded by Col. James A. Van Fleet, the 8th, with 3rd Bn., 22nd Inf., took five forts, cleared a two-mile stretch at the southeast corner of the Cherbourg peninsula within two hours. While the remainder of the division poured ashore, the 8th, 70th Tank Bn. and 4th Engineers crashed into enemy rear positions across the flooded ground behind the beach.

Col. H.A. Tribolet's 22nd Inf. swung north along the fortified coast, blasting away at forts and pillboxes of the "impregnable" Atlantic Wall. Division Artillery followed as 12th Inf., led by Col. Russell P. "Red" Reeder, pushed northwest to fill the widening gap between the 8th and 22nd.

Gen. Barton and his three brigadier generals, Theodore

Gen. Van D, Lt. Col. W. Stakely and Lt. Col. Barber, were among those killed. Gen. Roosevelt, landing with the 1st wave, won the division's first Medal of Honor.

Frenzied Nazis saw the assault gain momentum. Hitler had ordered von Rundstedt and Rommel to annihilate Allied beachhead forces by nightfall. Despite heavy shelling, the division poured ashore to defy the Fuehrer's orders. Not in the least "annihilated," most of the division was on French soil and had established a front four to seven miles inland as dusk fell.

Next day, the 8th broke through to the vital road center, Ste. Mere Eglise, to relieve a portion of the 82nd Airborne, isolated for 36 hours by numerically superior forces. While the 12th ripped straight ahead toward Montebourg, the 2nd threw its full weight against coastal fortifications that stretched for miles.

On the third day, the 12th forced ahead boldly with both flanks exposed. Germans, fighting desperately to gain time, called up their reserve power, including two SS divisions. When the 12th hit the enemy

main line of resistance near Emondeville an all-day battle, packed with repeated attacks and counter-attacks, raged. Twice, the regiment's CP was attacked, but the Nazis eventually were routed.



Having concluded the relief of the 82nd Airborne at Ste. Mere Eglise, the 8th made a long advance to come abreast of the 12th, extending the division's line from Emondeville west to the Merderet River. The 2nd still was locked in a deadly grapple with German fortifications.

Battling all the next day, the 8th smashed the Nazi MLR near Ecausseville. Acts of gallantry and heroism were many in the vicious fighting. Co. I charged across 300 yards of fire-swept ground; half of Co. E was cut down by ambush fire. In a final attack, 1st Bn. and Co. A, 70th Tank Bn., lifted the German line off its pivot.

While the 8th slugged through the Ecausseville line, the 12th, again ignoring its open flanks, smacked the same force it had defeated the previous day, driving the remnants to Montebourg. Meanwhile, the 2nd had buttoned up Azeville, toughest fort in the beachhead area, and shoved ahead to Château de Fontenay, home of Voltaire but now a Nazi strongpoint.

By D plus four, the 2nd was pushing on to Le Theil as the 8th and 12th, hammering through desperate German defensive efforts, gained their objectives—lines southwest and northeast of Montebourg. Here, Gen. Barton ordered them to dig in and defend their gains. A

northward,
Corps, with
the 4th, 9th
and 79th Inf.
Divs. blazing
the way, seized
the port.

Before day-
light June 19,
the 4th struck
enemy forces

near Montebourg. Following a barrage so close they nearly burned their faces, Joe of Co. F, 8th Inf., ripped through enemy lines to cut off the German escape route while the remainder of the regiment and the 12th herded Krauts to the "shooting gallery" Co. F had set up. Following this success, the division chased Germans 10 miles to the ring of defenses circling Cherbourg.

Meanwhile, the 22nd lunged forward from Le Theil in a long advance to take a hill between Cherbourg and its airport. The airfield, east of the city, was surrounded by the strongest fortifications on the peninsula. The 22nd proceeded to split the enemy force in half, then held out three days when it became surrounded. During this time, the 8th and 12th, in brilliant maneuvers and violent battles polished off enemy positions southeast of the city.

After taking Tourlaville, Cherbourg suburb, the 12th advanced to the coast June 25. Entering Cherbourg next day, doughs mopped up the eastern section of the city while the 9th and 79th Divs. drove in from the west and south. Exactly one week after starting the drive



from Montebourg, the Famous Fourth occupied the entire city except forts along the waterfront and in the harbor.

Then the 22nd drove in on defenses surrounding the airport where 1000 Nazis fanatically fought two days before succumbing. After a long pounding by artillery, the last harbor fort surrendered, June 29. Except for the northwest corner, the Cherbourg peninsula, pivot of the invasion, was swept clean of the enemy. Preparations for the Battle of France could go into high gear. Armored divisions and heavy artillery began arriving. Air bases were moved from England to the continent. An army capable of splitting the Wehrmacht wide open was landing in France.

Fourth Division men had fought 23 days without rest, driving ahead relentlessly until victory was won. Maj. Gen. J. Lawton Collins, VII Corps Commander, in commending the division following the campaign, said:

It is a tribute to the devotion of the men of the division that severe losses in no way deterred their aggressive action. The division has been faithful to its honored dead. The 4th Infantry Division can rightly be proud of the great part that it played from the initial landing on Utah Beach to the very end of the Cherbourg campaign. I wish to express my tremendous admiration.



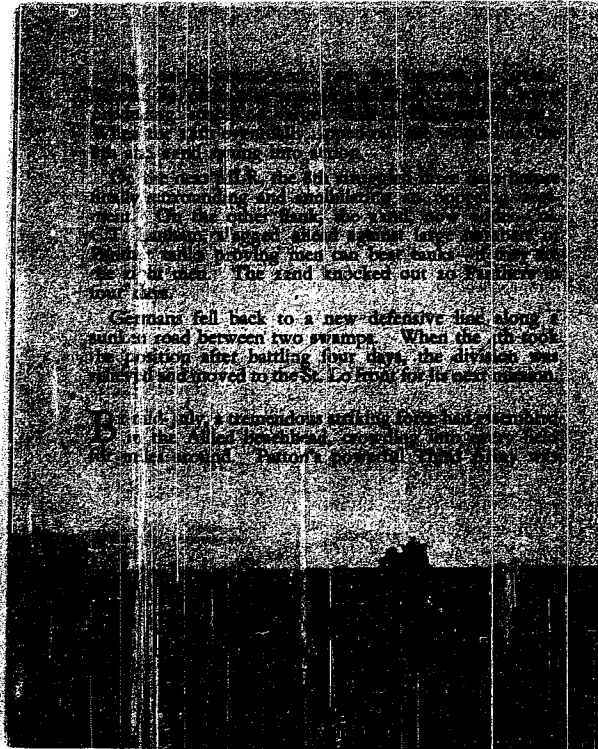
Breakthrough

BUBBLE BURSTS

THE breakthrough was to be made on a sector south of Carentan. This meant clearing rugged terrain, full of marshes and swampy rivers—ground ideal for defense. Germans had dug in for a permanent stay with intrenchments in every hedgerow. To reach firm ground where armored armies could operate, it was necessary to fight through that swamp country. The job was assigned to VII Corps. The 4th was in the star role.

With only three days rest for infantrymen and none for Div Arty, the Famous Fourth—new commanders replacing those killed or wounded—launched its new campaign. The 8th now was commanded by Col. J.S. Rodwell, former Division Chief of Staff; the 12th by Col. J.S. Luckett; the 22nd by Col. R.T. Foster. Opposing forces were the 12th SS Panzer Div. and 6th Parachute Regt., both top-notch outfits.

For 10 days, the 4th experienced hedgerow fighting at its worst. A hundred yard gain on a 300-yard front often meant a full day's work for a battalion. Enemy lurked behind every hedgerow. German gunners were dug in every few yards. Forward movement brought certain fire. Yet 4th Joes went into this new, grim battle with the same unbeatable determination they had in storming the Atlantic Wall and capturing Cherbourg.



stacked division behind division on the Cherbourg peninsula. But before this Allied might could begin crushing the Wehrmacht, the narrow limits of the beachhead had to be broken.

The plan had three essential parts: first, VII Corps would punch a hole in German lines west of St. Lo. Through this, reserves would slice westward to the coast, getting behind and opening enemy lines and opening the way for Third Army to roll. Finally, Corps would drive straight south through Villedieu and St. Pois to block out Germans while Third Army swept into open country. The Famous Fourth was to play a vital part in the first and third phases of the plan.

THE roar of heavies dropping their bombs on enemy positions signalled the beginning of the drive, July 25. The 8th moved forward at 1100. Germans, stunned by the severe pounding from the air, were disorganized and broken up into isolated groups. Plunging steadily ahead, Col. Rodwell's regiment surrounded centers of resistance for later annihilation. By nightfall, a mile and a half-deep wedge had been driven into Nazi defenses with the 8th at the point and the 9th and 30th Inf. Divs. on the flanks.

Next day, as the 8th smashed ahead, the 22nd went into action with Combat Command Rose of the 2nd Armd. Div.—a team which was to give an outstanding performance of infantry-tank coordination during the week. By noon, the Combat Command had knifed



was ordered to seize a north-south line through Villedieu, St. Pois and Mortain. Double Deucers, along with CC Rose, carried out the mission July 28.

Running into strong German forces trying desperately to build a new defense line from Tessy-sur-Vire through Percy and Villedieu to Avranches, CC Rose maneuvered and fought furious battles for five days before finally buttoning up Tessy and the area near Percy.

The remainder of the 4th was on the opposite side of Percy, keeping one jump ahead of the enemy. On Aug. 1, the 12th captured Villedieu, which von Kluge repeatedly called the key to the entire operation.

Now on the final lap, the Famous Fourth kept shoving ahead, shouldering Germans eastward into a trap forming between Third Army and the British. By Aug. 5, St. Pois and the north bank of the Sec River had fallen. Terrific artillery and mortar barrages mowed down routed defenders.

For this campaign, Gen. Collins again commended 4th Div., praising its "ability to take every objective assigned to it." Wrote the general:

I cannot let the division pass from my command without expressing my appreciation of the great contribution made by the 4th Infantry Division to the success of the VII Corps... The division has lived up to the high standard it set for itself in the initial campaign.

CLINCHING THE *Victory* AT PARIS

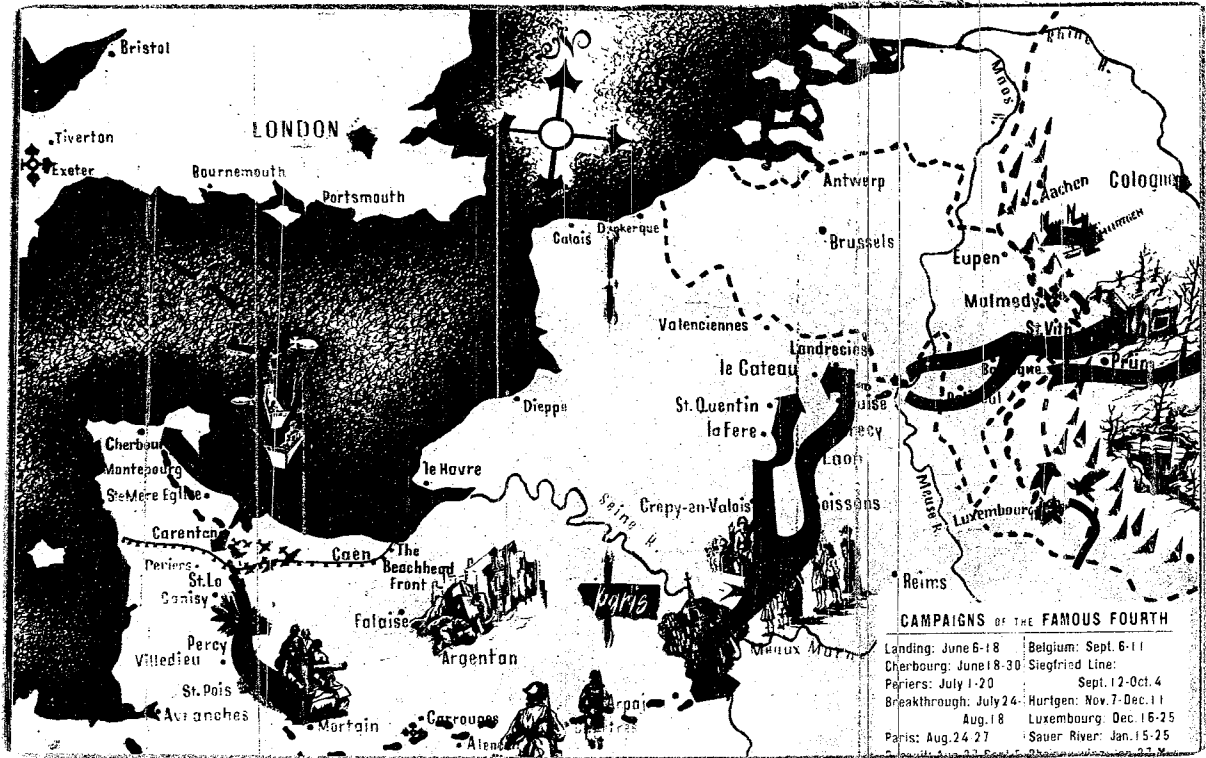
WEARY doughs, who had rested only three days since landing two months before, now anticipated relief. But on Aug. 6, von Kluge made his desperate bid to split Allied armies by driving along the See River to Avranches. The 8th and 22nd fought fierce battles as German units penetrated their lines. Main weight of the attack fell on the 30th Div. near Mortain where three crack Panzer divisions struck. The situation became so critical by Aug. 7 that the 12th was rushed in for reinforcement.

For the next week, the 12th underwent some of the toughest combat in its history. The regiment slugged forward through artillery, mortars and screaming meemies. It was bombed by the Luftwaffe, attacked by tanks. Battalions were reduced to two or three hundred men. Joes became so tired that sheer fortitude alone kept them in the fight.

But the regiment kept pushing back the enemy. When the 12th was relieved, Aug. 12, the German counter-attack was written off as a dismal failure. The rout was on. Germans back-pedalled and didn't stop until they hit the Fatherland.

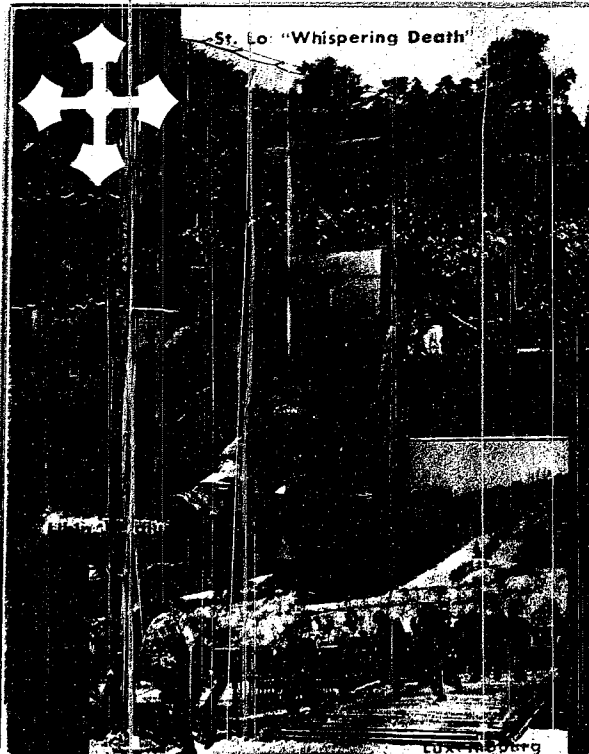
After Mortain, the 4th had its first and only real rest. No Germans were seen for 10 days; enemy artillery even





CAMPAIGNS OF THE FAMOUS FOURTH

Landing: June 6-18	Belgium: Sept. 6-11
Cherbourg: June 18-30	Siegfried Line:
Paris: July 1-20	Sept. 12-Oct. 4
Breakthrough: July 24-	Hurtgen: Nov. 7-Dec. 11
	Aug. 18
Paris: Aug. 24-27	Luxembourg: Dec. 16-25
	Sauer River: Jan. 15-25



moved out of range. Alerted for an urgent mission, the division was transferred to V Corps Aug. 23.

In a driving rain, the 4th rolled along the road to Paris all that night and the next day. Although the FFI had been battling Germans for several days inside the city, the capital still was surrounded. Bringing support to the patriots, the 4th and the 2nd French Armd. Div. raced to clinch the victory.

The 4th bivouacked 12 miles south of the city as Germans retreated hastily across the Seine River. The 22nd set out in pursuit. That evening, 2nd French Armd. met strong opposition between Versailles and Paris. At midnight, the 12th was ordered to move into the city.

EARLY Aug. 25, while the 8th and 22nd crossed the Seine, the 12th advanced north on Boulevard d'Orleans, ready to take on all comers. For once, doughs found the job nearly accomplished before they arrived. On trucks, the 12th rode in triumphal procession through streets jammed from wall to wall with thousands of joyous Parisians. Third Bn. reached Notre Dame Cathedral at high noon, first Allied military unit to see the famous square for more than four years. Other battalion elements arrived as fast as they could push their way through the surging throng.

Paris was free—the biggest news the world had heard since D-Day. Gen. Barton and Gen. Blakeley represented the division when the German commander surrendered at the Gare de Montparnasse.

Moving to the north suburbs of Paris, the division cleared the city. Germans now were frantically trying

to get out of France. Next, the Famous Fourth advanced northeast as First Army's drive to the Belgian border picked up speed.



TWENTY-SIX years earlier, a new and not yet famous 4th Div. had advanced northeast from Paris. The forward movement ended at Meaux after heavy fighting. The Ivy Division had entered its first battle along the Ourcq River where a week of bitter battling produced a gain of only five square miles.

The Famous Fourth roared along the banks of the same river, sweeping German rear guards from hundreds of square miles each day. Passing the Foret de Compiègne where the armistice was signed in 1918, the division bridged the Aisne River in one afternoon, then raced through territory which Germans had held against all attacks in World War I.

Double Deucers, riding hellbent for election, passed Soissons and Leon, swept through Crecy, Guise and Le Cateau. In two days they reached Landrecies, close to the border. On a broad front squarely across enemy escape routes, the 8th and 12th occupied the area near St. Quentin.

Two days later, V Corps rushed eastward to the Meuse River, crossing it before reeling Germans could take advantage of excellent natural defenses. In the same sector where the Nazis had routed the French in 1940, V Corps now surprised the Germans by spanning the Meuse and driving on the Fatherland.

D-Day : READY AND RARING TO GO

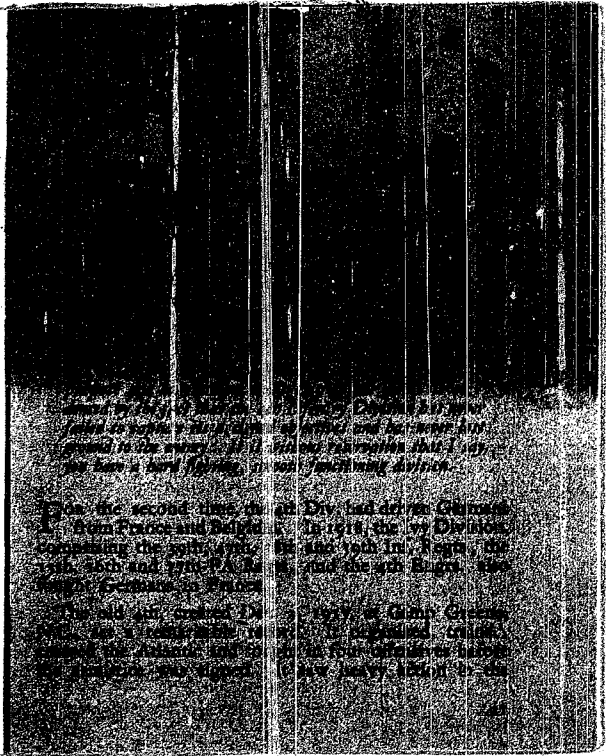
HITLER boasted that his vaunted West Wall was impregnable. The 4th set out to prove him a liar. Where the division assaulted the barrier, east of St. Vith, strong defenses were built on a steep, thickly wooded ridge—the Schnee Eifel.

When the 12th and 22nd climbed this Sept. 14, the enemy still was disorganized from his headlong retreat. Both regiments overran pillboxes, broke through to the top of the ridge, fanning out behind the Siegfried Line.

Germans made a desperate stand. They rushed in reinforcements as the 12th and 22nd split in a twin-pronged drive. When Germans filtered into the 4th's positions from behind, the 8th was recalled from an advance farther north to fill the center gap.

The division front, now extended 15 miles, prevented further penetration without support, so the 4th was ordered to halt, dig in. After 15 weeks of continual advance, the Double Deucers settled down to hold a stabilized line. After guarding the Schnee Eifel and later the Monschau front, the 4th moved to Hurtgen Forest Nov. 5.

Of the campaign just finished, Lt. Gen. (then Maj. Gen.) L. T. Gerow, V Corps Commander wrote:



Aisne-Marne offensive, on the Vesle, at St. Mihiel and in the Meuse-Argonne before occupying Germany for seven months.

June, 1940, when it seemed that no power on earth could stand against the Wehrmacht, the new 4th was activated. It was organized at Ft. Benning, Ga., with the 8th, 22nd and 29th Inf. Regts.; the 20th, 29th, 42nd and 44th I.A. Bns; the 4th Engr. Bn., and 4th Special Troops. Later, 12th Inf. replaced 29th Inf. After training at Ft. Benning, maneuvering in Louisiana and Carolina, the 4th served as the War Department's guinea pig in experiments with motorized divisions.

Gen. R.O. Barton, first Chief of Staff, returned as Division Commander in June, 1942. Under Gen. Barton's leadership, the 4th shaped up rapidly as a hard-hitting unit.

AFTER packing up for the North African invasion in Sept. 1942, the 4th was squeezed out by shipping shortages. For the next six months, it set a record as the most frequently alerted unit in the Army. While the fighting raged in Africa and Sicily and landings were made in Italy, the division went on training at Camp Gordon, Ga. and Ft. Dix, N.J., waiting impatiently for its chance.

In Autumn, 1943, the 4th became a straight infantry division, taking its amphibious training at Camp Gordon Johnson, Fla. After two years of restless waiting, the division sailed for England, Jan. 18, 1944. At "Sunny Devos," Joes rehearsed Normandy landings time and time again on the beach at Slapton Sands. D-Day found the 4th ready and raring to go.

Hurtgen—

"DEATH FACTORY"

HURTGEN was a cold, jungle hell—a death factory. Blocking approaches to Cologne and the Ruhr, Hurtgen was a "must" objective. The terrain was difficult enough—steep hills, thick woods, numerous creeks, poor roads. Across the front stretched belts of mines and barbed wire rigged with booby traps. Dug-in machine guns were set up to spray the entire area with interlocking fire.

Artillery, doubly dangerous in the woods because of tree bursts, was zeroed in on every conceivable objective. Weather was pure misery—constant rain, snow, near freezing temperatures. Living for days in water-filled holes, usually without blankets, troops had no escape from cold and wet.

Before the main offensive got underway, the 12th rushed south to aid a division under heavy enemy pressure. The regiment fought bitterly for eight days, attacking and counter-attacking without flank support. Although it suffered heavy casualties, the 12th returned to join the division's assault Nov. 16.

On the south flank of the offensive, the 4th attacked through the forest toward Duren. Again, its front was extended. To the left of the 12th, now commanded by



another mile gained. Germans brought up fresh regiments, counter-attacking daily. Often, companies were caught before they had a chance to get set. It took another battle to throw back stubborn Germans. After every advance, men spent hours digging holes and cutting logs to cover them. Artillery often whined, burst in the trees before shelters could be finished.

After a day and night of vicious fighting, the 22nd reached Grosshau Nov. 27, wiping out German defenders before going on to the last strip of the forest beyond the town. Still in the woods, the 8th and 12th crashed the third MLR, which was as rough as the others. The Nazis had overlooked no bet. Every approach was covered with every device of defensive warfare. Neither skill nor genius could find an easy way. It took sheer guts to win.

After three days, both regiments shattered the last line and broke through near the east edge of the forest. Then came welcome news. Relief! The 22nd moved to Luxembourg Dec. 3, followed by the 12th four days later and the 8th on Dec. 13.

Gen. Collins again paid tribute to the Famous Fourth:

The drive required a continuous display of top-notch leadership and the highest order of individual courage under the most adverse conditions. The fact that the 4th Division overcame these many difficulties and drove the enemy



Famous Fourth

LOOKS AHEAD

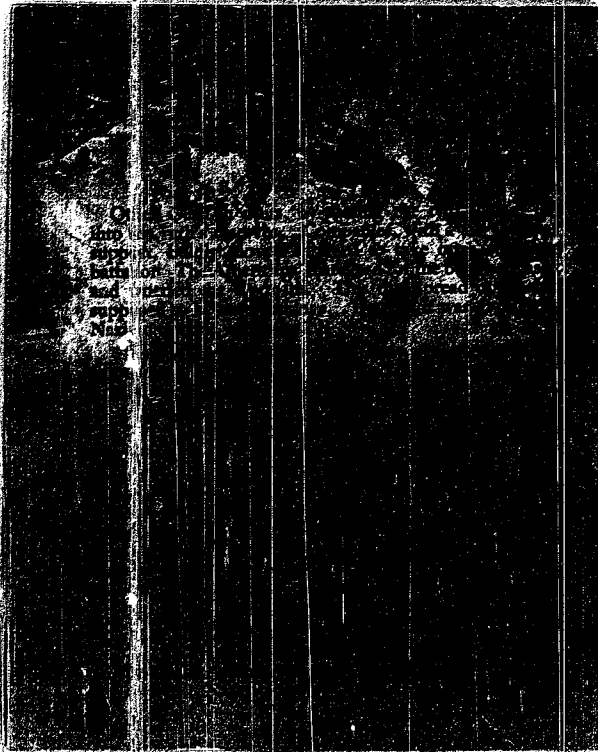
But it didn't last. Germans crossed the river at dawn Dec. 16, attacking the 4th and hitting division outposts from all directions. American platoons battled German battalions. Some platoons, struck from the rear, were overcome. Others withdrew, fighting their way to company areas.

That morning, Gen. Barton issued an order: "There will be no retrograde movement in this sector."

The 4th would stand and fight it out!

When a German battalion swooped down on Berdorf, lone defenders comprised a company headquarters, one rifle squad, two anti-tank squads and a four-man mortar squad. The make-shift defense took refuge in the Parc Hotel, a rifle in every other window, and withstood repeated attacks. Pulverizing German artillery blasted off the roof and part of the hotel's third floor. Doughs moved to other windows, kept firing.

Two platoons were at Dickweiler, three at Osweiler. Units in both towns were surrounded by full strength battalions. Every time Germans attacked, Joes waited until they closed in, then sprayed the Nazis with a withering fire that stopped succeeding assaults with heavy losses.



man breakthrough attempts, but still the enemy wasn't finished.

Withdrawing to their original starting positions, Nazis stormed Berdorf and Echternach. After completely encircling Echternach, the enemy recaptured the town. By now, the 4th had no reserves to call upon. Cooks, quartermasters, MPs—every possible man in the division—was in the line.

Gen. Barton decided to pull out of Berdorf and Lauterborn and withdraw to a solid MLR. Garrisons that had held against all odds fell back to the next line.

Germans followed. But they were too late. After attacking monotonously for three days, three battalions of the German 212th Div., already badly mauled, were wiped out. Only one German of 2nd Bn., 316th, survived the battle at Michelsdorf. He surrendered.

TRANSFERRED from the division Dec. 27, Gen. Barton had commanded the Famous Fourth for two and a half years, leading it with brilliant success through nine operations. Succeeding him was Brig. Gen. Harold W. Blakeley, artillery commander. Taking over Gen. Blakeley's post was Col. R.T. Guthrie.

Under Gen. Blakeley, the battle of Luxembourg was pushed to complete victory. Along with the 5th Inf. Div., which took over a portion of the front, Double Deucers seized the offensive. Germans failed to hold the little territory they had recaptured. By Jan. 1, remnants of the 212th Div. reeled backward.

Von Rundstedt's big gamble was definitely washed up

by mid-January; the bulge was whittled down all along the line. The 4th now was sent in to cut off another chunk.

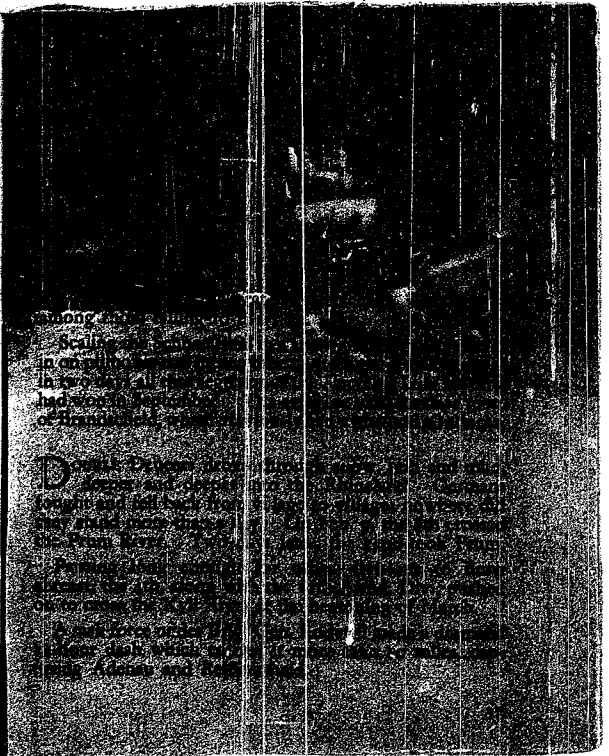
At 0300 Jan. 18, the 8th crossed the Sauer River in the winter's roughest weather. A strong north wind lashed stinging rain, sleet and snow in doughs' faces. Trucks and trailers skidded and ditched along steep, ice-covered roads. The bridging job was the toughest 4th Engrs. ever had experienced.

Surprised by the first assault, Germans were quick to retaliate. Advancing northward across the front of the Siegfried Line, the 8th took heavy flanking fire from hillside defenders. Doggedly, 8th doughs pushed on to their objective. Farther north, the 12th overran Fuhren and took the high ground near Vianden. By Jan. 21, the division had captured all its objectives.

In commending the 4th, Maj. Gen. M.S. Eddy, XII Corps Commander, said:

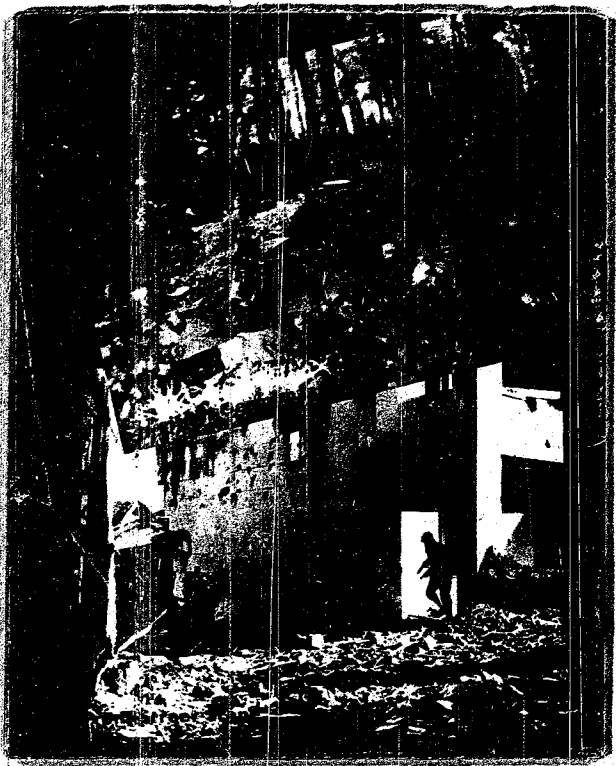
Your combat record since D-Day has been in the highest traditions of the American Army... Your execution of this mission (clearing the enemy from positions west of the Our River) was a demonstration of sound tactical planning and bold courage by a division who knew its business. Let me express my deep appreciation of your magnificent contribution to the successful operation of the XII Corps in Luxembourg.

Five days later, the Famous Fourth moved again, joining in the pursuit of Germans, now in headlong retreat from Belgium. Crossing the border in the same place it had back in September, the division recaptured



The Team







1075
THE 2nd

patch which you are wearing on your left shoulder (and which you probably sewed on with many a muttered curse and thereafter thought of but seldom) is a gallant bit of color that you ought to know more about, regardless of whether you've been with the 9th Division since it was activated, or just joined it this afternoon. It is not merely another gadget — it's your division insignia, and has been ever since the War Department approved it back in 1923. Technically it is known as a red-and-blue octofoil — a design of eight petals — with a white center. Now, don't let it discourage you to find that a design of eight petals is being used for the

NINTH

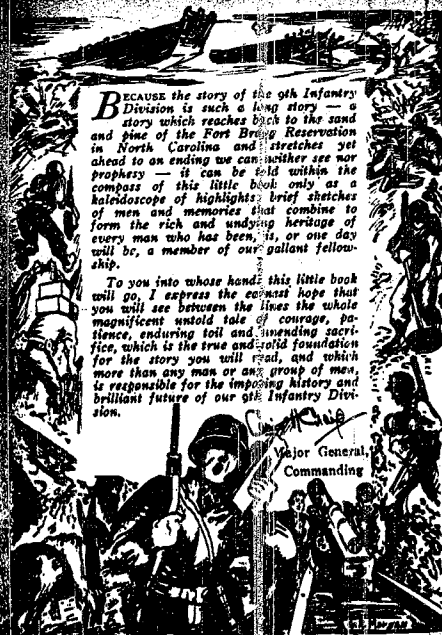
Division, because here's the reason: based upon the heraldic rules of the 15th century each son of a family had his own individual distinguishing mark, and the mark of the ninth son was this "octofoil." And, so, this being the ninth regular Army division, the heraldic symbolism is correct. Now, red and blue are the colors of division flags, and the white in the center is the color of the numerals you'll find on division flags. And the background disc is your old friend, olive drab. Wear it with pride, as fighting men of the 9th

INFANTRY

Division have worn it on three continents. At home, it symbolized one of the Army's proudest show divisions. Abroad it has been hailed by North Africans, both Arab and others, by Sicilians and French and Belgians, as the insignia of liberating forces. The Germans, too, have come to know it well, and fear the power that it represents. For ever in their memory, clarion-clear, rings a prophetic roster of grim and ominous names: Saffi...Algiers... Port Lyautey...Sened...Maknassy...El Guetter...Sedjenane...Bizerte... Randazzo... Quinneville... Barneville... Cherbourg... Chateau Thierry... Dinant... Monchau... Germeter... Zweifall... the 9th Division was there. And the 9th Division is *your*

DIVISION

Passed by Censor For Mailing Home

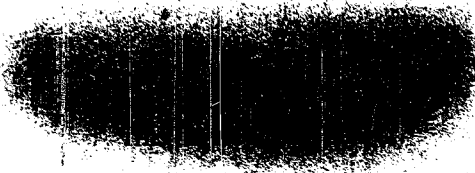


BECAUSE the story of the 9th Infantry Division is such a long story — a story which reaches back to the sand and pine of the Fort Bragg Reservation in North Carolina and stretches yet ahead to an ending we can neither see nor prophesy — it can be told within the compass of this little book only as a kaleidoscope of highlights: brief sketches of men and memories that combine to form the rich and undying heritage of every man who has been, is, or one day will be, a member of our gallant fellowship.

To you into whose hands this little book will go, I express the earnest hope that you will see between the lines the whole magnificent untold tale of courage, patience, enduring toil and unending sacrifice, which is the true and solid foundation for the story you will read, and which more than any man or any group of men, is responsible for the imposing history and brilliant future of our 9th Infantry Division.

Major General
Commanding

125



If any unit has earned the right to be called Hitler's Nemesis it is the U.S. 9th Div. Here is an outfit that really thrives on tough opposition. America has reason to be proud of this superb fighting unit.

BOSTON GLOBE (Editorial)

ON Aug. 1, 1944, the 9th Inf. Div. was four years old, and its brief brilliant history is a clear reflection of the part the United States has played in this war. The more than four years of its existence is a picture in miniature of America's preparation for and participation in World War II.

In Aug. 1940 the British had experienced Dunkirk and were preparing for invasion. The United States, too, faced with imminent war, began to expand its army, and the last of the regular army divisions, the 9th Inf. Div., was activated at Ft. Bragg, N.C., on Aug. 1, 1940.

Sent to organize the 9th was a skeleton force of regular army soldiers, to which were added in the next few months thousands of the civilians who were pouring into the Army through Selective Service. After a period of training came the flaming morning of Sunday, Dec. 7, 1941 — Pearl Harbor and the real thing. It became obvious that Allied armies would have to land on enemy-held beaches, and so the 9th immediately was launched on an amphibious training program.

Since that time, the 9th has met and defeated the enemy many times. The 9th landed in the invasion of North Africa on Nov. 8, 1942, fought through the barren country of El Guettar, across the mountains of Sedjenane and Sicily, across and up the Cherbourg Peninsula in France, through France, Belgium and the Siegfried Line into Germany proper.

During training and combat the 9th continuously cadred new divisions in the ever-expanding Army and graduated such outstanding soldiers as Lt. Gen. Jacob L. Devers, Commander of VI Army Group; Maj. Gen. M.S. Eddy, Commander of XII Corps; Lt. Gen. Alexander M. Patch, Commander of Seventh Army; seven major generals and four brigadier generals. The division now is commanded by Maj. Gen. Louis A. Craig.

Now marching triumphantly toward its fifth anniversary the 9th Div. is composed of men from all the 48 states and the District of Columbia, welded by courage, fortitude and glory into a great fighting unit.

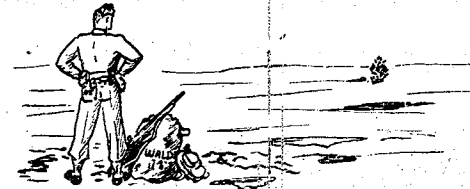
Born of the necessity of preserving freedom, the 9th Inf. Div. stands as a striking symbol of the military might of a democracy. It is America at war.

The 9th Div. is well known back home, for the 9th has long been a "show division" and staged many reviews for Allied leaders.

JACK FOISIE, THE STARS AND STRIPES

THE original 9th Div. was organized in July 1918 at Camp Sheridan, Ala., while the 9th F.A. Brig. was organized at Camp McClellan, Ala. Both were composed almost entirely of regular army units. When the Armistice was signed on Nov. 11, 1918, the 9th Div. was still in the states, and demobilization began on Dec. 31, 1918. However, many of the units in the present 9th Div. saw combat in World War I. The 39th and 47th Regts. were brigade partners of the 4th Div., and the 60th Inf. Regt. was a unit of the 5th Div. All three saw combat duty. The 39th and 47th have battle honors for the Aisne-Marne, the Meuse-Argonne, Lorraine, St. Mihiel and Champagne; the 60th Inf. is entitled to streamers embroidered for Alsace, Lorraine, St. Mihiel, and the Meuse-Argonne.

For more than 20 years the 9th had remained inactive, but at 0600 on Aug. 1, 1940, Sgt. John J. Waldrop, the first enlisted man of the reactivated division, arrived at Ft. Bragg, N.C. The division area was an uninhabited plot of muddy ground, but as the cadre trickled in a "Tent City" rose in record time.



On Jan. 16, 1941, the first 500 selectees arrived from Camp Upton, N.Y. On the following day 500 more arrived and they continued to pour in. Under the stimulus of this new blood the "regulars" forgot the rigors of Tent City to help the raw and bewildered "rookies."

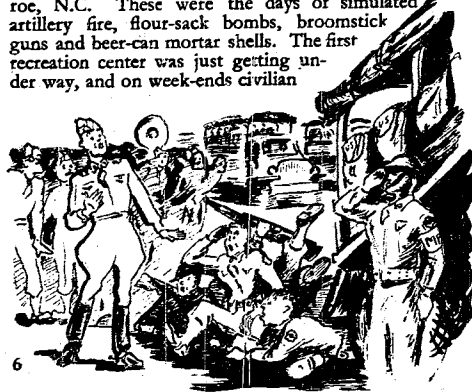
With the approach of summer the 9th began an extensive field training program. Most highly publicized maneuver of all was the war games near Bowling Green, Va., in June, during which Col. Frank C. Mahin's 60th Inf., supported by the 60th and 34th F.A.Bns., tangled with units of the 44th Div., and came away covered with glory and mosquito bites. Just prior to its first anniversary the division was full strength and was rated as one of the crack outfits of our rapidly expanding Army.

On its first anniversary the 9th Div. lost Maj. Gen. Jacob L. Devers, who had been C.G. from Nov. 4, 1940 to Aug. 1, 1941. He left for Ft. Knox, Ky., to take command of the Army's Armored Force, where he was soon promoted to Lt. Gen. At a farewell division review held for him, the 15th Engr. Bn. displayed a fleet of brand new dump trucks. But the solemnity of the

occasion was rudely shattered when an inexperienced driver kicked the wrong lever, and dumped a load of very surprised personnel smack in front of the reviewing stand.

At the start of its second year the 9th could boast rightfully that it was the only division in the army doing things "according to Hoyle." The C. G. was Brig. Gen. (now Maj. Gen.) Rene Edward DeRussey Hoyle.

In mid-September the 9th moved out to begin the memorable Carolina maneuvers and operated for 10 weeks near Rock Hill, Chester, and Lancaster, S.C., and around Rockingham, Cheraw, Hamlet and Monroe, N.C. These were the days of simulated artillery fire, flour-sack bombs, broomstick guns and beer-can mortar shells. The first recreation center was just getting under way, and on week-ends civilian



hostesses pleaded with soldiers to come in for a fast game of checkers or to write a letter home.

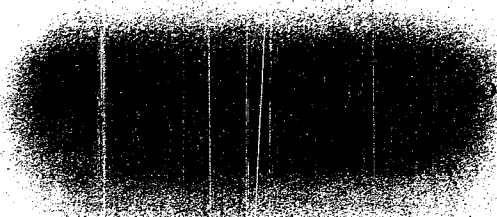
Maneuvers ended Nov. 28, 1941; and some outfits hadn't yet reached their barracks when Dec. 7 and real war rolled around. Shortly after the first of the year the first hint of the division's future came when it was attached to the Amphibious Corps, Atlantic Fleet, for training.

During the spring and summer, 1942, the 9th changed greatly. It learned a new type of warfare—sending unit after unit aboard transports in Chesapeake Bay to stage amphibious attacks on Solomons Island. It gave freely of its experienced personnel to form nuclei of new divisions.

On July 24, 1942 Brig. Gen. Manton S. Eddy became C.G. and on Aug. 9 he was promoted to Maj. Gen. He was to lead the 9th to Africa, Sicily, England and France.

During the summer, soldiers raced up and down nets on mock landing-craft, across—and often into—MacFayden's Pond on footbridges, and slashed at one another with bayonets as they had been taught by Marine Col. A. J. Drexel Biddle. Famed military observers visited the division weekly, some of them well known—Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson, Gen. George C. Marshall. Others were little known to Americans then, but since have become world-famous—Field Marshal Sir John Dill, Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten, Lt. Gen. Lesley J. McNair, and Lt. Gen. Mark W. Clark.

Then it came. In early September the 39th Inf. Regt. was alerted. The 39th Combat Team, commanded by Col. Benjamin F. Caffey, moved out on Sept. 17, 1942 to a POE. Later the 47th and 60th Combat Teams exchanged barracks for tents on Chicken Road, Ft. Bragg's Reservation. On Oct. 14, 1942 the 60th Combat Team, commanded by Col. Frederick J. deRohan, shipped to a POE and was followed Oct. 17 by Col. Edwin H. Randle's 47th Combat Team. On Dec. 12 the remainder of the division sailed from New York Harbor.



Observers who saw the 9th Div. in action in the Mediterranean considered it probably the crack U.S. Army unit in the North African theater.

TOM WOLF (NEA)

THE 9th Inf. Div. was introduced to the North African theater — and vice versa — just before dawn of Nov. 8, 1942, when the 39th Combat Team (which had come

via the British Isles) landed at Algiers, while the 47th Combat Team was hitting the beach at Safi, French Morocco, and the 60th Combat Team was hammering at the Kasba and the airport at Port Lyautey, Morocco. There, in the short sharp, murderous battle that preceded victory, the division received the baptism of fire which put the ultimate touches to its preparation for the big job.

Following the cessation of hostilities, plans were made to regroup the division at Port Lyautey. The 39th Combat Team remained near Algiers, and during the next three months was strung out more than 500 miles, guarding communication lines. The 47th made a foot march of over 250 miles from Safi to Port Lyautey, while the remainder of the division landed at Casablanca and moved to the division area. By the first of 1943, the 9th, less the 39th Combat Team, was concentrated near Port Lyautey.

For the next month, soldiers of the 9th in turn guarded the Spanish Moroccan border, drank red wine, staged a review for President Roosevelt, saw Martha Raye, slept in cork forests, and found out that the guidebooks don't tell the whole story. On Jan. 27, 1943, the first step was made moving by train and truck from Port Lyautey





The route was through Elmo Grain, Sidi Slimane, Petit Jean, Fez, Taza, Guercif, Taorit, Oujda, across the Algerian frontier, through Marania and Turene to Tlemcen.

The stay in Tlemcen was short. At 1100 Feb. 17 orders were received to move the division ar-

tillery to the Tunisian front where Rommel had broken through. Four and a half hours later the 34th F.A. Bn. crossed the IP as leading unit. Snow was on the ground and rain fell as the artillery and the cannon companies pulled out. By day and night they drove via Sidi bel Abbes, L'Arba, Setif, Ain M'Lila, Ain Beida, to Tebessa. Brig. Gen. S. LeRoy Irwin, artillery commander, then received orders from II Corps to proceed to Thala, which was seriously threatened. The road out of Tebessa was jammed with traffic, and heavy guns repeatedly slid off roads made slippery by mud and continuous rain.

By 0400 Feb. 21 the artillery battalions were in position to fire. In three days and twelve hours this column of 411 vehicles, 138 officers, and 2032 enlisted men had covered 777 miles of winding, congested and slippery roads, through rain and snow. Rommel's thrust was stopped.

Meantime, the remainder of the division left Tlemcen on Feb. 19. Heavy wet snow fell as the convoy moved

out at 0830 on a route that led—remember the names?—through Lamtar, Detrie, Sidi bel Abbes, Boulet, Mercier Lacomba, Ain Frass, Ain Fakin, Tizzi, St. André, Mascara, Ain Fares, El Bofdj, Tliouanet, Relizane, Hamedena, St. Aime, Inkerman, Charon, Malikoff, Orleansville, Oued Fodda, Rouina, Duperre, Lavandere, Affreville, Miliana, Marguerite, Bourkika, Aneur el Ain, Mouinville, Calmatie, L'Arba, Rivte Alma, Menerville, Souk el Haad, Dalestad, Thiers, Bouiara, El Esnam, El Adjiba, Mzita, Coligny, Setif, Ain M'Lila (where barracks bags were stored) — to arrive near Bou Chebka Feb. 27 1943.

During the move the 39th Combat Team joined the division, reuniting the 9th once again. The division immediately went into position and began patrolling around Sbeitla and Kasserine. In late March, the 6th Combat Team was detached to fight the battle of Maknassy, while the remainder of the division moved to El Guettar.

Here the 1st Inf. Div. on the left and the 9th Inf. Div. on the right, as parts of Gen. Patton's II Corps, were to attack on the Gafsa-Gabes axis to relieve the pressure on Gen. Montgomery's British force to the south.

Detachments reduced the 9th for this operation to six — and for several days to five — infantry battalions. Principal handicap, however, was the almost complete lack of adequate maps. Nevertheless, the attack was launched on the morning of March 28, and for the next 11 days a bitter battle was waged for hills 290, 369, and 772. By April 7 the enemy had pulled back and the

9th, after occupying forward positions, made immediate plans to begin the long, secret trek to northern Tunisia.

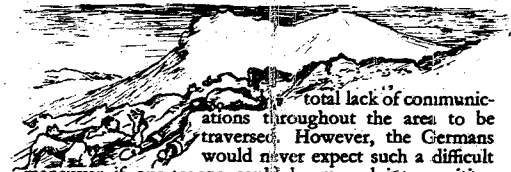
This meant moving an entire division from southern Tunisia to the extreme northern flank bordering the Mediterranean. By April 13 the relief of the British division in the sector had begun. Also, the 60th Combat Team had rejoined the division at Bou Chebka and had begun to move northward.

Attached to the division during the next operation were four Tabours of Goums: grim-visaged, swarthy, turbaned, "bathrobe-wearing," silent Berber tribesmen who, as part of the Corps Franc d'Afrique, fought and died for seven months beside their American, French and British comrades. "Goum" — a word these tribesmen never used in referring to themselves — is an Arabic term meaning "irregular soldier."

With the relief of the British swiftly completed, the 9th was now ready as a unit, and on April 23 the attack was launched in the Sedjenane sector.

The division commander soon decided that a frontal attack on the Green Hill-Bald Hill position would be too costly. He therefore decided to employ the bulk of the division in a wide flanking movement through extremely difficult terrain north of the main road, to outflank enemy positions and cut lines of communications north and northeast.

Such a maneuver would be hampered by an almost



total lack of communications throughout the area to be traversed. However, the Germans would never expect such a difficult maneuver if our troops could be moved into position without detection. Secrecy was essential to preserve the element of surprise.

In preparation for the attack a careful study was made of the terrain and dominant observation was selected for each of the intermediate objectives to be captured by the regiments each day. While these objectives were not always captured on the planned dates, most of them eventually were occupied, and in every case such occupation proved decisive in outflanking the Germans.

The extreme width of the front — 28 miles — posed a very difficult problem for the artillery commander who had to scatter his units. As a solution light battalions were kept in their usual role supporting the infantry regiments, but medium and heavy artillery were divided into two groups, one for the south and one for the north.

Supply was a great problem. The French had virtually no transportation. Three hundred mules were obtained, and for several days the regiments were forced to rely solely on them for supply transportation and evacuation.

In the campaign which followed, the soldiers of the 9th proved that they could take advantage of the lessons they had learned the hard way. The first proof was a brilliant envelopment of the Green-Bald Hill positions which the British had assaulted unsuccessfully for months. At Djebel Dardys and Djebel Mrata the 60th Inf. massacred a German counter-attacking force. Djebel Cheniti was a brilliant demonstration of infantry "leaning up against" artillery preparation.

The 9th continued to drive steadily toward Bizerte, one of the principal Allied objectives. Finally at 1515 hours May 7, the following conversation took place:

CO, 894th TD Bn.: "Have covered the entire valley of the Oued Garba. No sign of enemy in the valley. Believe way to Bizerte wide open. Request permission to proceed into Bizerte and occupy city."

G-3, 4th Div.: "CG instructs you proceed Bizerte and occupy it. Report your position every half hour."

CO, 894th TD Bn.: "Will comply with pleasure."

And then, as Maj. Dean T. Vanderhoef, Ass't. G-2, played the "William Tell Overture" on his ocarina over the radio telephone, troops rolled into Bizerte.

Mopping up continued for several days, and when all resistance ended, a brilliantly successful operation was complete. The 9th had come of age.

Days of combat in North Africa were over. Tunisia had been a disillusioning land, devoid of cinematic glam-

or; a land of over-loaded burros and few houses for shelter. The battle had featured over-extended fronts and equally extended lines of supply. Communications were across a country once described by a doughboy as "miles and miles of miles and miles"—a country strewn



mines whose exact location no one knew. These had been the days when cold-numbered fingers were sliced on C ration cans, when air superiority didn't always seem a certainty, when *Yank* and *The Stars and Stripes* were things that didn't arrive, when the only news came by way of BBC (and nobody had a radio), when the theory became a fact that "Africa is a very cold continent where the sun is hot."

Other divisions after the end of the African campaign went back to bivouacs near Oran or Algiers, but they sent the 9th to Magenta, 80 kilometers south of Sidi bel Abbes in the direction of the Sahara Desert.

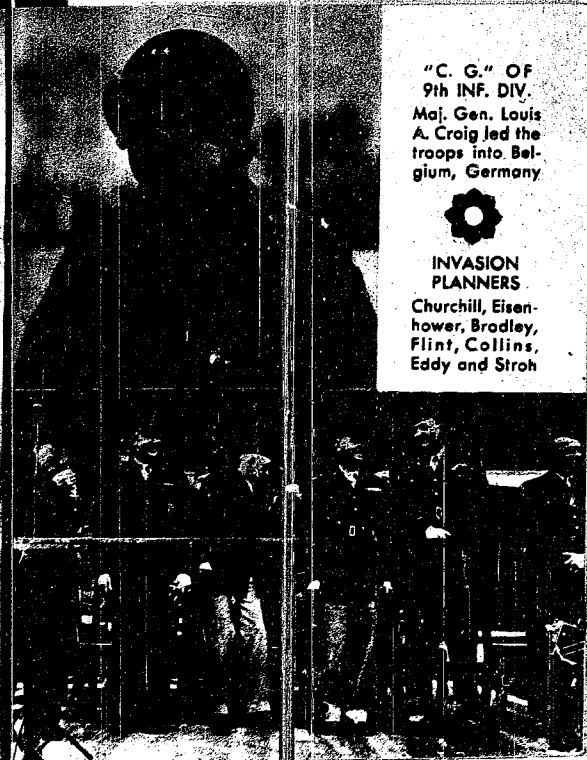
HAL BOYLE (AP)

AFTER the inevitable policing-up around Bizerte the 9th hit the road west, over the same route traversed three months before. Magenta, Algeria, where the division was assembled by late afternoon May 26, developed into an elaborate bivouac as days slipped into weeks.

Though dust, heat and flies seemed to increase almost daily, the coolness and beauty of mornings and evenings were worth the trouble and heat of mid-day. There was always the certainty of a night's sleep free of heat, but the mid-day sun was so intense that a division order (never rescinded) specified a siesta for all troops from 1300 to 1500 hours each afternoon.

Sidi bel Abbes, French Foreign Legion Hq. and the nearest town of any size, was 50 miles away, and some passes were issued to division personnel each day. Truck convoys brought the troops in and returned them to their areas each night.

Shortly after the arrival of the division in this area, changes began to take place. The 9th passed from control of II Corps to I Armored Corps. On June 1 orders were issued transferring Brig. Gen. S. LeRoy Irwin, Div. Arty. commander, and Col. Edwin H. Randle, 47th Inf. commander, from the 9th to the United States. Both received promotions and new commands. Irwin took command of the 5th Div. and Randle became Ass't. CO of the 77th Div. which later landed on Guam. On May 30, Col. Reese M. Howell was relieved from the 17th F.A. Brig. to command the 9th Div. Arty. Appointed Brig. Gen. June 9, he took command of the Div. Arty. on June 17, 1945.



"C. G." OF
9th INF. DIV.

Maj. Gen. Louis
A. Croig led the
troops into Bel-
gium, Germany



INVASION
PLANNERS

Churchill, Eisen-
hower, Bradley,
Flint, Collins,
Eddy and Stroh



CEFALU,
SICILY
Island stepping-
stone to Victory



BRIQUEBEC,
FRANCE
After the Huns
left on June 22



Between May 26 and June 27, 1943 the 9th participated in a program of training and rest. Emphasis was placed on rest — not forgetting reveille, formal retreat, calisthenics, Saturday morning inspections and all the thousand-and-one formalities which plague a GI who otherwise might have ten minutes to himself — with movies, band-concerts and as much entertainment as could be lured to the forsaken spot that was the division area. Units were sent to the beach at Ain el Turck near Oran in rotation for periods of four days each. Dysentery was prevalent. The training program featured schools, demonstrations and conditioning exercises.

Throughout the stay in the area the 9th received much cooperation from the French Foreign Legion. In return the division trained personnel of the 2nd Spahis (French) in reconnaissance work, and personnel of the French 9th Colonial Div. in tactics and technics of cannon-company and heavy weapon material. Details were also trained by the 9th Sig. Co. and the 15th Engr. Bn.

But movement was in the air again. On June 29 and 30, the 39th Combat Team (with attachments) and the 9th Div. Arty. moved out for Bizerte, via Orleansville, L'Arba, Setif and Souk-Ahras. Col. George Smythe took command of the 47th Inf. Another restless week followed as the remainder of the division stayed at Magenta pursuing its training program. And on July 8 orders were issued directing the remaining units to Ain el Turck. The infantry regiments, with attachments, were to march.

Thus, seven weeks after having moved into the



Magenta area, the division left. The new area was near Bou Sfer, with all units within walking distance of the beach. In this "staging area" preparations were immediately begun to move to Sicily. For two weeks training was conducted in the morning but each afternoon units were formed and moved to the beach at a walk-and-run, where the remainder of the afternoon was spent.

Across the Sea to Sicily

The stamina and endurance of these men (of the 9th) as well as their march and firing line discipline is remarkable.

HAROLD DENNY, N.Y. TIMES

ON the morning of July 29 five passenger ships (the Borinquan, Evangeline, Orizaba, Mexica, and Shawnee) with escort, moved out of Mers el Kebir, preceded by freighters. The trip was uneventful and

the convoy arrived off Palermo harbor in the early evening of July 31. But it was impossible to unload and the ships remained anchored during the night.

At approximately 0415 on Sunday Aug. 1, 1943—the 3rd anniversary of the 9th—the celebration began. Enemy planes raided the harbor for an hour and 45 minutes.

During the raid the 9th lost neither personnel nor equipment, but an undetermined number of enemy planes was shot down. That morning unloading of ships began and division units went into bivouac east of Palermo. During the next few days concentration of the division east of Nicosia was completed.

Units that had preceded the main body of the division for the invasion of Sicily rejoined the 9th west of Troina. By Aug. 5 all units were in a position for the attack that was launched on the morning of Aug. 6.

The 60th Inf. was sent on a wide flanking movement north through almost impassable terrain. Their mission was similar to what they had accomplished so brilliantly in the Bizerte campaign. Again there were major problems of supply and evacuation competently solved by the supply services, medics, and engineers.

While the 60th went north through Capizzi and then east, the 47th and 39th advanced east from Troina. The enemy once again was maneuvered out of one



position after another. By Aug. 12 the 60th Inf. reached Floresta, and the 39th occupied Randazzo, keypoint of the enemy's last line of defense before Messina. Here the 9th Div. was "pinched out" by the 3rd Div. on the north and the British on the south.

The 9th Div. remained in position until Aug. 20, when it was officially announced that the island of Sicily was free of enemy. On Aug. 23, movement began toward Cefalu on the Tyrrhenian Sea.

Here, for the first time the division received some of the credit it had so richly earned the hard way. Because of confused censorship regulations, the 9th had been neglected in press releases concerning the North African and Sicilian campaigns. Recognition came in early Oct. 1943 in *The Stars and Stripes*, which stated:

The 9th has the kind of leadership and spirit that make a fighting outfit. The men showed it at Randazzo, the southern hinge of the last German defense line in Sicily. They showed it by their brilliant envelopment of Green and Bald Hills in the Sedjenane Valley campaign which led to the fall of Bizerte. They showed it in one of the bitterest battles of North Africa — the fight at El Guettar; and again when they force-marched some 900 miles to help stem the Rommel thrust at Kasserine Pass. And they showed it when their three combat teams landed at Safi, at Port Lyautey, and at Algiers last Nov. 8.

In this area the bubble of rotation swelled to enormous size and burst abruptly. Here the division had

a chance to see entertainers like Jack Benny, Al Jolson, and Adolphe Menjou. Here the Donut Girls appeared, and from Sept. 5 through Oct. 30 served more than 170,000 freshly-baked doughnuts to the 9th Div. Here on Oct. 25, 1943, 34 newly naturalized members of the division formally became citizens of the country for which they'd been fighting for months.

These were the days of vino, marsala, and vermouth; of grapes and melons and almonds; of gaily-painted donkey carts and swims in the blue Tyrrhenian Sea; of visits to Palermo and Monreale and the dark catacombs; of the frequent times when the soldiers found out that the guidebooks don't tell the whole story.

Then came Hallowe'en and an order for the 9th to move to Mondello, near Palermo, "the muddiest patch of ground in the world." And on the night of Monday, Nov. 8, 1943, the 9th was boat-and-train bound for England.



Up

At Winchester the division scattered through the neighborhood of Bushfield, Barton Stacey, Alresford and Basingstoke. An information course was instituted to teach basic good manners to a batch of GI Tarzans who'd been in the woods too long. The 9th was very fortunate in its jumping-off place, for Winchester was Old England through and through. Even the most casual and literal-minded visitor scarcely could help feeling the weight of centuries borne by Winchester Castle, Cathedral and College.

But for all its quiet, ancient beauty, Winchester was nothing more than a springboard from which the 9th could leap into the final European phases of the world conflict. As the mild English winter melted into spring, the luxury of passes, furloughs and week-ends wore away to reveal more and more clearly the grim, steel framework of ominous military preparation.

Gen. Bernard Montgomery addressed the troops on a rainy afternoon Jan. 19, 1944, at the 60th Inf. area

in Winchester Barracks. On March 24 Gen. Eisenhower, Lt. Gen. Omar N. Bradley, Maj. Gen. J. Lawton Collins, and Prime Minister Winston Churchill inspected the division.

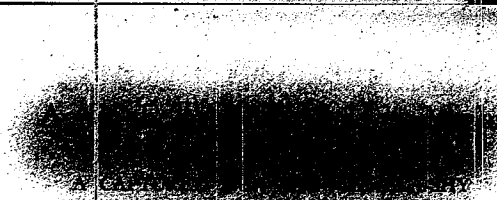
By April 2, with all leaves and furloughs cleared up, the training pace was accelerated by a field problem on Easter Sunday. On May 27 at 0630 the division was put on a six-hour alert status. The men knew the time was at hand.

There had been GI movies, USO shows, PX supplies, the Red Cross tea wagon, signs in English, mild-and-bitter, pubs and dances, and the not-so surprising rediscovery that the guidebooks don't tell the whole story.



The division began moving to marshalling areas on Saturday afternoon, June 3. Men found sleep difficult the night of June 5, under the ceaseless drone of unseen planes. By two-thirty, when the first units were alerted, everybody knew...

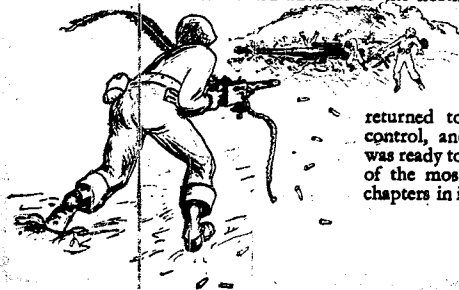
Invasion of the continent began in the early morning of June 6, 1944. The 9th Inf. hit the Normandy beach on D plus 4, as one of the two U.S. infantry divisions on the beachhead with previous combat experience, a fact fully appreciated by higher commanders and military observers.



The Ninth is good. It performed like a beautiful machine in the Cherbourg campaign.

ERNIE PYLE

UNLOADING of men and equipment had hardly been completed when the 39th Combat Team, the "Anything, Anywhere, Anytime — Bar Nothing!" boys of Col. Paddy Flint, were attached to the 4th Inf. Div. to clean up the east coast of the peninsula. Following capture of Quinneville, which at that time constituted the farthest Allied advance to the north, the 39th



returned to division control, and the 9th was ready to write one of the most glorious chapters in its history.

The attack was swift, perfectly executed. Each time the enemy dropped back, the 9th Div. hit him again. Having driven across the Douve River, and although north and south flanks were exposed, the 47th and the 60th Inf. reached the east coast near St. Lo, D'Ourville and Barneville early on June 17.

The Cotentin Peninsula was cut, but the enemy made a desperate attempt to break out near St. Jacques de Nehou. Artillery and a terrific mortar concentration massacred this force.

The 9th then turned north toward Cherbourg. The 39th went through Octeville while the 47th seized the western half of the town and the arsenal. Meanwhile the 60th was protecting the left flank and preparing for an attack up the cape.

During this campaign the 9th captured Lt. Gen. Karl Wilhelm von Schlieben and Rear Admiral Hennecke, senior enemy Army and Navy commanders of the Cherbourg area. They were immediately brought to the division CP where ensued a bit of repartee which shortly became famous.

Bob Capa, Life magazine photographer, appeared at the division commander's tent to take pictures of the captured officers. But the Germans definitely had other notions. Von Schlieben was particularly difficult. "I am tired of this picture taking," he snapped. Capa, who speaks German, sighed and lowered his camera

momentarily. "I, too, am tired, General," he pointed out, "I have to take pictures of so many captured German generals!"

While other forces occupied Cherbourg, the 9th cleaned up the Cap de la Hague by July 1. The 9th had accomplished the opening chapter of the invasion drama.

This had been Africa with hedgerows, calvados, snipers, totally destroyed villages, an occasional pretty girl, and the familiar realization that the guidebooks don't tell the whole story.

The story of how completely the 9th had done its job is told best by some of the war correspondents who reported the facts to the world:

The Infantry of the 9th Div. rates a mass Congressional Medal.

WILLIAM H. STONEMAN

The hedgerow-to-hedgerow fighting of the 9th Div. across the Cherbourg peninsula from sea to sea must rate as one of the most brilliant successes of United States military history. For four days I accompanied these veterans who not only had turned the tide in Tunisia with the capture of Bizerte, but also helped wind up the Sicilian campaign with the seizure of Randazzo. They were brought to France to chop off the tip of the strategic peninsula and isolate the Germans in Cher-

bourg... The renowned heroes of Port Lycaeus and Bizerte pushed along the flank to Barneville, encountered severe resistance at the little town of St. Jacques de Nebou.

TOM HENRY

To the north the 9th had taken Nebou. Veterans of Bizerte and Sicily, the men of the 9th were now fresh from England, itching for more fight. They got their chance: the 2nd was too spent to exploit its breakthrough. So while one regiment of the 9th pushed west from Nebou through St. Jacques, another regiment passed through the tired 2nd, pushed through St. Saviour in a parallel thrust... the 9th had gained 12½ miles in two days—the fastest advance of the campaign... The 9th had done the job: Cherbourg was sealed off.

TIME

Omar Bradley has done it again. Slipping stronger units past the lines of their firing comrades, he once more smashed unexpectedly through the Germans to cut off Cherbourg, just as he broke through to doom Bizerte a little over a year ago. And he used the same outfit—the battle-tested 9th Div.—to strike the decisive blow... The blow that broke the Nazi's back below Cherbourg was a clever one and aroused real enthusiasm here (Washington, D.C.) Brig. Gen. Horace S. Sewell of the British branded "the 9th American Division's exploit" as "a magnificent achievement."

CAPT. LOWELL M. LIMPUS

It was June 25, the nineteenth day of the Battle of Liberation. And the veterans of the American 9th Inf. Div., who a year before had helped to corner the Germans in Tunisia's Cap Bon Peninsula, now were conducting the first smashing Allied victory of the invasion. For by nightfall the great port of Cherbourg was for all practical purposes in American hands.



NEWSWEEK

The 9th Inf. Div. has been in action continuously since July 9, driving from France through Belgium, into Germany.

THE STARS AND STRIPES (Oct. 9, '44)

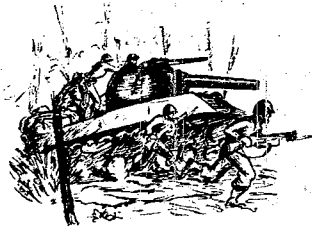
THERE came then the briefest of rest periods; July 9 found the 9th back in action again. It was the St. Lo-Perriers offensive this time. All three regiments were in the line, repeating again the story of hedgerow hell, slow advances from one field to the next, murderous casualties. Although this continued throughout the month, several days before the July 25 breakthrough the 9th cut the St. Lo-Perriers road. On July 25 the 9th was

one of the spearhead divisions in the offensive, and by the end of the day the division was credited with the furthest advance of any of the divisions in the "push."

The 9th beat off a series of counter-attacks in the Mortain-Cherence le Roussel sector and later joined in the chase which closed the Falaise Gap.

On Aug. 20, 1944 Maj. Gen. Louis A. Craig took command of the 9th and began an offensive which carried the unit over much of the same ground that he himself had covered in the last war.

The 9th swung toward the east, across the Seine at Melun, then pushed northeast to the historic Marne on Aug. 28 without opposition, and swept through equally historic Chateau-Thierry the following day.

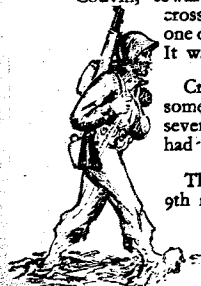


ON Sept. 2 the 9th laid claim to being the first Allied force to begin the liberation of Belgium when the reconnaissance troop entered near Momignies at 1107. At 1155 the 60th Inf. crossed the border. The 9th was truly "an Army of Liberation." In every town the GIs were greeted by throngs of happy people who had waited four long years and who now were free. The Belgian "White Army" aided the Americans whenever they could.

The 9th continued the push through Chimay, through Couvin, toward Dinant and the Meuse River. The crossing of the Meuse has historically been one of the most difficult of military operations. It was not less difficult now.

Crossings were attempted at several points—some were instantly successful, others required several thrusts. By Sept. 5, however, the 9th had pressed across the Meuse River.

The push continued and on Sept. 13 the 9th moved into Germany south of Roetgen.

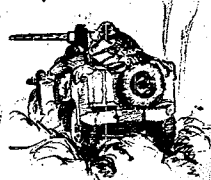


The following day the 47th Inf. staked its claim of being the first Allied unit to completely breach the Siegfried Line, advancing through the first zone and on through the second. The 39th and 60th meantime drove into the Hurtgen Forest.

A letter from Maj. Gen. J. Lawton Collins, C.G. of VII Corps, to Maj. Gen. Craig gives an apt description of the division's participation in the battles of Europe:

"After the fall of Cherbourg the 9th participated in the bitter fighting in the swamps and hedgerows of Normandy, and contributed materially to the breakthrough of the German defenses that ended the 'hedgerow' fighting and opened the war of maneuver. Joining in the pursuit, the division secured the left flank of the VII Corps in its drive on Mortain, then bore a large share of the vicious attacks of the German Seventh Army in the Mortain-Cherence le Roussel area aimed at separating the American First and Third Armies. With these German attacks beaten off, the 9th again participated in the pursuit that assisted in closing the Falaise Gap from the south.

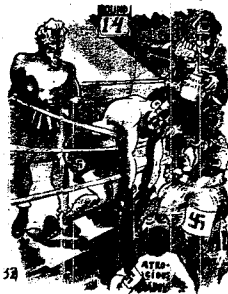
"After crossing the Seine, the Marne, and the Aisne rivers in rapid succession, the 9th again came to grips with the retreating enemy in the edge of the Ardennes Forest east of Hirson and drove him across the Meuse. The division's successful crossing of the Meuse in the vicinity of Dinant, in the face of strong opposition, was one of the most difficult tasks of this war. Using assault



boats and rafts, the initial crossing was at night. Despite heavy losses the division established a secure bridgehead, which it held against spirited German counter-attacks, then completed its crossing and routed the enemy which fled to the east. The pursuit continued without pause until the division had joined in the breakthrough of the West Wall.

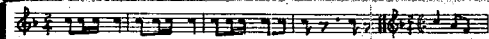
"During these extensive operations the 9th Division advanced almost 600 miles against enemy opposition, captured over 28,000 prisoners and participated in three major campaigns with not more than five days out of action in a period of over four months. This outstanding record is one of the finest in the European Theater."

AND there, for a moment, pauses the story of the 9th Infantry Division. It is today as it was yesterday, the gallant story of fighting men, sketched in honor of the living and the dead who blazed a brilliant trail across a quarter of the world to do what had to be done. And tomorrow? Tomorrow's story is now in your hands. It will be as magnificent a tale as the story of the past which you have just read, if only you, with the help of God, decide that it shall be so...



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THE 9th DIVISION MARCH

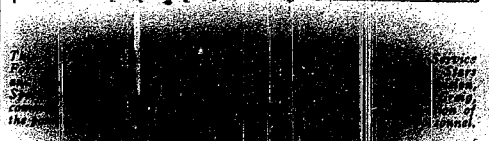
Here's to the 9th Division,
The Division that's the Army's pride;
Here's to the 9th Division
And its brave and gallant men so true
and tried,
We will be loyal to her,
No stain shall mar her name;
For freedom's cause we'll ever live
And all the world shall know,
The 9th Division proves her fame.

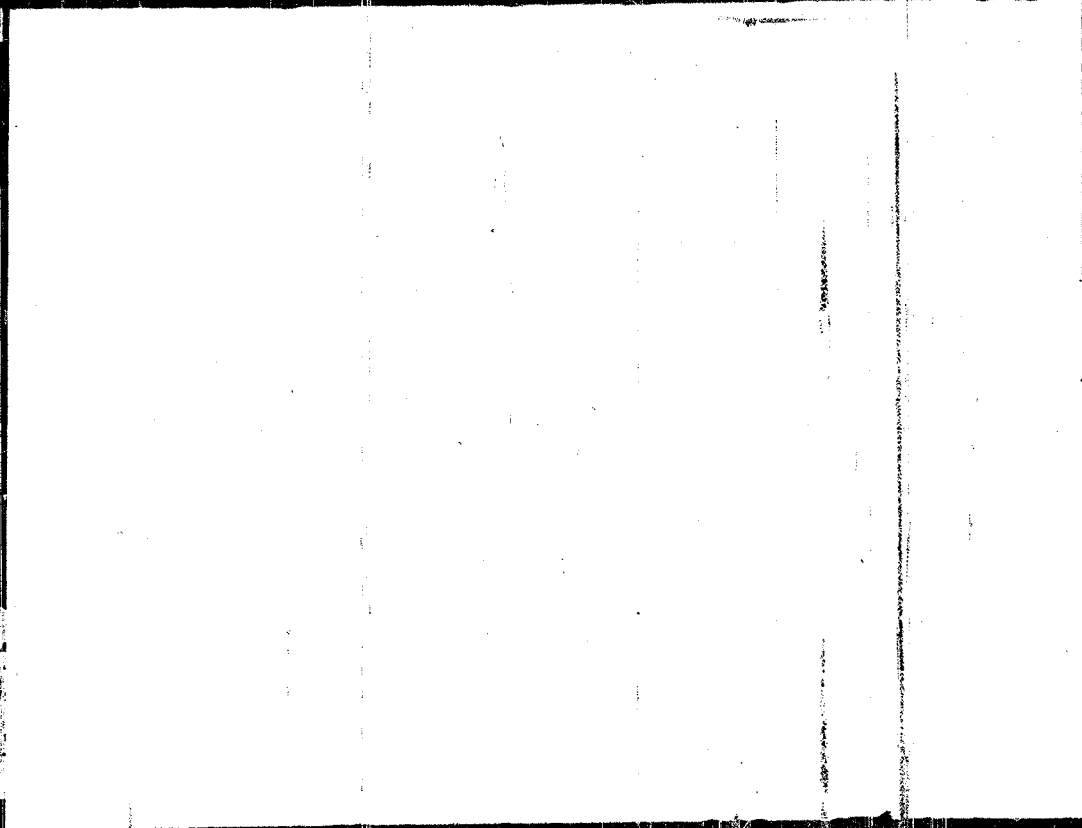
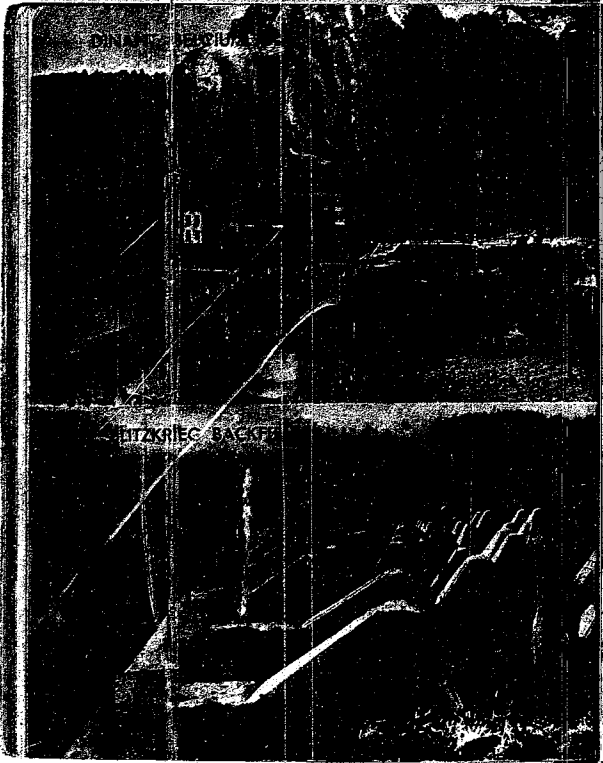
Interlude:

We will protect our birthright,
Liberty's sons are we,
We will be slaves to no might,
Americans are free.

Chorus:

We serve our flag and country,
Every soldier is a fortress strong;
Giving our best to our country
We will be the victors thro' the strife
be long;
We do not fear the battle,
We're ready for the fray;
Keeping hearts and courage high,
United as we go the 9th Division
leads the way.







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SOLDIERS of the 28th: The story of our division is written here only in part. For the complete history we must add up the sum total of accomplishments of every company, of every platoon, of every squad—yes, of each individual who has ever been a part of the Keystone outfit. Our successes have not as a rule come easily; however, because of skillful, determined, and courageous effort, they have always been sure. For your fine work in the past I congratulate each one of you most heartily. As we prepare to forge ahead in the future let me say, "ROLL ON!"

William H. Hall
Major General, Commanding

THE STORY OF THE *28th Infantry* DIVISION

DEC. 16, 1944: When Germans struck to break through and push back Allied lines in their powerful offensive aimed at Luxembourg and Belgium, the whole world waited, listened, held its breath. Was this to be another Nazi blitz?

Field Marshal Gerd von Rundstedt used the best divisions at his call. He planned to employ tactics reminiscent of the 1940 campaigns—a quick thrust, a breakthrough.

German forces pointed to Sedan, to Antwerp, to points beyond. They hoped to split Allied armies in half, sever communications and supply lines. The offensive might even gain enough momentum to sweep to the sea.

fighting in France. Eager to join that fight, 28th doughboys left the British Isles for Normandy battlefields.

Sounds of battle drew nearer and nearer as the division moved to a new assembly area northwest of St. Lo after disembarking. As July faded, the 28th reached the division's source and jumped off in its initial attack.

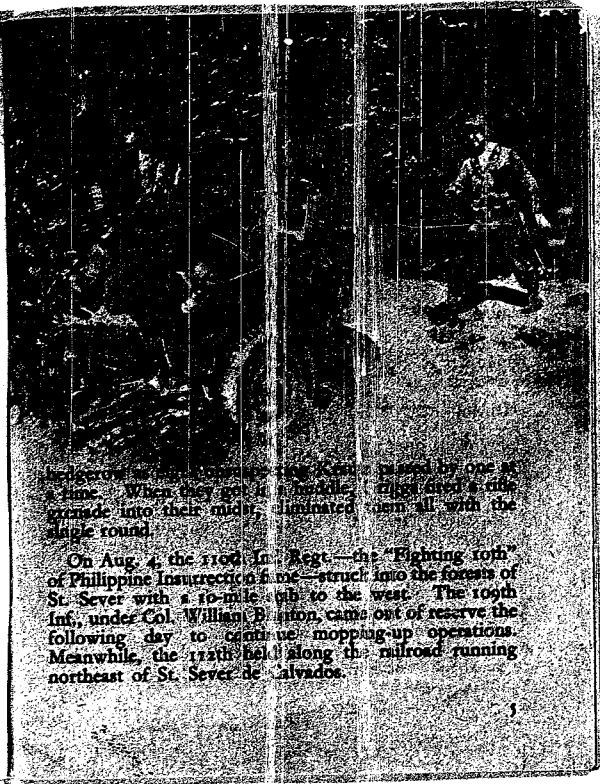
Fighting in Normandy centered about hedgerows that squared off the countryside in a checkerboard pattern. Hard-packed, root-filled walls of earth, overgrown with thick hedges and trees, formed the outline of enemy defense lines. German rifles and automatic weapons behind the first row were backed by mortars.

The enemy didn't always follow a form as rigidly set as a diagram. From hidden positions in flanking hedgerows Krauts opened up with deadly crossfire from automatic weapons. Snipers and burp guns popped out of nowhere.

This was the opposition as Col. Theodore Seely's 110th and Col. Henry Hodes' 112th Inf. Regts. slashed south in an attack below St. Lo. Troopers learned at the outset that battle was rough as they struck near Percy. To batter hedgerow defenses was no easy matter. Careful planning, skillful manipulation, teamwork were necessary.

Lt. William Hall, Owensboro, Ky., platoon leader, Co. C, 112th, helped his battalion to take Hill 210 when he worked up from the rear to knock out a machine gun nest that held up the advance of his men.

Pvt. Claude Griggs, Gainesville, Ga., waited near a



Hedgerow defenses were broken by one of a line. When they got in a middle, rifles fired a rifle grenade into their midst, eliminating them all with the single round.

On Aug. 4, the 110th Inf. Regt.—the "Fighting 10th" of Philippine Insurrection fame—struck into the forests of St. Sever with a 10-mile push to the west. The 109th Inf., under Col. William B. Austin, came out of reserve the following day to continue mopping-up operations. Meanwhile, the 112th held along the railroad running northeast of St. Sever de Salvados.

A new attack jumped off at 0600, Aug. 7, after the division had passed through an armored unit the previous evening. Working its way along the Vire-Gathemo road, the 112th had secured an important ridge by dark. Heading toward Gathemo, 109th doughs learned that taking their objective was no easy job. Task Force A worked with men of Col. Blanton. The city finally fell after four days of fierce battle.

Continuing south, the 110th and 112th passed west of Sourdeval. Task Force A, pivoting on the latter's flank after pushing through Sourdeval, continued east toward Ger. Automatically pinched out by this maneuver, the 112th moved back to division reserve.

Another thrust of approximately 10 miles Aug. 14, gained Corps' final objectives east of the Egrenne River next day.

During this phase, the 28th had three commanding generals in as many days. Succeeding Gen. (then Maj. Gen.) Omar N. Bradley, who took over II Corps in Tunisia, Maj. Gen. Lloyd Brown commanded the 28th Inf. Div. from Feb., 1943, until Aug., 1944.

Brig. Gen. James E. Wharton was commanding general for one day. While visiting a regiment a few hours after taking command, he was fatally wounded.

Maj. Gen. (then Brig. Gen.) Norman D. Cota, Chelsea, Mass., assumed command Aug. 14. A veteran of the North African campaign, Gen. Cota had landed in France on D-Day as Asst. CG., 29th Inf. Div. Wounded at St. Lo, he was back in action.

"BLOODY BUCKET"

IS *Fighting Fury*

THE division Gen. Cota now commanded was not a new one. Many of its units were fighting their second war, others had histories that reached far back into the past—in some cases, years before the American Revolution. When the 28th Inf. Div. was organized Oct. 11, 1917, at Camp Hancock, Ga., unit battle streamers showed participation in every war in which the United States had fought: the Revolution, War of 1812; Mexican, Civil, Spanish-American Wars, Philippine Insurrection.

Accomplishments of the Keystone Division after it arrived in France in late Spring, 1918, are recorded both in Washington archives and German history. From June 28 to July 14, while attached to the French, the 28th held the Marne River near Chateau-Thierry. Forcing crossings of the Ourcq River during the Aisne-Marne offensive the division pushed ahead to score gains in the Oise-Aisne offensive which began Aug. 18. After helping rescue the "Lost Battalion" of the 77th Div. in the Meuse-Argonne offensive, Keystone men were in the Thiaucourt sector when the Armistice was signed.

The famous episode of the "Lost Battalion" occurred in the depths of the Argonne Forest as the 28th pressed on with the 77th. Six companies had penetrated German lines to reach their objective near Charleveaux Mill.



move.

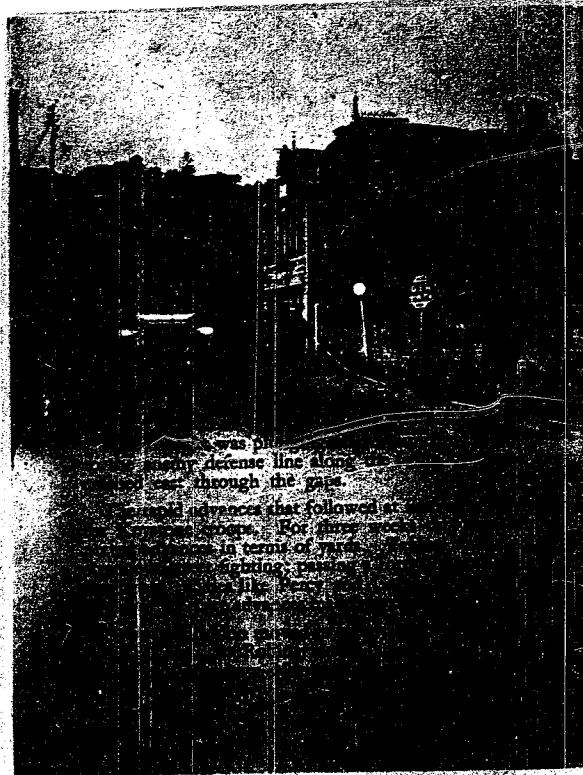
Each division unit from regiments down possesses a proud history of its own. The 100th Inf. Regt. (originally from Scranton) had its baptism of battle when it was thrown into the path of the German juggernaut at the Marne where Cos. L and M had fought as isolated combat groups in early July, 1918. From a wheat field turned into a bloody shambles, and past Surmelin, the 109th pounded through Fismes, pushed across the Vesle, stormed through the Aire River valley, kept battling to the last days at Bois de Dampvitoux and Xamines.

Southwestern Pennsylvania men of the 110th Inf. wrote the regiment's first pages of history in World War I when Cos. B and C, with outposts along the Marne, were to bear the full brunt of Ludendorff's "Peace Storm," a desperate enemy bid to break through and capture Paris. From then on—through the sharp, bitter fighting at Grimpettes Wood, across the Vesle, at Apremont, at Chatel-Chehery—the 110th fought hard, vicious battles.

Initial combat for Northwestern Pennsylvania's 112th Regt. fell on July 5, 1918; when men of each company charged over the top with the French at Hill 204 near Chateau-Thierry. Later Cos. G and H were cut off at Fismette. The few survivors still remember the fury of two companies being attacked by 1000 crack German troops. Other units, the 103rd Medics, the 103rd Combat Engrs., also fought in the last war.

Div Arty has many chapters in its history. Btry. B, 107th FA, served through the Civil War. The 108th—"the battalion with the big guns"—dates back to 1840, the first unit to use the name "National Guard," an adaptation of Napoleon's Garde Nationale. The 109th FA had three companies supporting Gen. George Washington's Continental Army.

TWENTY-SIX years after the climax of World War I, the same organization—the 28th Inf. Div.—was again in France, slugging it out with the Germans. In World War I, Gen. Pershing referred to the 28th as the "Iron Division;" in World War II, the Germans called the 28th the "Bloody Bucket Division." The latter name didn't only stem from the red keystone patch; it



give way to cheering crowds jamming roadsides. Americans were welcomed with showers of fruit, wine, and shouts of "Boche kaput—Vive les Américains!"

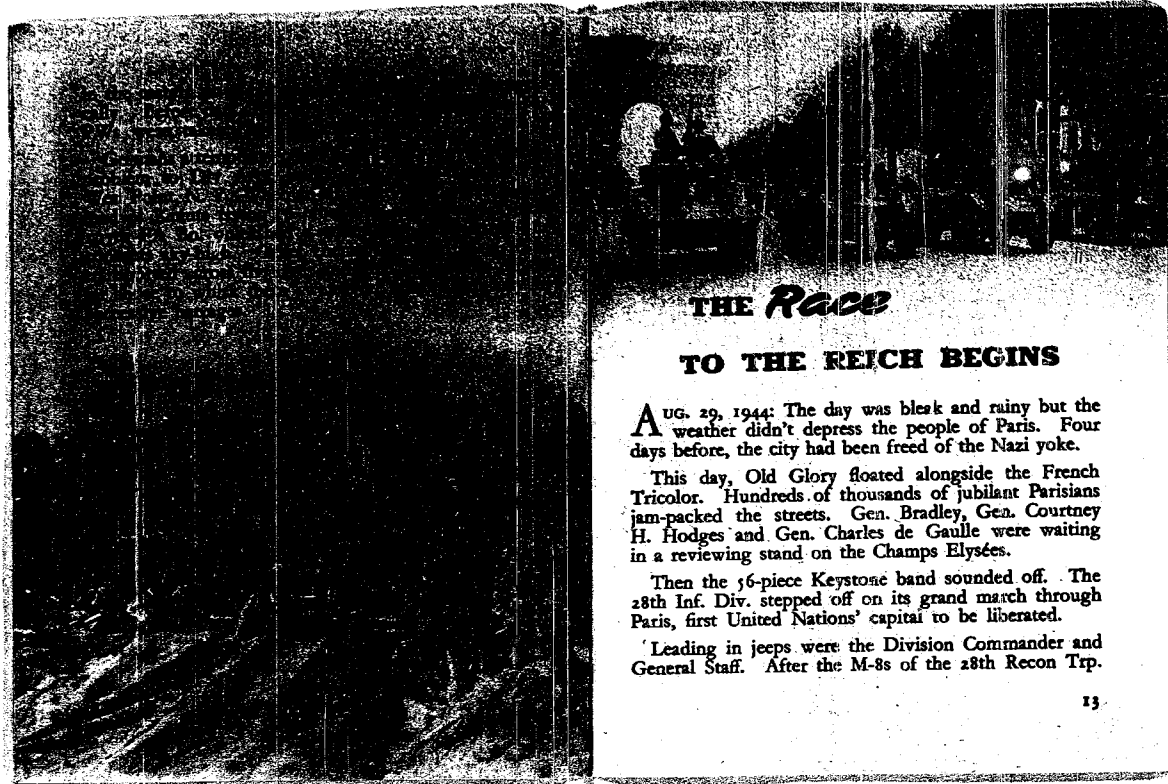
But Keystone men didn't ride for long. Jumping off on Aug. 21, the 110th and 112th Regts. advanced as many as 18 miles a day. Verneuil, Breteuil, Damville, were towns buttoned up by the swift 28th. Meantime, 109th was in Corps reserve.

Next day, more towns were added to the fast growing list of the liberated: Nogent-le-Sec, Bonneville, Conches, Cleville, Boquipuis. Toward the end of August Allied forces were clamping pincers on a sizeable chunk of the Wehrmacht. The British driving south from Caen and the First U.S. Army smashing east had trapped most of Field Marshal von Kluge's Seventh Army in the Falaise pocket.

The job of defending road blocks to prevent German units trapped west of the Seine from escaping fell to the 110th and 112th Regts. until they were relieved by the British Aug. 25.

Meantime, under command of Brig. Gen. George A. Davis, Boston, Mass., Asst. Div. CG, Task Force D, comprising 1st Bn., 109th; 107th FA; Co. C, 630th TD Bn., and a small tank unit stormed towards Le Neubourg. The struggle was savage, but the town was captured Aug. 24.

Next objective was Elbeuf, key town situated on the banks of the Seine, desperately needed by Germans as a key escape route across the river. Motorized elements of the 109th plunged into the town. Intense fighting raged



THE Race

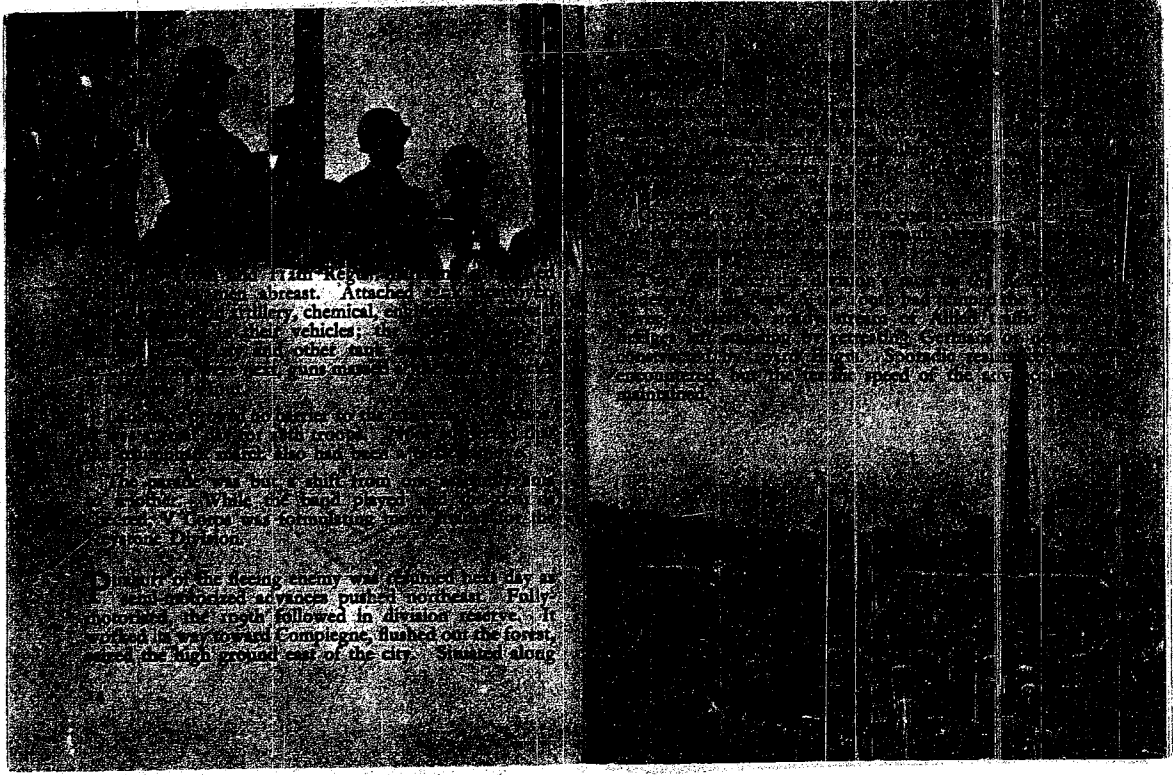
TO THE REICH BEGINS

AUG. 29, 1944: The day was bleak and rainy but the weather didn't depress the people of Paris. Four days before, the city had been freed of the Nazi yoke.

This day, Old Glory floated alongside the French Tricolor. Hundreds of thousands of jubilant Parisians jam-packed the streets. Gen. Bradley, Gen. Courtney H. Hodges and Gen. Charles de Gaulle were waiting in a reviewing stand on the Champs Elysées.

Then the 56-piece Keystone band sounded off. The 28th Inf. Div. stepped off on its grand march through Paris, first United Nations' capital to be liberated.

Leading in jeeps were the Division Commander and General Staff. After the M-8s of the 28th Recon Trp.



...the 7th Airborne...
 ...abreast. Attached...
 ...artillery, chemical...
 ...vehicles; the...
 ...other tank...
 ...anti-aircraft...

...the night...
 ...the ground...
 ...the tank...
 ...the division...
 ...the night...
 ...the ground...
 ...the tank...
 ...the division...

...the fleeing enemy was stopped...
 ...the mechanized advances pushed northeast...
 ...the 1st division followed in division reserve...
 ...it worked its way toward Compiègne, flushed out the forest...
 ...toward the high ground east of the city...
 ...situated along...

...the speed of the advance...
 ...the terrain...
 ...the weather...
 ...the enemy...
 ...the division...
 ...the night...
 ...the ground...
 ...the tank...
 ...the division...

Crossing the Belgian border, the division, joined by Prince Consort Felix of Luxembourg, fanned out, three regiments abreast, and swept on a north-south line into Luxembourg. Average daily advances were 17 miles, as Martelange, Ravigne, Wiltz, Bastogne, Longvilly, Arlon were liberated Sept. 10. Three months later some of these same towns were to figure again in the development of the war.

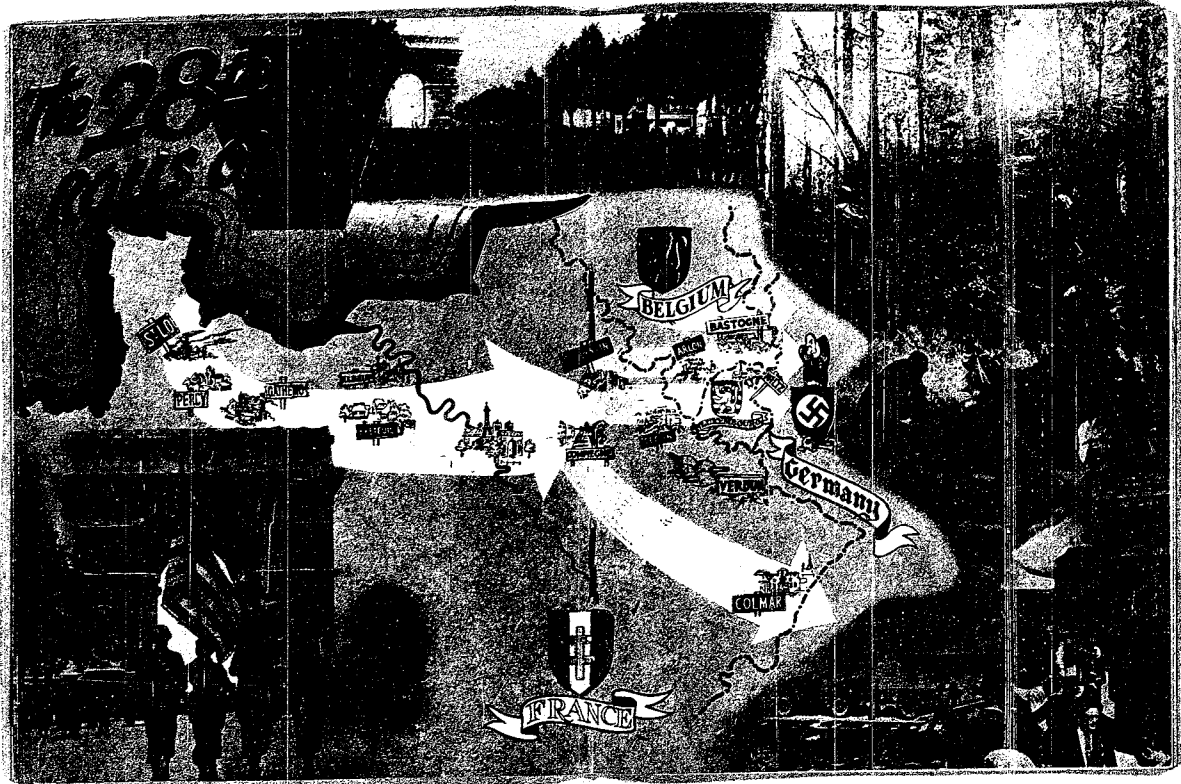
TEAMED with the 5th Armd. Div., the 112th Combat Team under Corps control remained near Luxembourg to help defend the city. Infantry and armored units formed a crack team. Repeated counter-attacks of German armor were thrown back. The 112th knocked out three Nazi tanks with organic weapons alone.

Meanwhile, the division took up positions in an assembly area near Binsfeld, Sept. 11. The dash across France, Belgium and Luxembourg had ended. The Keystone was set for the home stretch.

To hard-fighting 28th doughs, the "sacred soil" of Germany appeared no different from any other farm land. Cattle grazed. Large fields were lined with grain shocks from the late summer harvest.

But the land bristled with German guns. From OPs, COs on reconnaissance noted unnatural blotches along the landscape. Heavily camouflaged, topped by thick coatings of earth and streaked with green and yellow paint on exposed fronts, pillboxes glared in the September sun. These were the "impregnable" bulwarks of the Siegfried Line—the vaunted German defense wall.







Near Scurdeval, Normandy

Key Magic: "Superman" into PWs

Men had to learn for themselves how to capture this type of fortification. As a preliminary move, patrols were sent across the Our River. Germany was entered at 2100 hours, Sept. 11.

Next day, 1st Bn., 109th, secured a bridge intact, was followed across the border by 1st and 2nd Bns., 110th. Remaining elements followed Sept. 13. Although other units may have sent the first patrols into the Reich or occupied the first German towns, official records should confirm the 28th's claim of being the first division to cross into Germany in force.

Heroes WON

THE HURTGEN FOREST

NOT since Napoleon's mighty legions had swept across the continent nearly 150 years earlier had Germany been invaded. Now, free entrance into the country could be made only by plunging through the rugged defenses of the Siegfried Line. Why the thick-walled, firm structures of the West Wall ever were called pillboxes will remain a mystery to 28th soldiers who fought so furiously to destroy them.

When one of the pillboxes refused to quit, Pfc Lawrence Gentry, Oklahoma, twice ran a 25-yard gauntlet of heavy fire, carrying two 35-pound TNT pole charges. Both charges were defective. He tried hand grenades,

Meanwhile, with the 5th Armd. Div., elements of the 112th Combat Team had been battering their way into another portion of the pillbox defenses. Some of the deepest penetrations into the Siegfried Line at that time were made by this team as it hacked into Bitburg. Wallendorf and "Purple Hill" (Hill 407) are unforgettable names to the regiment. Sept. 26 the 112th returned to the division.

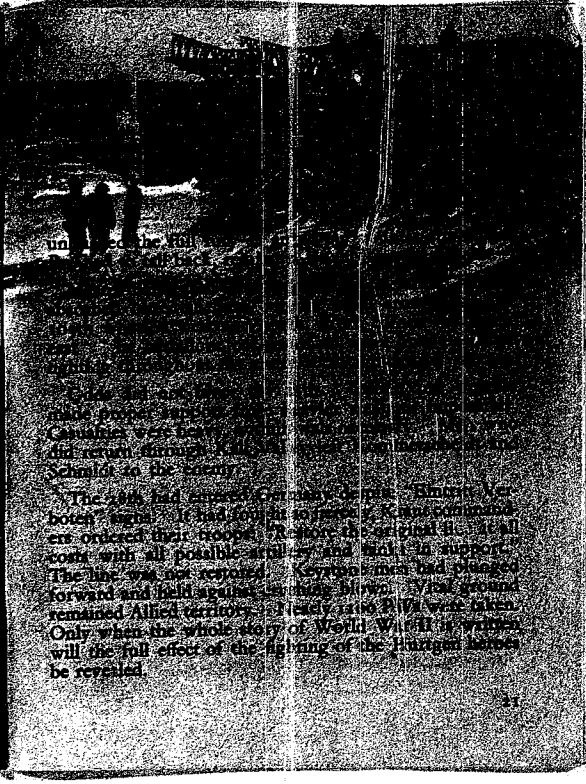
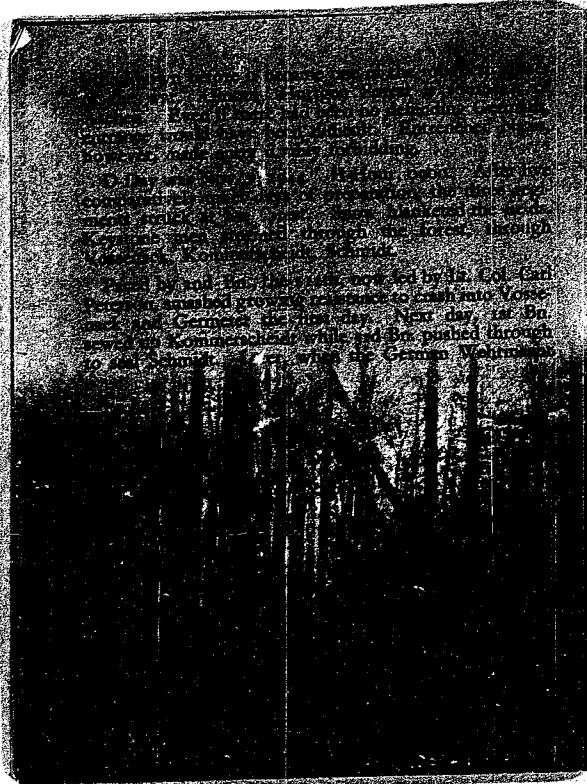
Pillbox country brought another change. Advances slowed down to a tempo measured by only yards of severe, bitter fighting. Service units grabbed the opportunity to supply forward elements.

EARLY October the division moved north to Elsenborn, Belgium, after turning over positions it had secured. Three days of ferocious attack brought the 28th before the Siegfried Line again. Then, the situation turned static and battalions were rotated to rear areas for training. Key personnel was sent to special schools.

Gen. George Marshall visited the division CP Oct. 11, praised the Keystone's combat record. "You are doing excellent work over here," he said, "and people back home are aware of it."

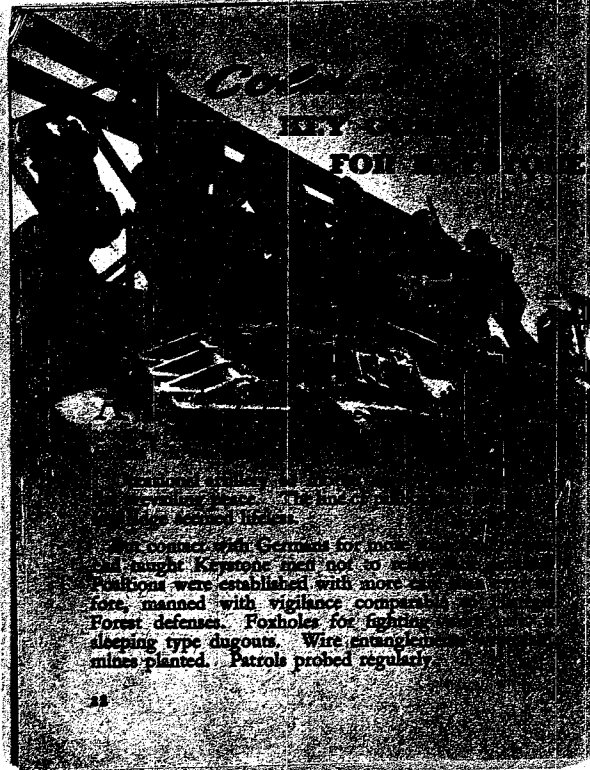
For Gen. Marshall, this visit to the 28th marked the return to his old outfit. As a lieutenant, the general had served in one of the 28th's units in 1906-1907.

But the 28th was destined to move again, destined for another job. In its push to Germany the division had to breach many obstacles—hedgerows of Normandy, rivers of France, savagely defended cities. Latest obstacle was



unlike the fall

The 20th had seized German tanks "Eisenknecht" tanks. It had fought to recover Kops command. It ordered their troops. Restore the original line. At all costs with all possible artillery and tanks in support. The line was not restored. Key positions had plunged forward and held against machine guns. What ground remained Allied territory. Heavily into POWs were taken. Only when the whole story of World War II is written will the full effect of the fighting of the Hurtgen be revealed.



...contact with Germans for months
and taught Keystone men not to relax.
Positions were established with more
fore, manned with vigilance comparable
Forest defenses. Foxholes for fighting
sleeping type dugouts. Wire entanglements
mines planted. Patrols probed regularly.

Contrasted to Hurtgen, this was almost a rest area. So quiet, so peaceful but ominous...

DEC. 16, 1944: Hell broke loose in the Ardennes. Enemy artillery and mortars ripped into the division's 25-mile line. Fanatic Wehrmacht elements threw themselves at the 28th immediately after barrages. Nazis attempted to throw back the Allies in a tremendous counter-thrust. In the path of the German fury was the 28th Inf. Div.

Five crack enemy divisions—Panzer, Infantry, Volksgrenadier—hurled across the Our River the first day of the assault. Second Bn., 109th; 1st and 3rd Bns., 110th; 1st Bn., 112th, rocked most severely under the first blows, lashed back to ward off attacks, caused many enemy casualties. But Germans struck again and again. Enemy reserves from the east threw their weight behind the steamrolling push. Germans pounded American lines continuously. Enemy tanks rolled up in support of Nazi infantry.

The day wore on. Division lines snapped under excessive pressure. Units were isolated, surrounded. Co. B, 110th, was encircled, lost contact with battalion. Douglas fought and died in their places. Co. I, 110th, pinned down at Weiler, hacked its way out of encirclement at night, joined its battalion in Clervaux.

Clervaux had been the division rest area for a month. Now it was a roaring battlefield as resting doughs scrambled to form hasty defenses.

Nine enemy divisions were identified in the striking force that kept hammering 28th troopers. Keystone men



cheer to Nazis but another attack. The regiment shifted its lines to the high ground between Ettelbruck and Mostroff. Two days later, it rejoined the 28th at Neufchateau.

Meantime, the 110th was weathering staggering blows. Wiltz was the division CP location since mid-November. The town was a vital transportation hub. It was also one of the first objectives of the German breakthrough.

The 110th, near Wiltz, suffered severe attacks all along its front. But the battered regiment was not alone in its defense. Division troops pitched in; MPs, postal and finance clerks, QM and Div. Hq. personnel, band men formed a provisional defense battalion to block the German blow.

From Dec. 16 to Christmas Day it was everybody's fight. Outstanding acts of bravery became routine. Morley Cassidy, war correspondent, in a nation-wide broadcast to America, said: "The 28th Division has performed one of the greatest feats in the history of the American Army. Against nine divisions it has held so firmly that the German timetable has been thrown off completely."

The German breakthrough had struck at the 28th in all its violence. The division had reeled under its impact, suffered the crush but warded off disastrous defeat. Keystone men pulled back to an area where they could recover from the shock, where they could prepare to avenge and slash back at the enemy.

Early 1945 was spent near Charleville where the 28th

—less the 112th Combat Team—defended the Meuse River from Givet to Verdun. Troops manned outposts at road junctions and bridges in key cities: Sedan, Verdun, Rocroi, Charleville, Stenay, Buzancy.

The 112th CT returned to the division Jan. 13 after almost four weeks of continuous contact with the enemy in the Ardennes area “somewhere in Belgium.” Four days later, the division moved southeast to Sixth Army Group’s sector.

The same Keystone division that the German radio had declared “wiped out” now was ready again. In September, 1944, a division slogan contest netted the following motto: “28th Roll On.” Hard hit in the Hurtgen Forest, harder hit in the Ardennes breakthrough, Keystone men still personified their division slogan. The 28th was to smash through the enemy once more, was to continue to live up to its slogan and Roll On!

In the First French Army sector the 109th and 112th established a line that curved from the vineyards of the Colmar Plain to the rugged fringes of the Vosges Mountains. Operational control having passed from II French Corps to the XXI U.S. Corps four days before, the 28th struck its first blow at the enemy Feb. 1.

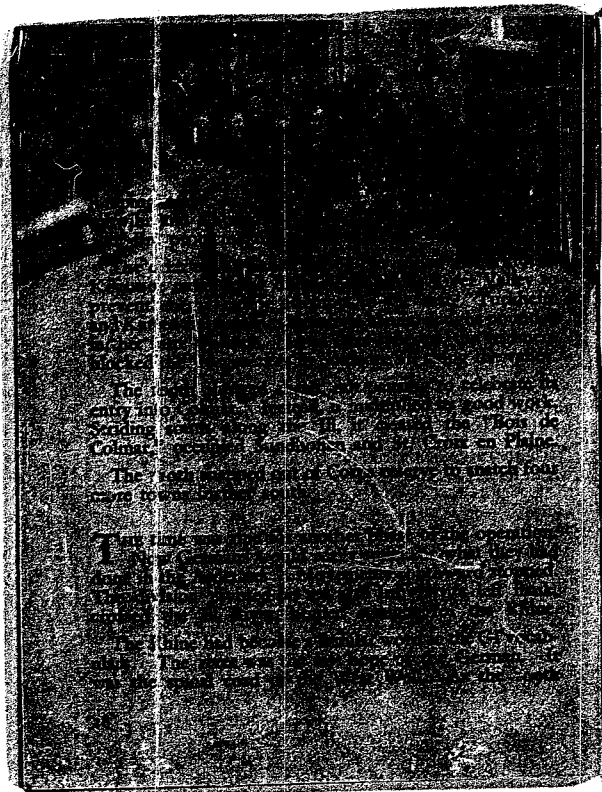
Attack orders came suddenly. Division CP shifted to Kayersberg. The 110th, having driven the enemy from Black Mountain in the hazardous Vosges terrain, moved into Corps reserve. Gen. Cota’s message to Col. James Rudder, Eden, Tex., 109th CO, was short in text, powerful in content: “We go to Colmar.”



...had been swallowed up by advancing Allies, the “Colmar Pocket” still was occupied by the enemy.

Three battalions striking simultaneously, the 109th began its push at 2100, Feb. 1. Driving southward along the west bank of the Ill River, it clamped down on the initial objective early next morning. In a coordinated thrust with the French CC4 (under 28th control) doughs penetrated the city, mopped up what remained of the opposition. Captured by next application of speed and surprise, Colmar seemed a prize easily won—easier than its defenses had indicated. In recognition, 109th men were awarded the French Army’s Croix de Guerre.

Meantime, Col. Gustin Nelson, Philadelphia, led his 112th Regt. in an attack along the division’s right flank.



halted its advance at Dessenheim, the 110th under Col. Daniel B. Strickler, Lancaster, Pa., continued the offensive.

A 3rd Bn. patrol led by S/Sgt. Willie Smith, Abingdon, Ill., crossed the Rhine-Rhone canal Feb. 6. Next day the canal was crossed in force. Balgau and Namsheim fell to the regiment with lightning speed. A Co. I 24-man patrol under T/Sgt. Wilbur Myers, Oak Hill, Ohio, accomplished the mission that brought to a swift completion the 28th's "Roll to the Rhine." Germans now had conclusive proof that the 28th Div. was not wiped out as they had claimed.

Commendations from Gen. Jacob L. Devers, commanding Sixth Army Group, and First French Army Commander Gen. de Tassigny, reflected the significance of the Colmar campaign. In his closing remarks, Gen. Devers said:

"For your operations, I say 'Fine Work.' I congratulate each and every man of the 28th Inf. Div. I am proud of you. Whatever new tasks may confront you, I am confident you will meet them with the courage and determination to insure success."

Keystone men soon were given the opportunity to demonstrate that the general's confidence was well placed. Shifted to the First U.S. Army, the division took up positions Feb. 23 along the Olef River near Schleiden, Germany.

Early on March 6, the 110th and 112th Combat Teams worked from the north, swung southeast to storm through several towns including Schleiden and Kall to strike at the Ahr River.

The 103rd Engineer Battalion, which has been in the front line since the beginning of the World War II, has been the backbone of the division in every kind of engineering work. They have built bridges, repaired roads, and constructed pillboxes and other fortifications. They have also been instrumental in the construction of the division's headquarters and other buildings. The 103rd has been the backbone of the division in every kind of engineering work. They have built bridges, repaired roads, and constructed pillboxes and other fortifications. They have also been instrumental in the construction of the division's headquarters and other buildings.

The 103rd Engineer Battalion, led by Lt. Col. Simpson and Lt. Col. Joseph Graf, kept the division rolling. Engineers built bridges and roads, handled mines, destroyed pillboxes, fought as infantry. Their missions: all accomplished.

Forward or rear, the 103rd Medics—medical aid men on the line, technicians at aid stations—conquered in another kind of battle. Keystone men never suffered from lack of proper medical attention.

The 28th Recon Trp., cannon companies, anti-tankers, Headquarters Special Troops, clerical personnel, 48th Signal Co., 28th QM Co., 28th MP Platoon, 28th Ord. Co., the band—they are all Keystone men, every man a soldier.

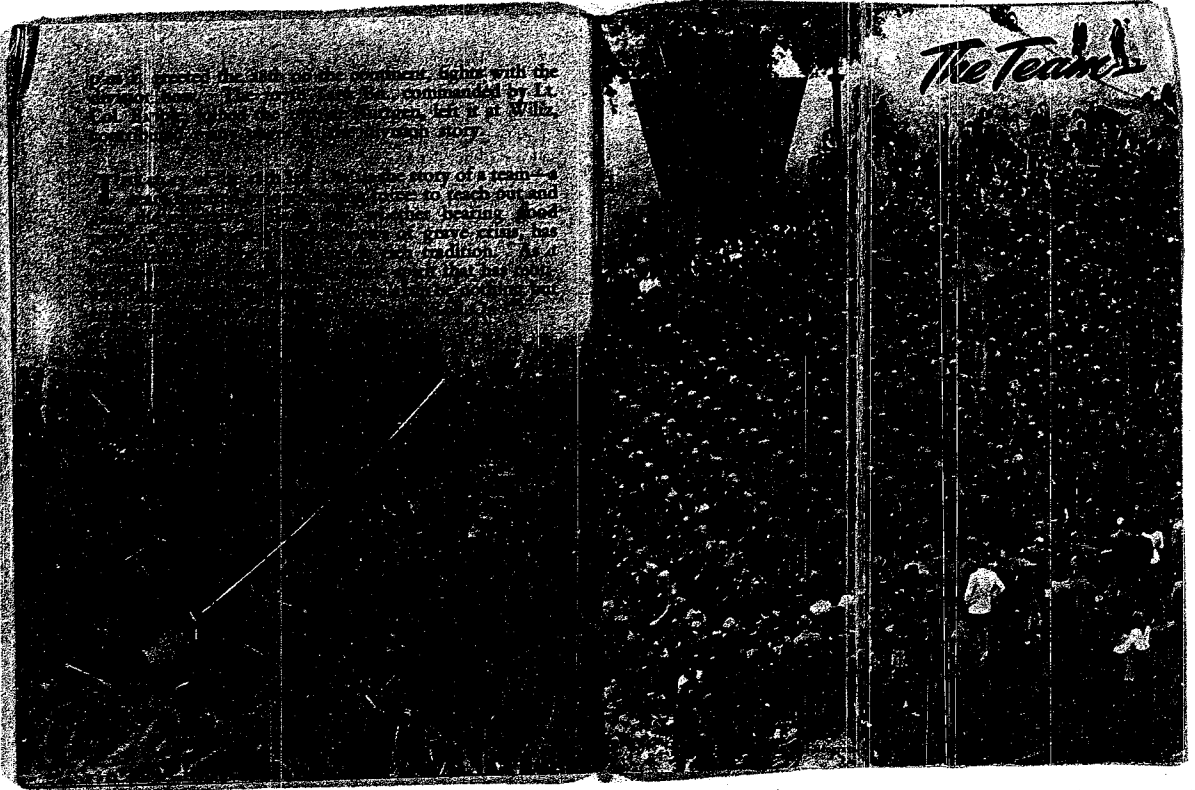
With the division since England, the 630th TD Bn. fought continuously with front line Joes. The 630th AAA Bn., one of the first ack-ack units to hit Europe.

The 103rd Engineer Battalion, led by Lt. Col. Simpson and Lt. Col. Joseph Graf, kept the division rolling. Engineers built bridges and roads, handled mines, destroyed pillboxes, fought as infantry. Their missions: all accomplished.

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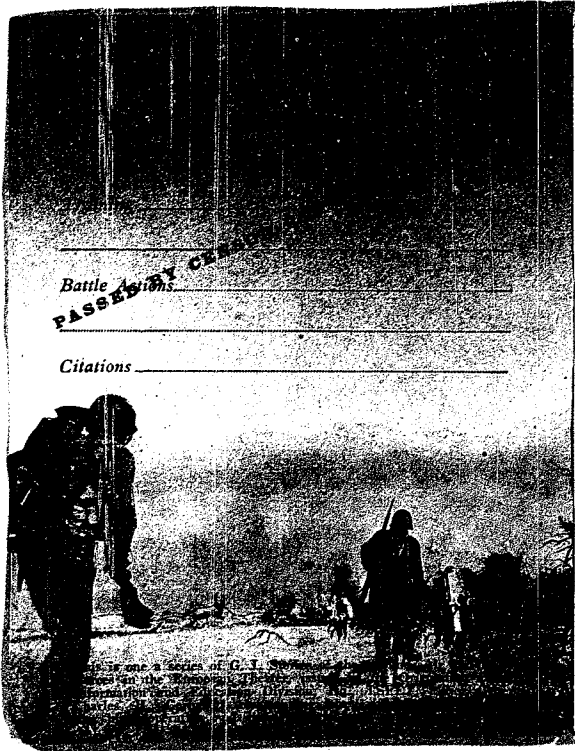
The Team





Colmar, France





Battle ~~is~~ **PASSED BY** ~~the~~ **CELESTIAL**

Citations _____

It would not be possible to put down on these pages the story of all deeds of valor, the courage, the unspectacular devotion to duty, the hidden fears of the individual man on the line. However, although unrecorded, these things are not unknown. As a soldier I know full well that they are there—that they have to be there in War.



This booklet is to help you remember the 29th Division and the splendid contribution it has made to the present victory. You men of the division read your story and be proud. Flaunt your patches of Blue and Gray—the insignia which by your own deeds has become a new symbol of courage in war.

To those of our men who have died we respectfully dedicate these few pages. We salute them because they shared our fears and our hardships. And because Warfare decrees that some men must fall, they had to die. Because of their death we have lived to gain our objective. We salute them proudly. They were our men. They were soldiers.

C. H. Gerhardt

Major General, Commanding

The Story OF THE **29th INFANTRY DIVISION**

HEDGEROWS, briar-lined every field and orchard of the picturesque Normandy countryside. Behind these barriers the Germans huddled and waited.

This was the battle ground facing the 29th Infantry

Division after it labored from the Omaha beachhead and captured Isigny June 9, 1944. Next day, the 115th Inf. Regt. pushed across the Elle River in the Columbieres-Briqueville sector. St. Clair-sur-l'Elle and Couvains fell to the 116th Inf. Regt.

The fighting was tough and brutal, a battle of cunning and sheer guts, of bayonets and hand grenades, of men making quick dashes across open fields, hiding from a watchful enemy. Doughs seldom knew who was on their flanks, often dug foxholes a few feet from Kraut-held hedgerows.

Advances were measured in hedgerows—four one day, five the next. The enemy employed every conceivable delaying tactic. The few soft spots in the Nazi defenses were difficult to locate. As the offensive halted at night, the men would dig, mole-like, into the sides of the earthen walls. Hot chow, mail and *The Stars and Stripes* would be brought up from the rear. The bitter fighting would be resumed next morning. Slowly, the Blue and Gray Division drove toward St. Lo.

Turning to the south, the 29th gained the high ground three miles north of St. Lo, June 17. With the enemy on three sides, this salient absorbed deadly artillery pounding, became known as "Purple Heart Hill." Four counter-attacks were beaten off during the three weeks the division held the ground.

As the all-out drive for St. Lo roared forward July 11, the 116th ripped ahead, cutting the important St. Lo-



Bayeux road and occupying high ground south of Martinville. Simultaneously, the 115th swung wide around Ste. Croix de St. Lo and gained the dominating terrain. The 175th Inf. Regt. attacked in the east of the division sector.

Task Force C charged into St. Lo July 18, seizing the city by nightfall after rugged house-to-house fighting. Brig. Gen. Norman D. Cota, task force commander, was wounded in the action.

As his troops prepared to attack the city, Maj. Thomas D. Howie, Staunton, Va., commanding 3rd Bn., 116th, told the men. "You'll see me in St. Lo!" Killed as he led the battalion forward, the major's body was carried into the city by the first men to enter and placed on a flag draped bier in the main square. Post

Joseph Auslander immortalized the action in the poem,
Incident at St. Lo:

*They rode him in, propped straight and proud and tall,
Through St. Lo's gates... He told the lads he led
That they would be the first at St. Lo's fall—
But that was yesterday... and he was dead:
Some sniper put a bullet through his head,
And he slumped in a meadow near a wall;
And there was nothing further to be said;
Nothing to say... nothing to say at all.
Ride, soldier, in your dusty, dirty jeep,
Grander than Caesar's chariot! O ride
Into the town they took for you to keep
Dead captain of their glory and their pride!
Ride through our hearts forever, through our tears,
More splendid than the hero bedged with spears!*



Blue and Gray STORMS NORMANDY SHORES

JUNE 6, 1944: D-Day. The 29th came in at H-Hour. J Doughs of the assaulting 116th RCT, led by Col. Charles D. W. Canham, Howell, Mich., were hit even before they reached the beach. Landing craft hung up on underwater obstacles, hit mines, blew up. German automatic weapons poured deadly cross-fire on the men climbing from the boats. Some doughs threw away their helmets, rifles and leaped into the water in an effort to save themselves.

This was not only an invasion. This was a struggle for personal survival!

Those blasted into the water tugged at their equipment, tried to reach shore. Some drowned. Others were hit while struggling to reach the beach. Gaining the beach, some doughs turned back, splashed into the water up to their necks for protection. Concertina and double apron fence criss-crossed the flat beach. Mines were buried in the sand. Mortar fire was deadly; 88s, set in the side of the cliff, were zeroed in on the landings.

"Hell, men," said Gen. Cota, Asst. Div. Commander, to the doughs crouching on the sand. "We're getting killed here on the beach. We might as well go a little farther in and get killed there!" Small groups crept

forward a few yards, then on further until they reached the protecting cover of the cliff.

Infantry, engineers and artillery suffered heavy losses in both men and equipment. The 111th FA Bn. landed with only one 105mm gun. Lt. Col. Thornton L. Mullins, battalion CO, said: "To hell with our artillery mission. We've got to be infantrymen now!" Col. Eugene N. Slappey's 113th Inf. Regt. came in at 1100, then fought up the heights to St. Laurent and to positions south and west of the town.

Maj. Gen. Charles H. Gerhardt, Division Commander, personally directed the fight on the beach at 1100. His CP, set up in a rock quarry 100 yards from the water's edge, was functioning four hours later.

Vierville-sur-Mer and St. Laurent were taken next day by the 116th, while the 113th shifted south toward



Longeuville and Formigny. The 175th, held offshore in Corps reserve, came in June 7 and seized Isigny two days later.

Resistance was fierce up the narrow coastal strip. Machine gun fire pinned down 116th doughs on the approaches to Grandchamps and artillery couldn't knock out the German position. T/Sgt. Frank D. Peregory, Charlottesville, Va., did it alone.

Working his way up the side of an enemy-held hill, the sergeant dropped into a trench. As he inched forward, he suddenly came upon a squad of German infantry. Sgt. Peregory killed eight Nazis with hand grenades, took three others prisoner at the point of his bayonet. Threading his way down the trench, he captured 32 more riflemen and the machine gunners who held up the 116th's advance. The Congressional Medal of Honor was awarded Sgt. Peregory posthumously. He was killed in battle six days later.

As the beachhead expanded, the 29th ripped inland to the hedgerows and St. Lo. Omaha Beach was costly. Never again would such a terrific price be paid for ground won by the Blue and Gray.

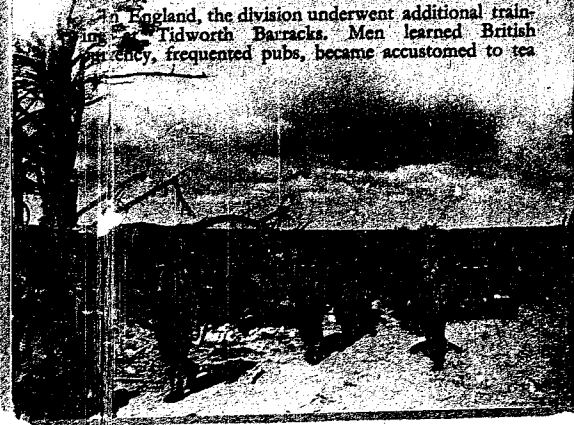
At Omaha Beach and St. Lo, 29th doughs wrote new chapters to a story already famous in American military annals. The 29th's regiments could trace their origins to the Revolutionary and Civil Wars. The 115th grew out of Maryland's "Fighting First" Regt.; the 116th combined elements of the First, Second, Fourth and part of the Fifth Virginia Regts.; the 175th stemmed from the

Maryland Fifth, the "Dandy Fifth" of Revolutionary War days. In World War I, the three regiments and the 176th formed the 29th Division which fought in the Meuse-Argonne Offensive.

On its return from France, the 29th became part of the National Guard but wasn't assembled as a unit until 1936. Mobilized again in 1940, the division was called into active service Feb. 3, 1941, at Ft. George Meade, Md.

After preliminary training, the division moved to A.P. Hill Military Reservation, Carolina maneuvers came in 1941 and 1942. Following a month's rest at Camp Blanding, Fla., the 29th shipped overseas, Sept. 26, 1942.

In England, the division underwent additional training at Tidworth Barracks. Men learned British efficiency, frequented pubs, became accustomed to tea



and coffee. The 29th fought battles at St. Lo and the invasion.

Organized with men selected within the division, a Ranger battalion under Lt. Col. Randolph Millholland, Cumberland, Md., trained with British Commandos in Scotland. Many 29th men participated in the Commando raids on Norway's coast long before the Normandy invasion.

Nineteen months of training had made the 29th rugged, sharp. It was ready for D-Day.

July 26, 1944: Eight days after the capture of St. Lo, the 29th was in the line again. Replacements and supplies had been brought up through the torn countryside and rubble towns. Kicking off with the 30th Inf. and 2nd Armd. Divs., the Blue and Gray drove southward over the dusty, winding country lanes to seize Percy.

Tessy-sur-Vire, St. Germain de Tallevande, Vire, Villebaudon.

German resistance was stubborn. Self-propelled 88s and small infantry units harassed the 29th as the Nazis fought delaying actions. The 121st Engr. Combat Bn. probed the roads, pulled mines and blasted openings in hedgerows for the 747th Tank Bn. and the 821st TD Bn. which supported the division. Leveling its guns at the hedgerows, the 459th AAA Bn. covered the attacks.

In late July, the Nazis launched a desperate counter-offensive designed to cut off American troops on the Cherbourg peninsula. In the 29th's sector, the 116th Panzer Div. battered Blue and Gray positions at Percy and Villebaudon but was driven back with heavy casualties. The 110th, 111th, 224th and 227th FA Bns. pounded enemy positions, prepared the way for the next lunge.

"The Battle of Normandy" produced many heroes. T/4 Harold O'Connor, West Orange, N.J., 175th Medic, dragged his wounded company commander from the Vire River, administered first aid, then braved murderous machine gun fire to stay with him until help came. Lt. Richard N. Reed, Canandaigua, N.Y., 175th, crawled within 10 yards of a Nazi machine gun before he charged the position, killing the gunner with the last round in his carbine and clubbing the assistant gunner with the butt. Pfc Robert Moore, Silver Springs, Md., 115th, stalked a German tank escorting American prisoners to enemy lines. After shouting to them to disperse, he fired his anti-tank grenade, drove off the tank.

Brest THE 29th

CRACKS A FORTRESS

I expect every parachutist to bear in mind his important mission, to execute his duties with fanatical zeal... The defense of the sea fortress of Brest must become the same glorious page in history for the Second Parachute Division as Monte Cassino has been for the First... The whole world looks to Brest and its defenders, of which the Second Parachute Division is the main pillar... Long live the Fuehrer!
Gen. Herman Ramcke

MID-AUGUST, 1944: From Normandy, the crushed enemy fled eastward. Resistance ceased at St. Malo and Paimpol as German forces on the Brittany peninsula withdrew to the coast.

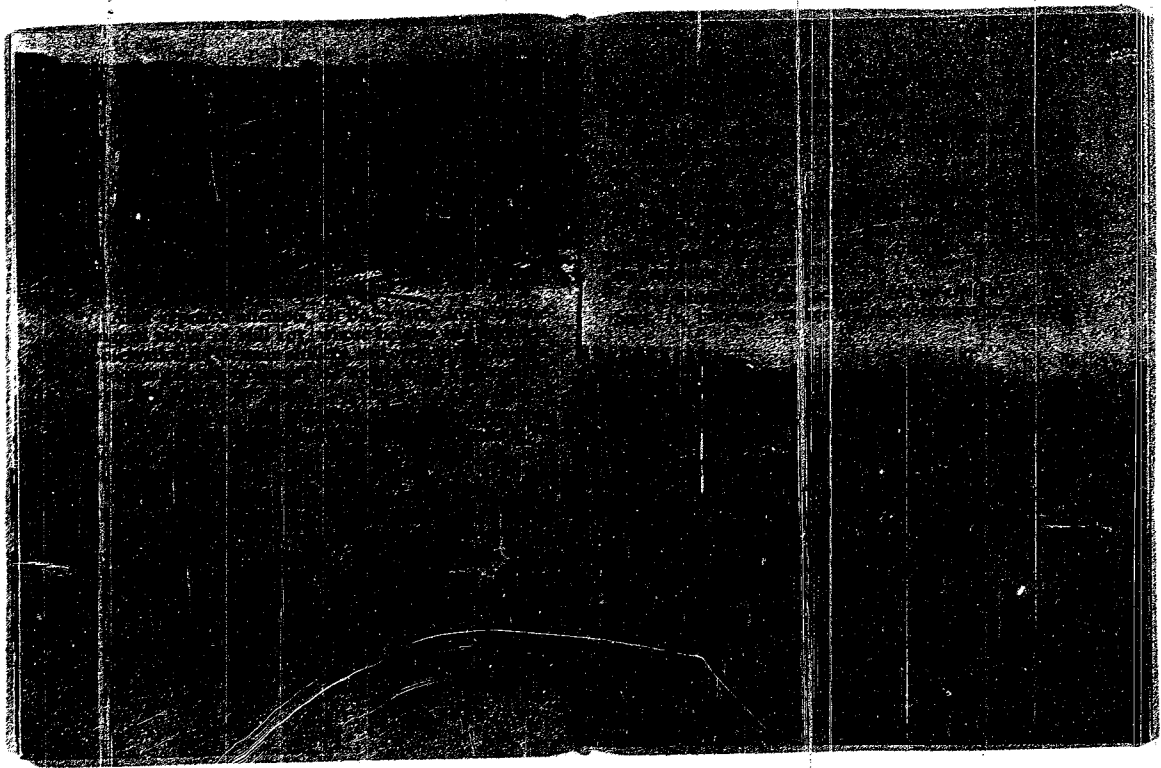
An estimated 20,000 paratroopers, along with marines and sailors, held Brest where defenses hewed from rock, concrete blockhouses, SPMs and artillery were backed up by giant coastal guns that could be fired in any direction.

Brest looked like a tough nut to crack, but the 19th was accustomed to rugged assignments by this time. After a 200-mile motor march from Normandy, division doughs launched their attack Aug. 25. Col. William C. Purnell's 175th, on the right of the division front,

shoved off, its right flank protected by Task Force Sugar, commanded by Lt. Col. Arthur T. Sheppe. On the left was the 113th as the 126th smashed through the center. The 8th Inf Div took up positions on the left of the 19th. The attack was aimed at the suburbs of Recouvrance, separated from the old city by walls and the Penfeld River.

Hedges were not as high or as plentiful in Normandy, but this terrain produced the same slow, dusty and bloody fighting as the division had experienced before.

Next paratroopers, personally led by Hitler to hold out for four months, fought on the last day of the battle. They captured the harbor and the city, falling slowly and bravely to the assault.



counter-attack. Moving up to assist, the 116th pushed within 400 yards of the fort as the 115th shifted to attack the fortress from the rear. After the British 141st RAC Squadron poured flames on the fort from its "crocodile" tanks, 116th doughs captured it, Sept. 16.

Driving in for the kill, 2nd Bn., 175th, knifed through the closely-knit defenses of Brest, blasting through the massive wall to take the Germans completely by surprise. Next day, practically all of the division was fighting in the streets of the city.

Early Sept. 18, a delegation of four enemy officers was led through the 115th's lines to arrange for the surrender of the Brest garrison. At 0800, all resistance ceased. Weapons belonging to Gen. von Mosel and his staff officers were turned over to Maj. Tony Miller, CO, 2nd Bn., 115th. Approximately 13,000 Germans passed into the 29th's PW enclosure.

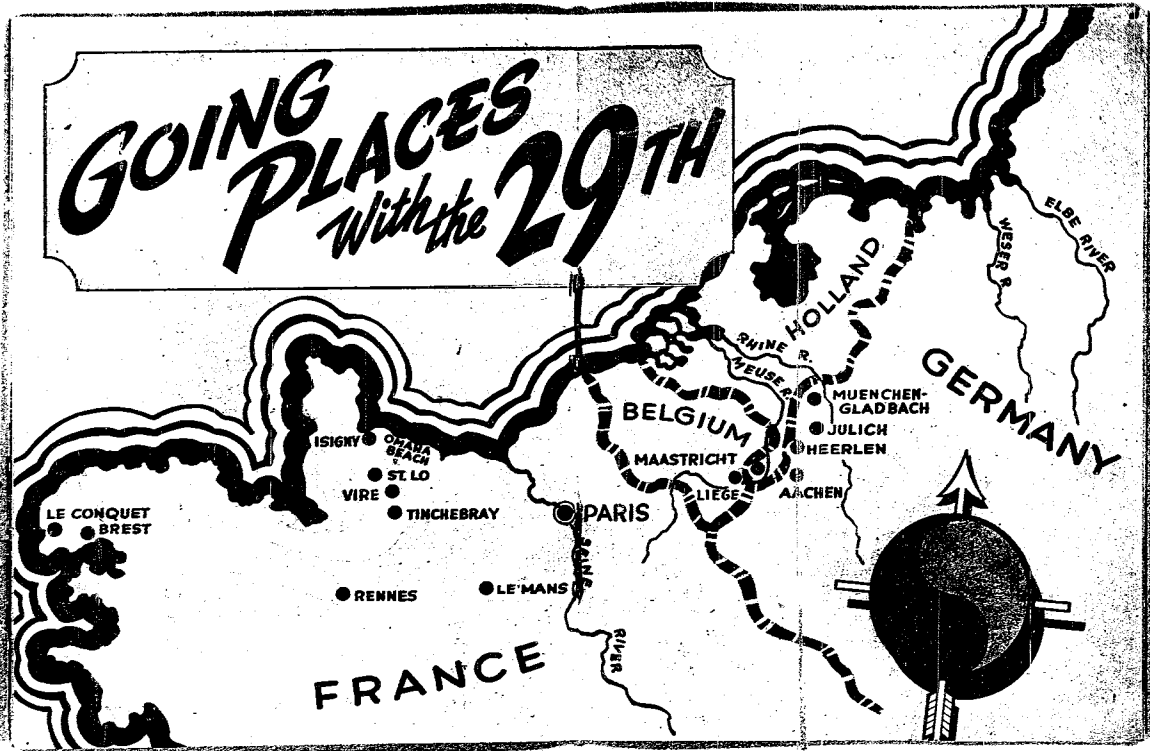
Gen. Ramcke, garrison commander, fled to the Crozon Peninsula to continue the fight against the 8th Inf. Div. He was captured two days later.

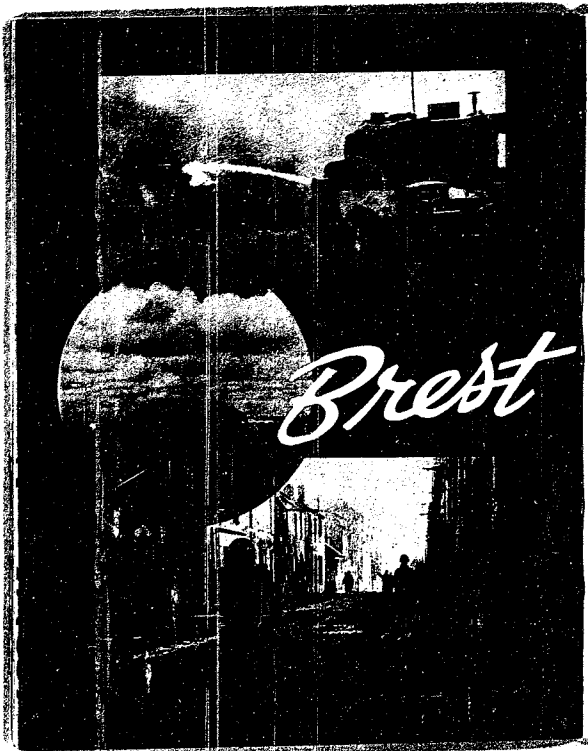
Division doughs prowled through Brest's musty, deep submarine pens, capable of housing 15 undersea craft and constructed to withstand the heaviest bombs. A hospital large enough to accommodate 14,000 patients was found underground as well as enough food for a six months' siege plus vast quantities of wines and liqueurs.

Souvenir hunters had a field day. However, the 29th moved back from Brest Sept. 19 for a week's rest before packing for the long train and motor haul to Germany.



GOING PLACES With the 29TH





Veteran DOUGHS RIP PATH TO ROER

AGGRESSIVE patrolling and diversionary attacks were the 29th's initial assignments when it went into the line in Germany, Oct. 1. On the left flank of Ninth Army in the Geilenkirchen area, the 115th quickly seized the Siegfried Line towns of Hatterath, Birgden and Kreuzrath.

Day and night patrols pushed out to Bauchem, Geilenkirchen, Buserheide, Waldenrath, Schierwaldenrath and Niederheide as German defenses were probed, casualties inflicted and prisoners taken.

This activity kept constant pressure on the Germans, kept the Nazis from sending these troops south to aid the defenders of Aachen, who were nearly encircled by American troops. The main German escape route from Aachen was the road to Alsdorf, which ran northeast from the besieged city. With attached battalions from the 66th Armd. Regt., 120th Inf. Regt., and 99th Inf. Bn., the 116th moved against Wurselen, five miles north of Aachen, Oct. 13, repulsed a counter-attack, cut the Alsdorf Road to seal the Aachen Gap.

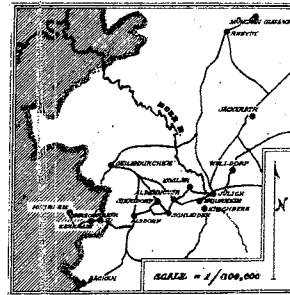
By the end of October, the 29th had moved back across the Dutch border to the Herzogenrath-Kerkrade area where it trained daily for the impending offensive.

Rumors made the rounds. "The 29th is going back

to the States as demerit on record. ... I got into the
up Paris to guard the railroad tracks. But the Army
had other plans. Replacements arrived and immedi-
ately attended the division training school at Erbebeck,
Holland. Opened back in Normandy, the school
offered bar le facta straight from the front lines as well
as such division SOPs as "Child seen on point of the
line." Soap twice a day and "I'm good and out back."
"I don't know but I'll find out."

Nov. 16, 1944. Massive artillery pushed tremendous
preparation fires. Tanks climbed out in roaring escort.
The 9th Division surged across cabbage patches and
beet fields along a line that ran through Bendendorf,
Germany.

This was the big push through the Siegfried Line aimed at the Roer River and Julich, last barriers before the Cologne Plain. Ninth Army had waited days for the attack. Dark, rainy skies had grounded air support. Now, the sky was clear and Aldenhoven and Julich were being saturated with bombs.



The 116th and 175th moved abreast, gaining three miles in three days of rugged fighting. The assault pounded through the towns of Siersdorf, Schleiden, Aldenhoven, Setterich and Durboslar which formed the outer defenses of Julich. The Roer River towns of Koslar, Bourheim and Kirchberg still were to be taken before the river could be crossed and the prize city of Julich taken.

Bourheim fell first as 2nd Bn., 175th, stormed two platoons into the town against small arms fire the afternoon of Nov. 20. The Germans smashed back with fresh troops that night, driving 2nd Bn. doughs from the town except for a group of 20 men who remained

with Capt. Robert W. Gray, Snowsman, Mo., Co. F 60. Crouching in doorways with their M-1s, the men peered down the dark streets, guarded their precarious foothold. In his cellar CP, Capt. Gray destroyed his maps, waited for relief.

First and 3rd Bns. succeeded in retaking the town two days later and relieving Capt. Gray's force. After the doughs had slugged their way into Bousheim, German artillery pounded it relentlessly. Enemy infantry and armor unsuccessfully counter-attacked on five occasions. Against the final counter-assault, six P-47s swooped low over the attacking tanks and 300 infantrymen, bombing and strafing with fury.

Second Lt. (then T/Sgt.) Paul F. Musick, Jr., Grantville, Ga., won a Distinguished Service Cross for his action at Bousheim. Racing across a field being pounded by enemy artillery, he directed mortar fire on attacking infantrymen, dispersed them. When two German tanks appeared, Musick climbed into an abandoned light tank, manned a 37mm gun and chased off the armor. Out of the tank, he next silenced three snipers who had the area under fire. Remaining on his

original position, Musick repaired a three-inch gun and recruited a crew which fired six rounds at an enemy observation post.

German guns across the Roer hammered the 116th as the regiment struck Koslar. After a rough fight, 2nd Bn. clawed its way forward, gained the western half of the town. The terrain to the battalion's immediate rear was as flat as a table, under enemy observation and couldn't be crossed in daytime. Cub liaison planes flew through flak to drop food, ammunition and medical supplies.

Attacking before dawn, Nov. 27, 1st Bn. broke into the east side of the town, drove off the Nazis and held its ground against two savage, tank-supported counter-attacks.

When a machine gun pinned down his company outside of Kirchberg, Pfc Harold J. Speer, 115th, crawled forward alone. Twenty-five yards from the enemy nest, he leaped up, tossed a grenade, charged with fixed bayonet. After shooting the gunner, he pulled the gun from position and killed the four other members of the crew. Kirchberg, last of the three bastions before Julich, fell to 2nd and 3rd Bns., 115th, after dogged house-to-house fighting.

Living conditions were rugged in the trenches and foxholes along the Roer River. Water and mud were ankle-deep. Trenchfoot sent many doughs to hospitals.

The Roer's west bank still wasn't completely cleared. Between Koslar and the river, Germans held the Julich

Clean Sweep **ACROSS THE COLOGNE PLAIN**

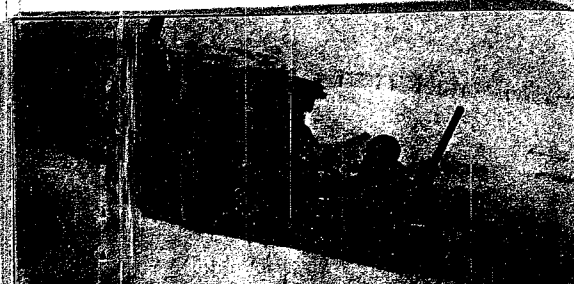
DOUGHS practiced river crossings on a small pond near Alsdorf, carrying boats half a mile across ploughed fields, as the 29th made preparations for the Roer operation.

Then von Rundstedt struck against First Army in the Ardennes. The 2nd Armd. and 30th Inf. Divs., also preparing for the Julich assault, were rushed to the breakthrough. Its plans changed, the 29th now extended its flanks, maintained thin defense lines from Barmen to Pier, a distance of 12 miles.

Outposts pushed close to the river bank, looked across to Julich as an unbroken watch was kept on the enemy front. Sound power phones reported every sound coming across the water. Rabbits bounded through the wooded areas along the river, were challenged by sentries, fired on and duly reported: "It was just the rabbit patrol again, Sir!"

River defenses were strengthened—more foxholes, more communication trenches. The 121st Engineers stretched concertina and double apron fence, sowed anti-personnel mines and trip flares along the west bank.

"Sally," smooth-talking Nazi propagandist, broadcast:



...to the river! How good it was to see the river...
...shot down by the river...
All there was behind the river...
...defense battalion, composed of division...
...elements dug in near Herzogenrath. All reserves were
being sent to the Bulge.

In brick buildings near the river, men not pulling
guard duty sat around kitchen ranges, fried potatoes,
made toast, wrote letters... Doughs in German-made
dugouts in the woods ingeniously installed heating
devices to keep warm.

For most of the winter, the division sat along the
river... Churchbells rang in Julich on Christmas Eve...
Happy New Year!... A two-minute greeting from 88s
at midnight... Searchlights lit the sky at night... Patrols
donned snowcaps.

The 554th AAA Bn. shot down seven enemy fighter
planes on New Year's Day... Replacements now were

"reinforcements." Division veterans, evacuated as
battle casualties, returned for duty... Germans dropped
propaganda leaflets during the Battle of the Bulge...
"So you thought you could break our lines and reach
Cologne! Now it is our turn!"... Artillery, mortars,
machine guns exchanged fire across the river... But
most of the time it was quiet.

Three major raids were attempted by the 29th. Five
officers and 79 men crossed the river in rubber boats,
failed to find their objective in a blinding snowstorm.
Another patrol set out even as the ice-choked river
began to crack but was turned back by mortar fire.
Finally, a 54-man patrol reached the opposite shore
undetected but ran into a stiff fire fight.

Some men went to Heerlén on pass. Coca Cola and
showers became available. Lt. Frank Bishop, Norman,
Okla., 175th, designed a slingshot from an inner tube,
used it to lob hand grenades across the river.

In February, the Bulge was flattened out. Plans to
cross the Roer were resumed. Tanks were assembled
near Aldenhoven and Schleiden. Engineers loaded
boats and bridging equipment, ammunition lined the
roads for miles.

An alert came Feb. 10, was postponed twice. The
Germans opened the dam at Schmidt, made the Roer a
torrent half a mile wide in places. Outposts pulled
back to higher ground. Battalions relieved from the
line went to Belgium, practiced river crossings on the
Meuse River.

Feb. 23, 1945, 0245 hours: Ninth Army's long awaited push was under way. Big guns leaped into action. The earth trembled under tremendous preparation fires. The sky was red along the Roer; batteries of machine guns and mortars hammered the far bank. Twenty-ninth doughs emerged from their cellars, prepared for the Julich assault.

Boats slid into the black water at 0300, slipped across to the opposite shore. Dim figures spread out to defend the initial bridgehead. Lt. Col. Raleigh C. Powell's 121st Engineers bridged the river. Downstream to the left, troops of the 115th were ferried across at 0350 in "alligators" and assault boats.

Rubbed Julich was silhouetted against the grayish, smouldering sky as assault troops of the 175th pounded across the completed foot bridges. They pushed through Julich against opposition described as "moderate." By nightfall, all of the city was secure, except "The Citadel," formidable 16th century fortress with massive walls 45 feet high.

Next day, flame throwing tanks of the 739th Tank Bn., and doughs of 3rd Bn., 116th, took the fort. Broich, a town on the left of the division's front, fell to the 115th and the high ground behind quickly was taken.

Engineers worked tirelessly, Feb. 23. It was plenty "hot" on the river. Enemy rockets and artillery sought, and frequently found, bridge sites. Half completed, a treadway bridge blew up under a direct hit; a ponton bridge was struck twice. Enemy planes swooped low,



The drive to capture the Cologne Basin, heading northeast towards Düren. The attached 110th Inf. Regt., 3rd Div., and the 115th were committed to the attack. Stammersbach, Holzweiler, Rerwenz, Kuckem, Keyenberg, Boichemich, Wink, Wickrathberg, Gudenath, Oldenkuchen, Bell, Sellenbeck fell in quick succession to the 175th.

The 116th swept through Welldorf, Sarret, Gissen, Immerath, Lutzerath, Spornach, Pesch, Finckhaun, Hochscheid, Monschor, and Sassenath. The roll call of captured towns continued—Spel, Aulin, Ties, Opherton, Jakesath—was taken by the 115th. The 110th seized Merich, Pechen, Munn, Hahnweiler, Gevelsdorf.

The division fought through Oldendriesen and Rheydt on Feb. 28. Next day, it captured Mursbach.

Gladbach, textile center of Germany and largest city to be taken by Allied troops up to that time.

Lt. Gen. W.H. Simpson, Ninth Army Commander, paid this tribute to the 29th:

Since the initiation of operations on the Continent, your division has distinguished itself time after time in successive operations, and I share your feeling of pride in the fine record of the 29th Division. It is equally gratifying to me at this time to be able to add another note of commendation in recognition of the outstanding role played by the 29th Infantry Division in the recent advance of the Ninth Army to the Rhine. As one of the assault divisions of the Army, your organization again distinguished itself by promptly crossing the Roer River... quickly seizing the town of Julich... terminating the drive in your expeditious reduction of the hostile strong point, Muenchen-Gladbach.

The victorious doughs enjoyed luxury at Munchen-Gladbach. There were soft beds, carpeted floors, champagne in every apartment, beer on tap to go with



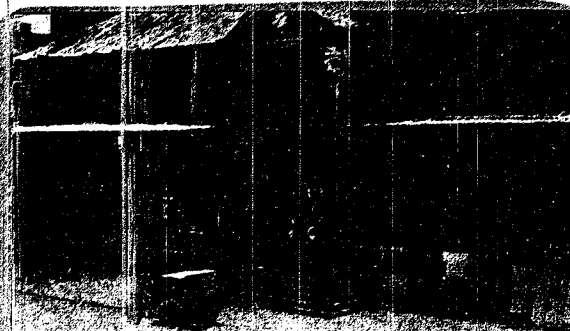
Blue and Gray SHARES IN FIGHT AND VICTORY

THE order was: "To the Ninth Army Reserve." Doughs were jubilant when they heard the news. The 29th stayed in reserve for six weeks, finally went into action again but with a different assignment—policing Ninth Army's rear. Near Munster, the Blue and Gray spread itself thin over a large area, patrolled by motor, guarded ammunition dumps, warehouses, bridges, factories, set up camps for thousands of PWs and DPs freed as German armies retreated.

Given a regular combat mission again, the 29th dispatched its 115th and 116th to clear all opposition in the division sector west of the Elbe. Resistance was slight; the river was reached April 26.

The 175th threaded a dense forest near Klotze, cleared a pocket of enemy infantry and tanks, then joined the remainder of the 29th on the Elbe. Along the river, international "boundary" between approaching American and Soviet armies, the 29th held a line 39 miles long.

Berlin had fallen. Hitler was reported dead. Peace rumors were circulating. Along the division front, action was virtually non-existent. Cattle grazed on the rolling banks of the Elbe. There was no sign or sound of war.



An entire German division facing the 29th's front surrendered May 1. It took two days to ferry the 9947 Nazis across the Elbe.

Meanwhile, Red Army troops, advancing westward, were expected daily. Finally, Lt. Col. Roger S. Whiteford, commanding the 175th's 3rd Bn., could stand the suspense no longer. "Go out and find the Russians," he ordered Lt. Kenneth A. Rohyans, Pittsburgh. A five-man patrol—S/Sgt. Ralph Stecklein, Russell, Kan.; Sgt. George J. Taktekos, Brooklyn; T/5 Ogder O. Raam, Williston, N.D.; Pfc Russell Frederick and Pfc Palmer P. Loro, both of Niles, Ohio—was quickly recruited, took off across the river with the officer.

The patrol saw horses first, then men in long gray coats and furred hats. Greetings were exchanged; the

meeting produced a mutual admiration society. Toasts of vodka and brandy were drunk from tall glasses.

In the 11 months from the time they had stormed Omaha Beach, 29th Division doughs had pushed the enemy inland, hammered him through hedgerows, broken through at St. Lo, reduced the great naval port of Brest. They had crashed through the Siegfried Line, assisted in crushing Aachen, shoved the enemy over the Roer, swept across the Cologne Plain, wiped out Nazi resistance beyond the Rhine, scooped up 38,912 PWs, the bulk of whom surrendered during the bitter fighting that preceded the wholesale disintegration of the Wehrmacht in the spring.

Behind it, the 29th left an indelible record of great military success and courageous individual achievement.

For this, the Blue and Gray sustained heavy losses in dead and wounded, grim testimony of the ferocity of the fight and the valor of its men. Courage also could be measured by the number of battle decorations and awards: two Congressional Medals of Honor, 37 Distinguished Service Crosses, 733 Silver Stars, 120 battle-field commissions. The Presidential Unit Citation Badge for Gallantry in Action was awarded to the 115th and 116th Inf. Regts.; 1st Bn., 116th, 1st Bn., 175th; 121st Combat Engr. Bn.

When V-E Day was proclaimed, May 8, 1945, the division was back near the Weser, preparing for occupational duty in the Bremen Enclave. The 29th's contribution to victory was generous. The men who

carried the fight from the foxholes, the plain doughs; the men who drove the convoys, repaired guns, policed roads, loaded supplies; the men who operated the big guns, built bridges, administered behind desks and with bandage on the field—they were all 29th soldiers who shared in the fight and the victory.





THE ROOF



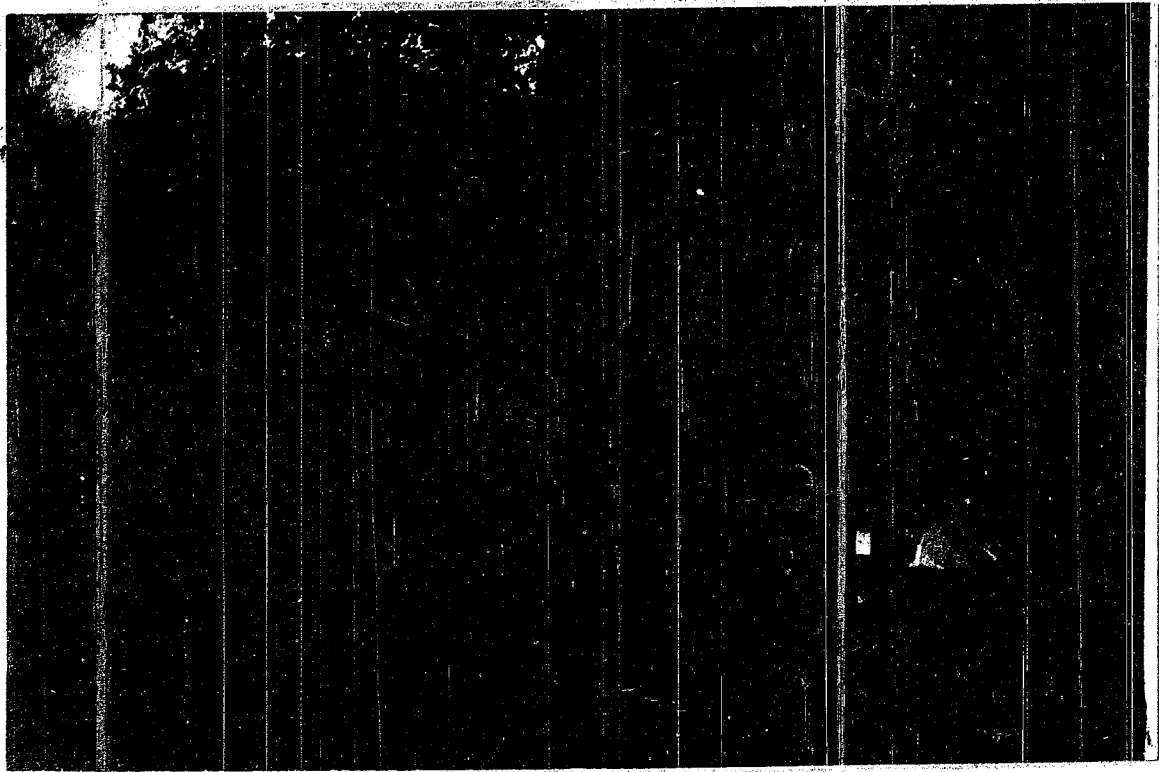
THE STORY OF THE 35th INFANTRY DIVISION

A CRU test of the American Army was von Rundstedt's last-ditch offensive in December, 1944. Into the Ardennes salient the Prussian war lord poured his finest troops and armor, drove miles deep through Allied lines. To American soldiers withdrawal was new, distasteful. They dug in, reorganized, counter-attacked savagely. The veteran 35th Division, infantry spearhead of Lt. Gen. George S. Patton's Third Army, was called from another sector to blunt the drive near Bastogne.

Fresh from their classic crossing of the Blies River into Germany's rich Saar region, the 35th's Santa Fe men slipped into Luxembourg and Belgium during the Christmas holidays. They crossed the Sure River Dec. 27, 1944, then bit hard into the thick Nazi bulge.

Four elite Nazi units composed the iron fist of the German surprise blitz: The Fuehrer Brigade (Hitler's bodyguard troops), 1st SS Panzer Div., 5th Paratroop Div., 167th Volksgrenadier Div. The 35th met elements of each, smashed them back, and secured the vulnerable right flank of the Bastogne highway. Beaten back by Yank courage and skill, the Nazi blitz faltered, sagged, then collapsed entirely.

THIS climaxed another major phase of the 35th's battle career which began in July, 1944, when it landed in France under the command of Maj. Gen.



BATTLE-WISE *Veterans* IN 30 DAYS

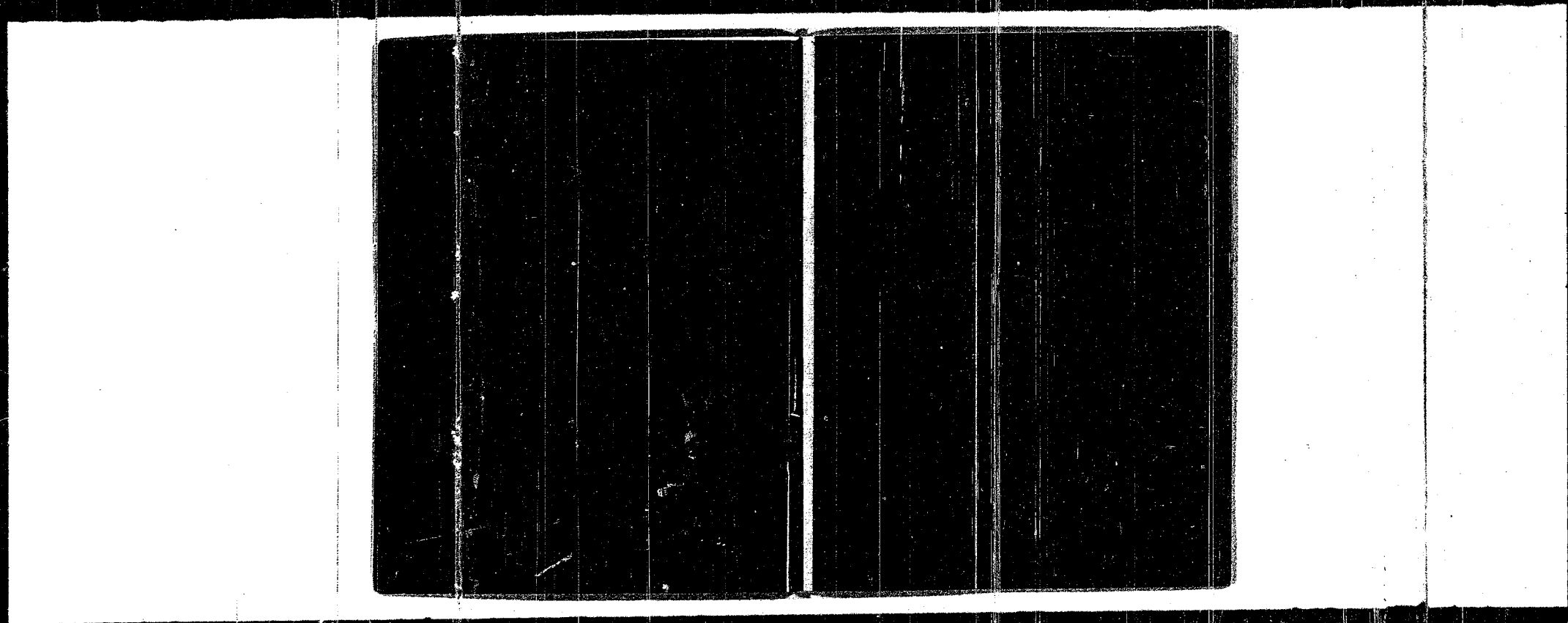
IN the hot, jungle-quiet night July 10, the division moved silently along dusty roads to form a battle line running southeast from the Vire River above La Meauffe to La Nicollerie. The 137th Inf. Regt., commanded by Col. Grant Layng, was on the right and 120th Inf. Regt., under Col. Bernard A. Byrne, on the left. Behind them was the powerful artillery directed by Brig. Gen. Theodore L. Futch.

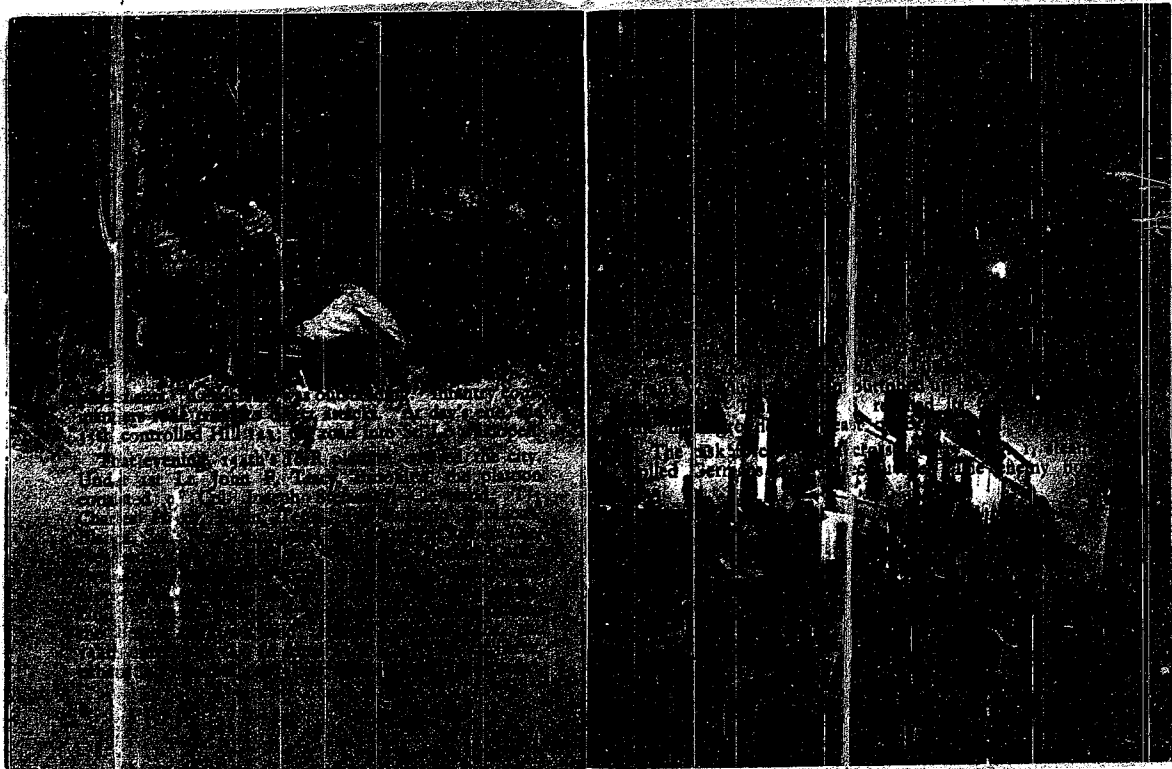
The division's first casualty was recorded that night. While Co. H, 137th, was moving into position, a shell killed Pvt. Owen J. McBride, an ammunition bearer.

Just before dawn July 11, more than 200 division guns and supporting Corps artillery pounded Nazi positions in a thunderous barrage. Then, at 0600, infantrymen stormed "over the top" of hedgerows.

The 137th rushed along the area following Highway 3 where the Germans awaited the attack on a small road leading from the highway to the Vire Canal. Dungeon-deep foxholes, connected by underground tunnels and heavily protected by mines, lined the road.

The regiment lunged forward with bayonet, grenade and point-blank fire. Green troops fought like veterans as they punched along the narrow road until reaching La Meauffe. There they ran up against Germans barricaded in houses and shops, where every building was





SANTA FE *Saves*

"LOST BATTALION"

IN early August 1944, the 35th was assigned to XX Corps of Gen. Patton's Third Army, whose armored prongs were spearing into Brittany. A large-scale Nazi counter blow at Avranches, juncture of the Cotentin and Croton Peninsulas, threatened to isolate Third Army, trapped a 30th Div. battalion beyond Mortain.

In the word of the 35th's Chief of Staff, Col. Maddrey A. Solomon, the Santa Fe was "literally flagged off the road" to fight for Mortain. Combat teams were formed on 30 minutes' notice. Scouts reported Germans dug in solidly at Barenton, Mortain and in the Mortain forest.

Combat Team 137th drove Nazis from Barenton after a sharp clash, then moved toward the forest. The division was attached to VII Corps Aug. 8 as both 134th and 320th teams aimed an attack to split the Germans east of Mortain. The 30th's "lost battalion" had to be rescued. Food and ammunition were running out.

While 2nd and 3rd Bns., 320th, pounded the crack SS Das Reich Div. back toward Mortain from the west, Maj. William G. Gillis' 1st Bn. rode 737th Bn's. tanks in the now famous thrust from the south, cut through the center of the Nazi pocket and joined 3rd Bn. in taking the high rugged Hill 317 overlooking Mortain from the east.

Capt. Homer W. Kurtz, Troy, Ill., led a five-man

as the finishing touch to the 35th's destruction of Hitler's last chance to balk the invasion.

When Third Army made its record run from the Crotton Peninsula across France, the 35th swept forward with it, protecting Army's right flank.

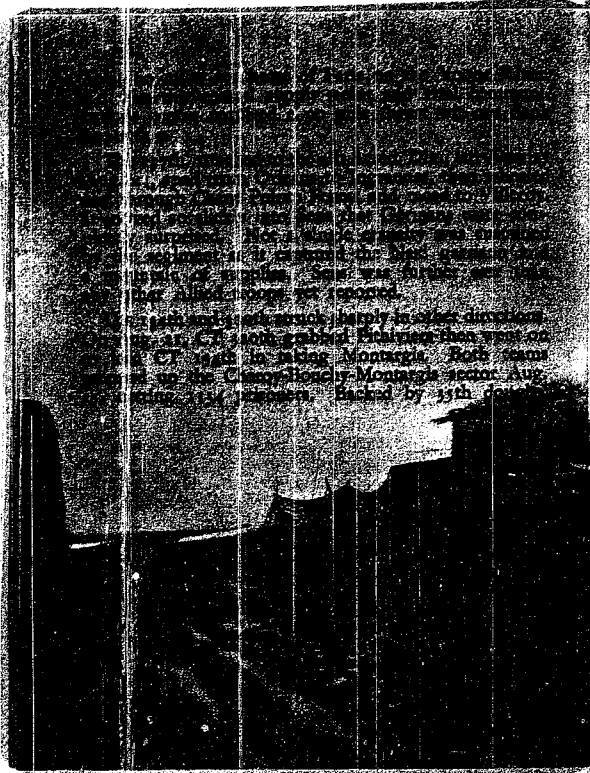
Attached to XII Corps, Aug. 14, the division moved east of Le Mans, formed combat teams.

Task Force S, teamed with Combat Command A of the 4th Armd. Div., set out for Orleans Aug. 15. Spearheaded by CC A's tanks, the task force raced down the Le Mans-Orleans highway, overwhelmed Nazis, drove them to rout. Unable to cope with the speed of the advance or replace battered guns and tanks, Germans fell back fast, left huge stores of equipment.

By Aug. 15, the team reached Coulmiers and was in striking position to whip into Orleans from the north and west the next morning. Opposition was formidable, but the task force cracked through to the railroad crossing on the Ormes Highway at the outskirts of the city and two hours later occupied the northwest zone of Orleans. That evening the City Hall was taken, and occupation was completed the next day when all enemy troops fled across the Loire River, leaving behind half-eaten stews and lukewarm baths.

CT 320th, with the 35th Recon Troop, attacking under heavy mortar and artillery fire, seized Chateaudun and occupied Cloyes Aug. 17.

Orleans, where Jeanne d'Arc gave her life for liberty, now was rid of Nazi shackles. The 35th aimed at



armored spearheads took Troyes and completed the sweep around Paris. The heart of France now was liberated.

Setting its battle sights northeast to Nancy, ancient stronghold and fifth largest city in France, the 35th went into attack Sept. 30, synchronizing its assault with Third Army's blow at Metz and the German border.

To take Nancy, the Meurthe and Moselle Rivers south of the city first had to be controlled. The 137th and 134th drove from Houdelmont and Thuillery to reach high ground west of the Moselle. Second Bn., 134th, crossed the river by bridge at night but was repelled by a strong Nazi counter blow. Survivors swam back under fire as Germans destroyed the bridge.

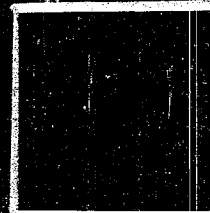
Capt. Joseph Giacobello, Mt. Union, Pa., and a small group from Co. F, 137th, crossed the river next day but were given up for lost when the remainder of the battalion was forced to abandon a crossing. Although elements of 3rd Bn. forded the river further south, they were pinned down until late afternoon. In a coordinated attack by the entire regiment, 1st and 3rd Bns. each put two companies across in assault boats manned by Co. B, 60th Engr. Bn., near Lorey and St. Mard. The attack developed in fury during the night but 1st Bn. had cleared all Nazis from the Lorey area by morning. Second Bn. crossed the river next afternoon, then worked back along the east bank to be greeted by Capt. Giacobello and his men.

Same day, 320th crossed the Moselle, attacking on the right of the 137th. Tank-riding doughs took the high ground between Saffais and Coyviller, cleared

Rosières and the Boche belt between the Moselle and the Meurthe. Frantic Germans reeled, fell back. By Sept. 16 most of the division's armor and infantry not only had crossed the Meurthe but also the Le-Sanon River and the Rhine-Marne Canal. That evening CT 140th pushed to Haraucourt and Buissoncourt. The task force chased Nazis from Mazerulles next day, cutting the main supply route and highway from the east and clearing the approaches to Nancy by swinging into Azelot, Mononcourt and St. Nicolas.

Task Force S, commanded by Gen. Sebret, with the 134th as the major unit, flowed down the Toul-Nancy highway, its south flank covered by Task Force T, under Lt. Col. Robert S. Thompson, 127th FA Bn. CO. The rough spade work had been done; Nazis were too groggy to put up a fight for Nancy. The task force rolled into the city without opposition and was greeted joyfully by grateful Frenchmen. The 134th then forced a crossing of the Meurthe, capturing high ground to the northeast.

In the thick Champenoux Forest south of the Nancy-Saarbrücken highway were stubborn Nazi concentrations which had to be erased. Second and 3rd Bns., 137th, attacked across open ground Sept. 20. But the Germans had an ideal defensive position, fought grimly and held. Two days later, impatient with delay, doughs mounted 757th Bn's tanks, rode to the edge of the woods, then jumped off to annihilate Germans in a bloody hand-to-hand fight. Nazis fled to Gremercey and the Chateau Salins Forest, another stronghold. They reorganized, counter-attacking Sept. 26 along the Chambrey-Petton-







court highway, and threatened to encircle 1st Bn. with tanks and infantry. For three days the fight see-sawed viciously, but the Nazis were thrown back with heavy losses. The 137th attacked with support from 6th Armored, cleared the Bois de Chambrey and took shell-battered Chambrey, Sept. 31.

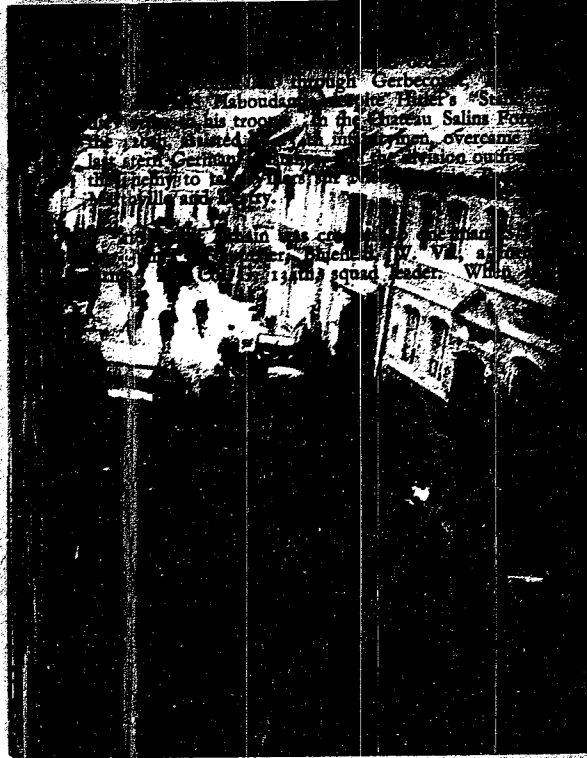
During the next week, the division pushed and prodded the Nazis without letup. It established a firm line from Ajoncourt through Fossieux to the Forêt de Gremertey down to Chambrey. The 31st now prepared for the next big push.

One-Man Army

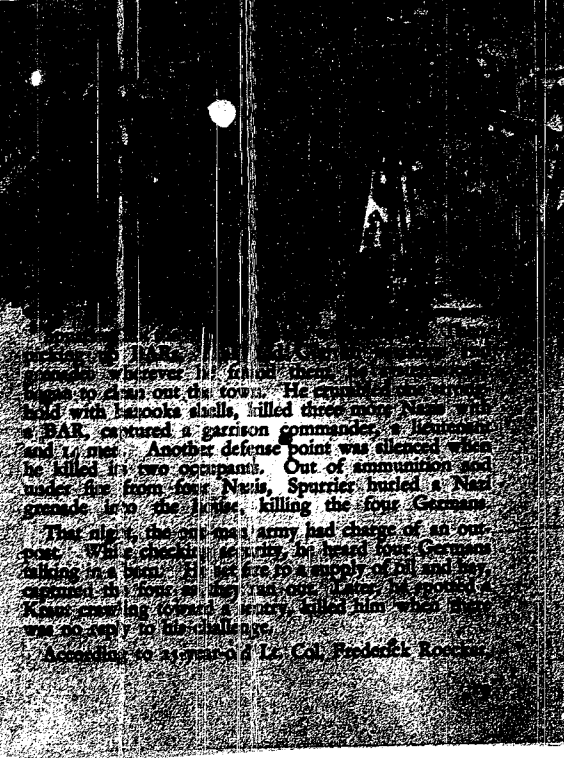
NABS ACHAIN

STRATY rain plus a surprise skip-bombing of the Seille River dam by P-47s to thwart a possible German flooding of the area had turned Lorraine into bogland. But Nov. 8, Third Army started a drive to force the Nazis out of France. The 31st slithered forward at dawn after a 70-minute artillery barrage, the 137th seizing Jallacourt and Malaucourt and reaching the high ground east of Fossieux. The 310th entered Fresnes and completed the capture the following day, then drove into the southern rim of the Chateau Salins Forest.

As the regiment seeped through the heavy woods, the remainder of the division attacked north and north-east. Coutures, Amelecourt, Orlocourt, Laneuville,



...through Gerbeco...
 ...aboudach...
 ...his troops...
 ...last night...
 ...the enemy to...
 ...Hills and Perry.



...of the...
 ...to clean out the town. He...
 ...held with...
 ...and 10 men. Another defense point was...
 ...he killed...
 ...made fire from...
 ...grenade into the... killing the four Germans.

That night the... army had charge of an out-
 post. While checking... he heard four Germans
 talking in a barn. He set fire to a supply of oil and they
 retreated. In front of the... later he spotted a
 Kraut crawling toward a sentry, killed him when there
 was no reply to his challenge.

According to a report of Lt. Col. Frederick Roeder.

his battalion CO, Spurrier killed 25 Germans, captured 20 others. In March, 1945, Sgt. Spurrier was awarded the division's first Congressional Medal of Honor.

Nazis ferociously defended their garrison and supply depot at Morhange. But the 134th closed in and squeezed the Nazis from the city Nov. 16. Racrange fell the same day. Completing its initial objective, the Santa Fe, chalking up victories near Morhange and in the Chateau Salins Forest, netted more than 1,500 prisoners and considerable enemy supplies. Morale was sky-high.

Two days later, the division renewed its attack, seizing Harprich, Berig-Vinrange, Vallerange and capturing Bermering, Bertring, Virming, Gros-Tenquin, Erstroff and Francaltroff.

At Freyhouse, Nazis twice attempted to burn out Lt. Thomas R. Travis and 20 Co. K, 137th, doughs from their shelters. The "Travis Twenty" had killed 15 Germans and captured eight others in taking the first house in town. Germans threw phosphorous grenades on the roof of a second house to set it afire. When the roof collapsed, the men moved downstairs and continued to fight until the flames seared their window positions.

The group fought its way back to the first house, prisoners in tow, and held out all night against automatic and bazooka fire. Next morning, the Yanks were told to surrender or be burned. Lt. Travis' reply was "Go to Hell!" Enraged stormtroopers set fire to the roof. The group was completely surrounded when the lieutenant spotted a tank destroyer edging into the outskirts of town.

"Watch my tracers!" he shouted. "Watch me!"

out a casualty, capturing 75 sleeping Nazis. The 320th met an enemy column which had just arrived. After a sharp fight the regiment pushed on to take Didering, Betting, Helving, Richelling, Grundviller, Ballering and Hambach by dark Dec. 5, exactly five months after the 35th's first elements landed in France. The anniversary was observed by Btry. B, 127th FA Bn., firing the first Santa Fe shell into Germany near Harweiler. Infantryman Col. Miltonberger pulled the lanyard.

FIRST *Shot* INTO NAZILAND

THE city of Saareguemines is split by the Saar River. To take the western half, the 134th drove Nazis from a maze of trenches and pillboxes between Puttelange and the town. Led by Lt. John Davis, a night patrol from Co. G crept into the city, captured an 88 intact, killed eight Germans and made such a commotion that the enemy withdrew its entire force across the river. Other elements of the regiment entered the city and established a line along the Saar for a mile and a half. Meanwhile, the 320th's veterans of "Foret de Chateau Salins" pushed seven miles through the Saareguemines Forest. By Dec. 7, the 35th held the entire west bank.

The same afternoon, Lt. Col. Botchin's 60th Engrs. planned crossing sites. At Saareguemines, a railroad



battalion, ordered to die before allowing Americans to remain on German soil. Meanwhile, engineers had assembled nearly 1000 feet of footbridge, the first built near Blies Ebering. Next morning, Cos. B and C, 134th, crossed into Habkirchen, reinforced "Club 21" and held it against attacks of tank-supported SS troops. Both companies were hit hard, but Capt. William Denny told the remaining men they were "the toehold of a bridgehead." Tired doughs clung tenaciously.

Third Bn., 320th, spurred on to Bliesbruck, where it encountered heavily mined areas and fierce German tank and automatic fire. Cos. I and L, 134th, crossed the river north of Habkirchen, then were pinned down.

THE 320th aimed its next punch at Hill 312 northwest of Bliesbruck. Using the strong-arm support of Div. Arty, 1st Bn. spanned the Blies in a surprise attack and took the hill. Third Bn. bored into a portion of the town as 634th TD Bn. and 737th Tank Bn. charged in to break the solid wall of German resistance. At Habkirchen, Gersheim, Reinheim, Neidercallbach and Bliesmengen, Nazis were annihilated in cellar strongholds. Between towns, 137th doughs battled Germans at farms converted into forts. Thirty-five stormtroopers were captured in a single "farm fort."

After a week of constant attack the division was ordered to hold and consolidate. Brave men had carved a bridgehead in Germany. Completing 162 days of almost constant front line action, the 33rd was relieved by the 87th and 44th Inf. Divs. Dec. 20-21.

THE 35th—ALWAYS READY FOR *Attack!*

Yet, an extended rest period could not materialize. Germans had launched a tremendous offensive in Belgium and Luxembourg. The Santa-Fes moved to Metz where the road pointed like an arrow to the Ardennes.

At Metz, massive church bells tolled the peaceful music of Christmas. Within the fortress city, 15th soldiers rested briefly and enjoyed a turkey dinner. Dec. 16, the division launched a swift, miracle-fast move that ended 24 hours later with troops ready to attack from front lines north of Arlon, Belgium. There, tactics of von Rundstedt's frenzied blitz had clawed as far as the Sure River.

TARGETS of III Corps strategy were relief of the beleaguered 101st Airborne surrounded at Bastogne and to crush the threat to the Arlon-Bastogne highway. Gen. Bunde expertly organized his veteran forces to make a silk-smooth assault in conjunction with the 15th Inf. Div. on the right; the 4th Armd. Div. on the left flank.

At 0800 Dec. 17, the 15th churned through knee-deep snow and attacked boldly across the Sure into the quivering belly of the Bulge. The 15th crossed to a point southwest of Tintange, reached Sure and captured the town after a hard struggle. The 16th doughs

was neutralized. Santa Fe doughs drove to the high wooded ground north of Harlange and gripped important ridges commanding the road net. The 320th captured the road center of Oubourcy, grabbed 215 prisoners, including a Nazi battalion CO and five staff officers who were surprised at a breakfast conference.

The division rounded up 1034 prisoners between Dec. 27 and Jan. 17, captured much equipment, wiped out enough Nazis to wither the salient in that sector. Mission completed, the 35th moved back to Metz Jan. 18. Left behind were the 134th, 161st FA Bn., one company of the 654 TD Bn., and a 448th AAA Bn. battery, all attached to the 6th Armd. Div. to clean out remaining Nazi pockets in the dwindling Bulge.

Stop-over at Metz again was brief. Nazis were attacking in Seventh Army's sector to the south and the 35th sped to Alsace Jan. 23 to tighten snowbound defense lines. Attached to the XV Corps, the division planted itself in the Domaniale Forest. A week later, the 35th made one of the longest infantry shifts of the war. From Alsace it traveled north, picked up the 134th and other elements and continued non-stop to Maastricht, Holland, near the German border. The leap covered nearly 300 miles.

The 35th was assigned to XVI Corps of Ninth Army which was under Lt. Gen. William H. Simpson, who commanded the Santa Fe from Oct. 1941 to spring of 1942.

THE division relieved the 155th British Brigade Feb. 6 and took over positions in Germany along the Roer River from Annendall south to Kraudorf. Ninth

partially damaged it, and allowed 35th troops to cross swiftly.

The division rolled 30 miles along the bank of the Singed Line in less than a week, captured 27 towns in two days. As the offensive sped into March, Task Force Bryan, 14th, and Task Force Murray, 17th, were loud across in the Hall of Fame. Task Force Bryan with Yanks, Poland, so quickly that amazed British sent reconnaissance over the Rhine River to check whether the city actually had been taken. The task force continued its lightning drive through Straelen, Neukerk, Sevelen, and Kamp. Its final objective was Dross, only four kilometers from the Rhine.

As the 14th cleared towns in its wake, Task Force Murray struck into Rheinberg, pointed up "B Alley" into Osenberg and drove the Nazis from the Solway Works in a battle which cost Germans many dead and wounded, two tanks, an SP gun and 63 prisoners. Reduction of Osenberg allowed adjacent units to cut off Nazi escape routes across the Rhine.

Within marching distance of the Rhine, the 14th now converged on Dross and a crossroads north of the town which was the roadhead center of the remaining Nazi holdfasts in the Ninth Army sector. Troops encountered the heaviest artillery and mortar fire they had yet experienced. Nazis resorted to every conceivable trick used in the Ardennes offensive. Some clothed themselves in American uniforms and fired on unsuspecting Yanks. Every house and building in the path of the 14th was a fort. By March 11, the 14th had captured the radio-

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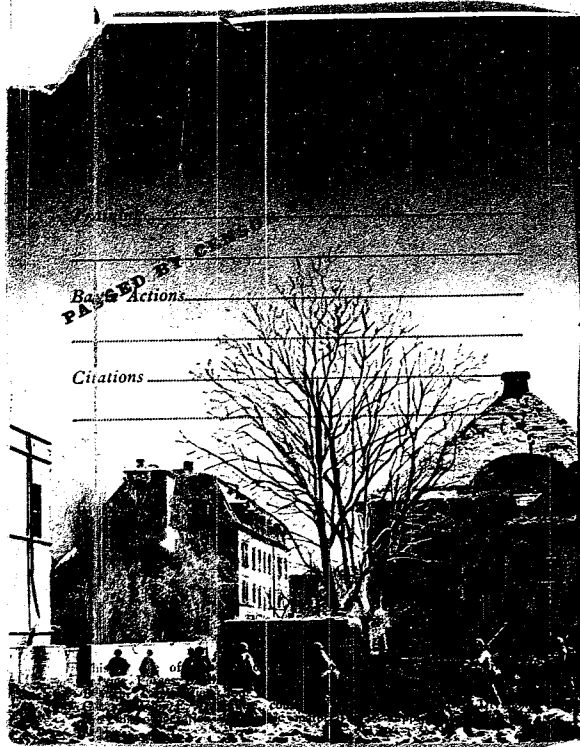
...the ...

The Team









BASED BY CASE
PASS Actions _____

Citations _____



The following pages tell very briefly the story of our division during its twenty months of combat. The heroism and courage of the individuals of the division have been recounted in the thousands of citations which they won. Greater than any individual feat, however, was the division spirit which kept it a fighting outfit from Salerno to Austria in spite of overwhelming odds, bitter weather conditions, seemingly interminable campaigns, and heavy losses.

It was a great outfit. I am proud that I had the privilege of wearing the T-Patch.

John C. Ballquist

Major General, Commanding

THE STORY OF THE *36th Infantry* DIVISION

DEC. 13, 1944: The 36th Infantry Division, fighting desperately in the Colmar Pocket, was cut off.

A fierce, fanatical enemy had smashed back the point of the Texas Division's lines, sliced hard through the flanks, cut rear communications.

First Bn., 142nd Regt., holding the left bank in Selestat, withstood vicious assaults of two Russia-hardened enemy divisions, sent them reeling back with heavy casualties.

Five hundred Germans struck at the center of the line, infiltrated back as far as the 141st Regt.'s CP in Rique-wihr. Cook, clerks, other rear echelon troops had to be called to help drive them out.

An enemy assault battalion of officer candidates slashed in from the south, cut the supply lines of the 3rd Bn., 143rd Regt. Meanwhile, German engineers slipped through to artillery positions, blew up a howitzer, mined and blocked a road to the rear. The ring around the T-Patchers was sealed.

Swiftly and efficiently the 36th fought back. At the division CP in Ribeauville, every available man guarded road blocks. Anti-tank obstacles were hastily manned. MP and engineer patrols lashed out to clear the road. The 143rd, cutting across a ridge to the rear of the infiltrating Germans, smashed strong reserves coming up for the kill.

The 36th held, slowly pushed back the stubborn Kraut thrusts, finally broke the steel trap. On Dec. 19, its lines straightened, the 36th resumed its traditional role as attacker.

The Germans hated and feared the 36th. They had met it before in the Vosges and the Riviera, at Cassino and Salerno, on the Marne in 1918. They had never been able to crush it; they never would. A proud division, the 36th boasted a history dating back to 1835 and the Alamo, to 1899 and the Rough Riders, to World War I.

Originally composed of Texas National Guardsmen, the 36th was mobilized into the Army of the United States Nov. 25, 1940, at Camp Bowie, Tex., in the fiercest ice storm in Texas' history.

In the next three years, with replacements from every state, the division maneuvered in the Carolinas and Louisiana, "invaded" Martha's Vineyard, trained at Massachusetts' Camp Edwards and Florida's Camp Blanding. It reached fighting trim in Africa, at Arzew and Rabat.

Road to Rome VIA SALERNO, CASSINO

SEPT. 9, 1943: In the pre-dawn blackness, T-Patchers tumbled off the ropes into small landing craft bobbing on Salerno Bay. They were eager and ready for their first combat mission. The threat of invasion had forced Italy's surrender, and the announcement, made just nine hours before the jump-off, had spread rapidly throughout the ships. Some men thought the invasion would be cancelled but the operation went ahead. Confident, tough, doughs hit the deck.

"It'll be a cinch," the sergeant said. "Won't last a month." He bunched his pack higher on his shoulders and counted off his squad.

Salerno was a fierce baptism of fire for the 36th. The small landing boats bucked the surf, grounded on the beach. Men charged ashore, cut paths through mine fields and barbed wire. An enemy outpost marked them with machine gun tracers. Krauts were waiting — waiting with 88s on the ridges, with tanks on the flats.

The landing barely had been accomplished when the Germans launched their first armored attack. On the right flank, Nazis barreled through to the beaches, where 3rd Bn., 141st, in a bloody man-to-tank action, threw them back. For this action, the battalion received the first Presidential Citation awarded a 36th unit.

On the left flank, two more armored spearheads slashed at the lines. One assault nearly reached the division CP. A hastily-unlimbered 700, firing point-blank into the formation, destroyed the tanks. The others fled. A self-



off a second attack. Bazooka teams held the flanks. The original landings had withstood every counter-blow the enemy could muster.

Altavilla was taken, the forces in it trapped and scattered. But the Germans regrouped and punched their way back into the town. When an attack to retake the town by seizing vital Hill 424 failed, the division pulled back its defense along the rim of the landing area.

Every man who could be spared from field ranges, typewriters and trucks was in the line Sept. 13. Striking hard far to the left, the Germans had breached the Sele-Calore corridor. U.S. paratroop units were dropped along the defense perimeter, rushed into position before the enemy could exploit his tactical advantage.

Guts, firepower and teamwork decided the battle of Salerno that day. T-Patchers sealed off the Nazis along little La Cosa creek and drove off the lumbering panzers. Covered by naval and land guns, doughs rolled the enemy back into the hills. Altavilla was retaken.

Four 36th Div. men won the Congressional Medal of Honor at Salerno. T/Sgt. Charles E. "Commando" Kelly, Pittsburgh, held off the Germans alone by throwing mortar shells when there were no more grenades. On Hill 424, Pvt. William Crawford, Pueblo, Colo., grenaded several machine gun nests, captured another machine gun position and fought the enemy until he was captured. Lt. Arnold Bjorklund, Seattle, Wash., grabbed an enemy rifle, destroyed two German

machine guns with it. T/Sgt. James Logan, Luling, Tex., single-handedly wiped out machine gun nests which held up an entire battalion, advanced alone to rout snipers which covered his unit's positions.

The 36th pulled back to establish defensive positions and detached 3rd Bn., 143rd; Btry. A, 155th FA, and the 133rd FA to join Rangers in a sea-borne end-run that seized Naples and drove the Germans several miles beyond, freeing the main Fifth Army supply port.

With large numbers of reinforcements, the 36th went back into the lines Nov. 13, in the lower Liri Valley just north of Venafro, to begin one of the most grueling and vicious campaigns in the history of modern warfare.

Wrote Maj. Gen. Fred L. Walker, Division CG at the close of the campaign:

While subject to hardships that have never before been exceeded by any troops anywhere, you drove the enemy from well-organized and stoutly-defended positions in the hill masses of Camino and Sammucro, from Maggiore, Mount Rotundo, and San Pietro. You punished him severely.

Hardships: knee-deep and wheel-deep mud, foxhole-engulfing mud; insufficient winter equipment; rain and snow, cold and sleet. Howitzer trails that couldn't be dug in. One round fired and the guns buried themselves. Trucks that bogged down in soupy ground. Machine gun barrels that froze. Shoes that wore out in one day on sharp rocks jutting up through the snow.



To understand that winter's campaign, picture a wine bottle. The cork was at Cassino, and the lower Liri Valley was the long neck reaching up to the stopper. The 36th had to advance along the sides of the neck—the mountains and craggy masses.

Mount Maggiore came first. It was named "Million Dollar Mountain" after the pulverizing barrage which devastated its slopes.

In a masterly-coordinated night attack, the 143rd grabbed strategic Mount Longo.

Massed artillery was turned on San Pietro, key to the German mountain-cast line. The first infantry assaults had been beaten back; tanks trying to bull their way up the narrow roads had been annihilated. San Pietro was nearly blown off the earth; it seemed that no German could survive the bombardment. Yet, Germans lay under its stunning blows, hid in the rubble, stood in the infantry that followed on the heels of the barrage. Only a few doughs had come down.

from Longo and Hill 120; on the flanks were the Nazis finally eliminated.

The Italian village of San Pietro—population 1400—had been liberated. There was one American casualty for every freed Italian.

The Rapido River, skirting Cassino, was the retaining band on the cork. Fifth Army elected to crack it by a frontal assault in an S-bend opposite Cassino. If ever the Germans were prepared to meet an attack, it was then and there. The 141st on the right and 143rd on the left drove gallantly into the strongest defenses of the line, were thrown reeling back. Squads reformed from companies led by sergeants and launched another violent attack. Enemy mines were too thick; observation too good; machine guns firing almost from the rear, from the flanks and chopping down tank assault elements. Attack after attack was stopped, and the



S Sgt. Thomas McCall, Viedersburgh, Ind., led one attempted crossing of the Rapido. The young squad leader got across, formed his small group to make a determined stand in an untenable position. Although taken prisoner, he later was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor.

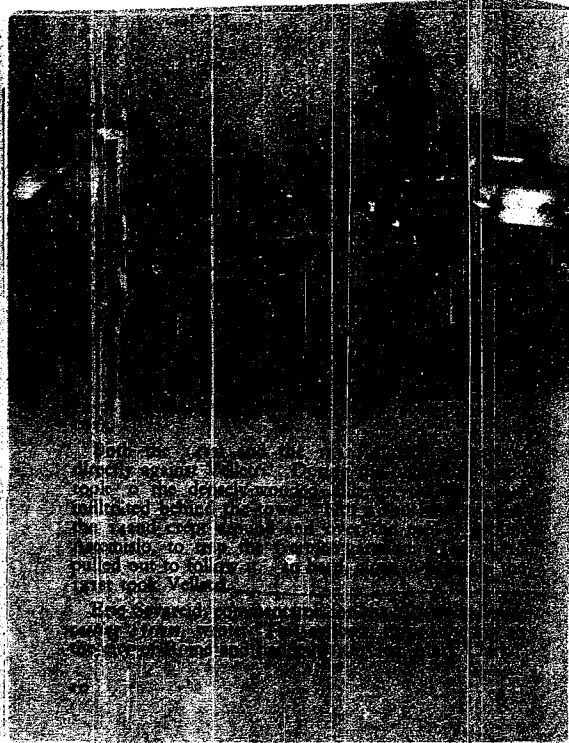
The 36th remained in the line for a month after the futile smashes into the Rapido River positions. The men dug into the cold, barren slopes of Mount Cairo, behind Cassino, and Castellone Ridge which fringed it.

The freezing winter seemed an eternity. Doughs advanced a yard one day, five yards another, paying in blood for every gain. Mule trains were the sole source of supply in those hills, and where the mules wouldn't go, frightened by the incessant nebelwerfer and artillery fire, the men had to carry rations, ammunition and wire, and packboard it through the mine fields themselves.

He was six feet four; he carried four blankets, two bulging medical pouches and anything else he could sling on his back. He carried one end of a litter himself, and wore out three relays at the other end. Sgt. Joe Vcdwarka, "The Terrible Czech," evacuated a wounded man off Cairo in three hours one night. It took the mule trains eight.

One by one, division units trickled off the lines for rest and retraining in late February through April.

Brig. Gen. Walter W. Hess' Div Arty went into action in early May on the Garigliano River, and on May 25,



The 36th entered Rome.

The division followed this major success by rampaging 240 miles up the Italian peninsula, slamming aside German defenders at Magliano and Grossetto in short, sharp, decisive battles. Through the heavy Italian dust, tank-riding doughs pressed forward, artillery close behind. The Germans threw out rear guards, mostly short, puzzled Mongollans.

Magliano was different; first-rate enemy troops were encountered. S/Sgt. Homer Wise, Baton Rouge, La., earned the division's sixth Congressional Medal of Honor at Magliano, smashing a strong enemy position with tommy gun, rifle, grenades, and BAR, leaping on a tank to clear a jammed machine gun and rake the Germans from his exposed position.

When the 36th finally came off the lines near Piombino, June 29, after spearheading the entire Fifth Army, *Associated Press*' Ken Dixon, wrote: "It seemed right and just that the 36th would be the men to chalk up these achievements."

The division withdrew to Paestum, and on the same beaches that had witnessed their battle baptism, the troops paraded in farewell to Gen. Walker. Maj. Gen. John E. Dahlquist took command as the 36th prepared for its second invasion.

Eleven months of Italian warfare had changed the Texas Division. The ranks of National Guardsmen

slowly had been thinned. Of 11,000 casualties, 2000 were Texans; at Salerno alone: 1900 casualties, 750 from Texas.

But the 36th had made the Germans pay heavily, too—6000 prisoners in addition to enormous numbers killed and wounded.

T-Patch Blitz OPENS RHONE VALLEY

"I know what you want," said the mayor of Draguinan. He led the colonel to a beautiful, walled garden, quiet and shaded. "You want a cemetery. All the people of my town have contributed to give you this land. It is the gift of the people of Draguinan to their liberators."

AUG. 15, 1944, 0800 hours: First Bn., 141st, scrambled ashore on Blue Beach. Unlike Salerno, the way had been paved by overwhelming naval and aerial bombardment. As a covering rocket barrage lifted, 2nd and 3rd Bns. landed on Green Beach, near the tiny village of Dramont.

For rooting the Germans from the slopes overlooking the beaches, 1st Bn., 141st, was awarded a Presidential Citation.

Following the 141st onto Green Beach, the 143rd swung left toward St. Raphael and Red Beach, to trap

the defenders there as the 142nd came in for a landing. But when naval demolition boats failed to knock out the obstacles lining Red Beach, the 142nd put about and landed on Green Beach. All guns, men, trucks, TDs, and tons of supplies were landed on shallow Green Beach, barely 250 yards wide.

By D plus 1, however, supplies could flow steadily: Prejus was taken by the 142nd; St. Raphael by the 143rd. Meanwhile, the 141st pounded east toward Cannes and blocked German reinforcements advancing west. All three regiments battled savagely but skillful tactics, based on hard training and aggressiveness, kept casualty lists low.

The only serious setback was the sinking of an ammu-



nitron and artillery-laden LST by a single low-flying plane in the channel off Green Beach.

On D plus 3, *T-Patch*, the division newspaper, printed a banner head: **FIRST YANKEE RAG ON RIVIERA!** With landings consolidated along the entire Seventh Army front, the 36th began a lightning blitz that blew sky-high German plans for defense or even an orderly withdrawal.

A task force consisting of 3rd Bn., 143rd, elements of the 636th TD Bn., 753rd Tank Bn., and 111th Medics, along with ordnance and reconnaissance units, pounded north towards Lyon while the remainder of the division sprang forward to Draguinan, Digne and Sisteron. The 143rd RCT, 636th TDs, 36th Cav. Recon Troop, and other Texas units under Brig. Gen. Robert I. Stack, Asst. CG, spearheaded the drive up the Route Napoleon.

In one day, the division extended its lines 100 miles, raced to trap the German Nineteenth Army before the Nazis could reach the Moselle River. Grenoble was captured by the 143rd.

The dash up the Rhone River Valley to cut off the enemy retreat was a dangerous gamble. Provisional trucking units were formed to augment the overworked 36th QM Co. Heavily reinforced by automatic weapons from the 443rd AAA Bn., the long columns slashed deeper and deeper, disrupting the enemy's rear areas as the jaws of the trap snapped shut.

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During the eight days of battle, Div Arty poured in more than 75,000 rounds as the outnumbered infantrymen slugged it out with German tanks and foot troops.

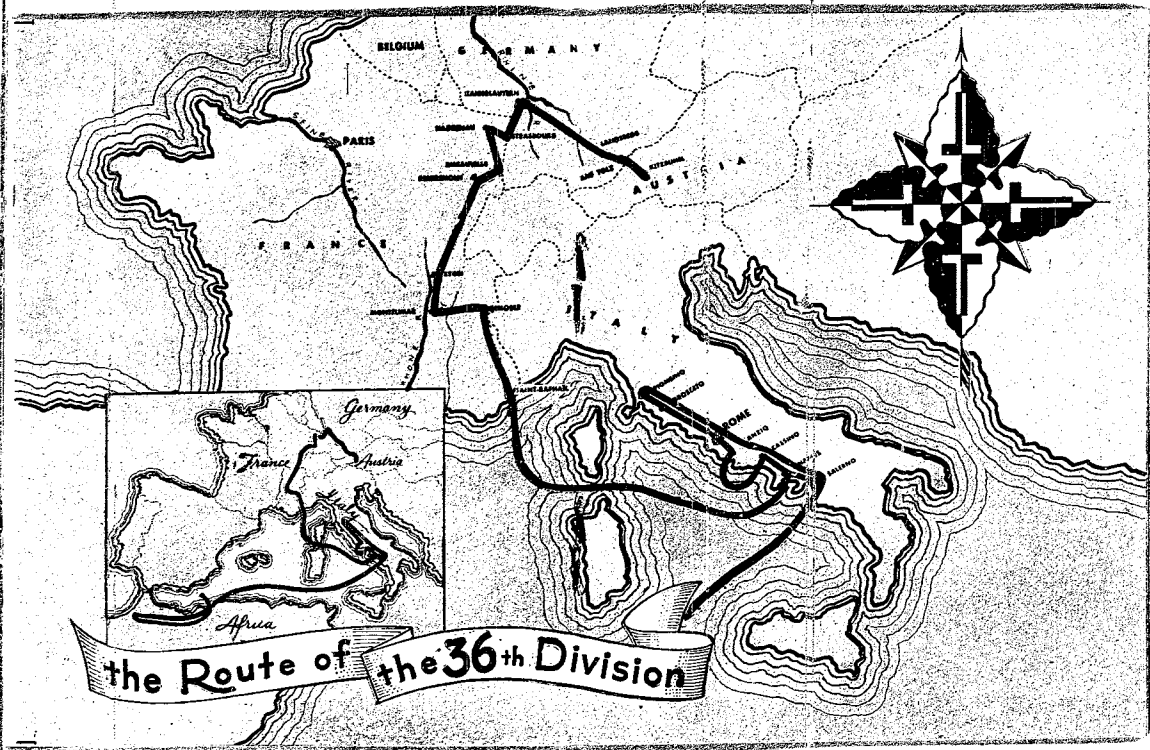
At one point, enemy forces hammered close enough to menace the artillery. Doughs of the 142nd barely beat them back. Rushed into the line as infantry, engineers held the panzers at one road block; cavalry recon troops manned another. Fighting was furious and desperate along the entire perimeter as the trapped enemy fought to free himself. The 36th's grip was firm.

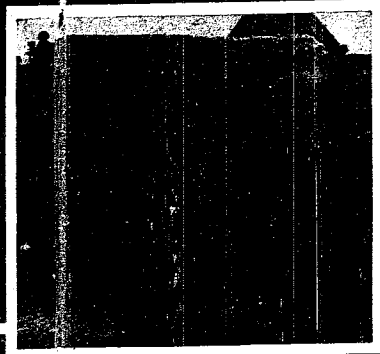
Lt. Stephen Gregg, Bayonne, N. J., charged the enemy, firing his machine gun from the hip to cover a medic. Krauts infiltrated behind him, attempting to seize some mortars. Gregg lobbed grenades, swung the mortars on other Krauts. He was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor, seventh in the 36th, second for Co. L, 143rd.

It was a bitter last-ditch struggle. Enemy casualties: 11,000, including Maj. Gen. Richter, 198th Div. CO; 2100 vehicles, 1500 horses, all artillery, including six "Anzio Annies"—huge railroad guns. Yet, the stubborn Krauts fought to the end. On the last day of battle, they mounted a last furious assault, quit when it was beaten down.

The battle of Montelimar over, the Rhone River Valley lay open. The 36th resumed its chase of the Germans, catching and destroying remnants before they could cross the Moselle River.







Heroes BLAST PATH THROUGH RUGGED VOSGES

LYON by-passed... Doubs River spanned by the 11th Engineers, a 124-foot timber trestle bridge, built under fire in 24 hours. Louhans, Arbois and Besancon captured... Vesoul taken after a delaying force was decimated... the push to the Moselle continued. Resistance grew stiffer. At Remiremont, where lay the Germans' sole escape route over the last intact bridge across the Moselle, the 142nd had a fight on its hands. While it traded blows with a stubborn enemy, the 141st swept up on its left with the orders: "Cross the Moselle."

To reach the Moselle, the 141st needed a guide. None could be found until the Mayor of Raon appeared. He was 90, but he had the agility of a youth and he knew the way through the trackless forest. Alone, he made a reconnaissance, returned to lead the 141st to the fords.

Remembering the bloody Rapido, T-Patchers employed another tactic. While 2nd Bn. staged a diversionary action in the river's elbow opposite Eloyes, 1st and 3rd Bns. forded the swirling waters a mile upstream.

The enemy was not long fooled. Germans were in favorable positions and boasted they would maintain defenses all winter behind their water barrier. Their

massed mortar crossed at the bridge and the
doughs were still in the air. The
slope was steep and the bridge was
machine gunners, ammunition carriers, worked
across, fighting the turbulent river with German
the river opened up. The 142nd followed, drove
into Eloyes, while the 1st swung toward Remiremont.
The 142nd had fought through most of the town when
resistance suddenly crumbled. German soldiers
across the river, blowing the remaining bridge.

But even with the entire 16th concentrated on the

crossings, the situation was precarious. Only one tem-
porary bridge spanned the Moselle, and seasonal rains
had turned the river into a raging flood. Winter was
not far away, and equipment was the same as that used
in Italy during the past summer. Supporting units
were just catching up with the swift advance.

The division swung north, exposing its flank to the
river, marshalling its greatest strength at the point to
ward off counter-attacks, which increased in fury. At
Tendon, the 142nd's frontal assaults in a valley were
thrown back; the regiment went into the hills on either
side to wage a battle that raged more than two weeks.

Casualties were high: 1700 in September; nearly
2000 in October. Despite the lack of reserves and rest,
the rugged and resourceful 16th had cracked the Moselle
River Line and spearheaded Seventh Army to the Vos-
ges Mountains.

There was no break. The terrain grew rougher, the
winter colder. The rainy season was as bad if not
worse than the Italian winter.

Every yard of the Vosges had to be wrenched from
the obstinate enemy; in the Vosges he pressed every
advantage. Difficult patrol warfare by T-Patchers re-
placed frontal assaults.

Hillside forests were studded with mines and burp
guns. Fierce clashes, firefights lasted for hours when
patrols met. German observers slipped forward, drew

out American patrols, then vanished into thickets while Nazi artillery poured down deadly tree bursts on unprotected Yanks.

Capture of Bruyeres marked the end of the first phase of the Vosges campaign. A systematic, ruthless housewrecking battle all but destroyed this vital road center, which fell after a harrowing fight through factories and barracks. Doughs next dashed into Belmont, advanced wearily up the slopes of the Foret Domaniale.

"Do you know what I kept thinking?" said Pvt. William Murphy, Chicago. "I kept thinking how wonderful it would be back on my old job as street-car conductor. And I kept thinking that now I finally had something to tell my three kids when they grow up. Y'see, I've never been in combat before. I'm a replacement. This was my first time. But I'll tell you something funny. I wasn't scared, honest I wasn't."

"Send us food, ammunition, medical supplies, and radio batteries," came the weak voice. Caught in an advance, 1st Bn., 141st, was surrounded. For five days doughs nursed scanty stocks they had carried until P-47s dropped provisions and supplies. There was little water; both Germans and Yanks fought for the nearest water hole. Some supplies were shot by base ejection shells. For six days and nights the "Lost Battalion" threw back successive attacks, conserving ammunition, killing Germans, five or more for every one of its own casualties. The men fought on, not knowing when relief would come. Then, one day...

A bearded, grimy 141st sergeant stared down the hill waiting for another German attack. He saw something stir in the bushes, then come closer. He brought up his rifle, watched and waited as the helmeted figure crept closer. Then he dropped his rifle, yelled like a crazy man, jumped from his fox hole and raced down the slope, dancing and crying. There, he met Pfc Matt Sakomuko, 442nd Japanese American RCT. "Say," Sakomuko asked, "do you need any cigarettes?"

After an advance of a half mile in a week-long battle, Sakomuko's 442nd had lifted the leg.



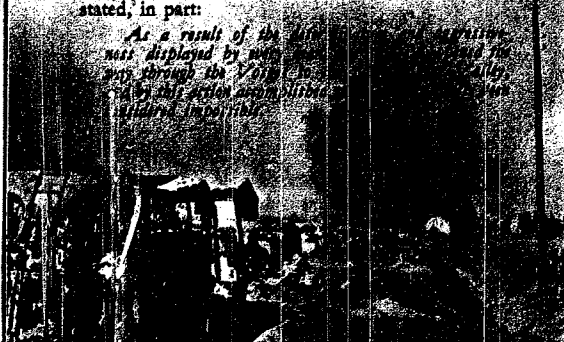
BATTLE-TRIED VETERANS

DO THE *Impossible*

It was a wearing, grueling war in the hills and forests of the Vosges. Then, in a sudden burst of power, the division drove across the Corcieux Plain, across the earth scorched by retreating Germans, the burnt remains of St. Leonard and once-thriving St. Die, across the Meurthe River, and into the Ste. Marie Pass.

The Ste. Marie Pass never before had been breached by an army. Highly defensible and heavily-defended, the Pass was taken, however, in a swift move for which the 3rd Bn., 142nd, received a Presidential Citation. It stated, in part:

*As a result of the daring and aggressive
mass displayed by units of the 36th Division
which drove through the Vosges Mountains
and by this action accomplished the
impossible.*



Lt. Gen. Alexander M. Patch, Seventh Army Commander, commending the 36th, wrote:

In the Vosges foothills, you dislodged a desperate and skillful foe from positions which gave him every natural advantage. You fought for weeks... to pave the way for a breakthrough. Despite unfavorable weather, terrain and savage resistance, you pushed on with tenacious courage.

Maj. Gen. Edward H. Brooks, VI Corps Commander, wrote:

I want to express my appreciation for the part played by the 36th Division in clearing the enemy from his strong positions in the Vosges Mountains... This was all done without fuss or feathers, and in a manner worthy of the splendid Americans under your command.

Tired by its long, arduous campaign, the 36th still had punch enough to seize Ste. Marie and St. Croix, burst into the Alsace Plain, capture the important towns of Ribeauville and Selestat.

Then came the unexpected climax. Germans switched suddenly from the defensive to strike with all their might at both flanks of the Texans' line. On that bloody Dec. 13, the 36th was surrounded.

No single day of the fall and winter battles was without lengthy casualty lists. In the Vosges and southern Alsatian campaigns, there were more than 6000 casualties.



For the fighting in the Colmar Pocket, both 1st Bn., 142nd, in Selestat, and 2nd Bn., 141st, which held the fer right flank of the line, were awarded Presidential Citations.

Gen. de Monsabert of the French II Corps, under which the 36th fought, paid this tribute to the division:

It was for me the signal honor of my career to have under my orders such companions in arms. I shall never forget it.

For this campaign, three additional T-Patchers received the Congressional Medal of Honor: Pfc Gerald S. Gordon, St. Joseph, Mo., a medic who tore off his arm band to help stem the advancing enemy near Ribeauville; Sgt. Ellis Weicht, Everett, Pa., who was killed at

St. Hippolyte while cleaning out enemy machine gun nests and smashing powerful cannon emplacements; T/Sgt. Charles Coolidge, Signal Mountain, Tenn., who dueled two enemy tanks with a carbine and advanced alone to blast a German attack which threatened to turn his battalion's flank.

The division was withdrawn to a less active sector near Strasbourg, and after Christmas, prepared to pull back for a rest near Sarrebourg. That rest never materialized. Before all units were off the line, came an urgent summons: German troops were attacking to the north, threatened to turn a flank. The 141st RCT hastily was committed; shortly after, the entire 36th went back into action.

The three regiments alternated. While one engaged the enemy, another dug field emplacements along a switch line in case Kraufs should penetrate too deeply; the third was in reserve, prepared to repulse German columns which had driven across the Rhine and established a sizeable bridgehead just north of Strasbourg. The only reserve force in Seventh Army, the 36th was prepared for immediate action in any sector.

While the 141st was in the line, the 142nd covered an exchange of sectors to the south. Then came the call: Germans had rolled over the plains to threaten Strasbourg and the important rail center of Saverne. The 143rd raced to the defense of VI Corps' right flank.

The 143rd, supported by the 753rd Tank Bn. and 636th TDs, had just jockeyed into position when the 10th

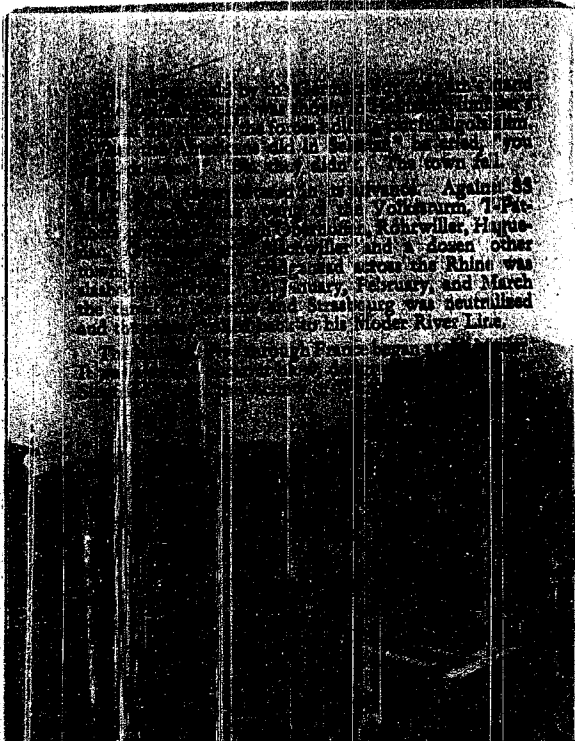
Panzer Div. slammed squarely into the center of the defensive arc, extending from Weyersheim to Bischwiller. Twenty-five enemy tanks, supported by large numbers of infantry, were hurled back. Gunners of two platoons from the 636th, outnumbered five to one, knocked out seven tanks. Fighting along a brush line, doughs captured their 20,000th Kraut in France.

The northern Alsatian campaign which began with three regiments spread out in VI, XXI and XV Corps, produced some of the toughest battles in the 36th's history. Rohrwiller fell to 1st Bn., 143rd, in an overnight attack across flooded land, which some veterans boasted was the best-timed, best-conceived, best-coordinated action they'd ever fought.

Bloody Haguenau, defended by the 141st, was an unforgettable scene. The German Moder River defense line coiled through the town. On one side were Texans, and on the other, Germans. A single platoon grabbed 11 houses on the German bank, held them.

"We held three houses, then eight houses, then three houses," said S/Sgt. Roy Chiatovich, Bishop, Calif. "It was crazy. We held half of one house, the Krauts the other half. It was crazy, mad, drunk. No sober Germans ever fought like that."

But in Oberhoffen, taken by the 142nd after several days' pitched battle with King Tiger tanks and SS troopers, T-Patchers faced the most savage fighting of their careers. So strongly was Oberhoffen defended



into Germany to the Rhine River. The knockout force had everything: special engineer bridge trains, searchlights for night fighting, a tremendous mass of supporting artillery. After the slugging, unrewarding grind of previous months of defensive warfare, spirited T-Patches were buoyed up for the swift march into Germany.

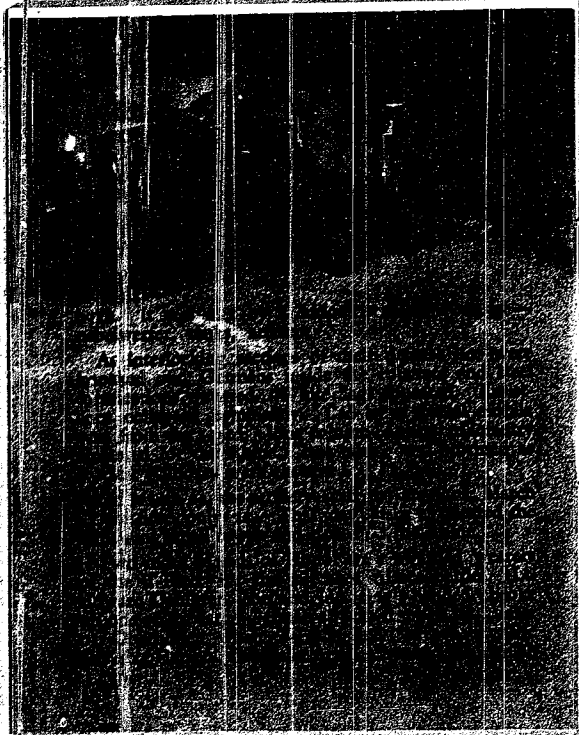
On the left flank, a strong column of the 143rd broke away after crossing the Moder, smashed straight ahead. On the far right, a 141st task force crossed the river in Haguenau to enlarge its painfully-held bridgehead. In the center, the 142nd plowed through half-mile deep mine fields and battered across the river.

Co. K, 143rd, won a Presidential Citation for cleaning out the first important German stronghold of Bitschoffen astride the only first-rate supply route for the 36th.

Resistance crumbled, and long, armored columns pressed rapidly on Wissembourg, a Siegfried Line outpost and last large French town in German hands.

Two regiments marched straight into the Line's dragon's teeth defenses and breached the pillbox ranks in canny, slow fighting. Special demolition squads advanced from pillbox to pillbox. While automatic weapons and riflemen gave covering fire, a dough crept up to one pillbox and destroyed it with a beehive charge placed in a gun port or ventilation slot.

Enemy fire was heavy as the 142nd stormed the high ground north of Schweigen. The 141st pushed ahead nearly 1000 yards, probing for cavities in the dragon's



enemy mine field on the Moder River, had his feet blown off, but continued to fight off the Germans while his platoon flanked its positions.

Victory — AND A

NEW JOB FOR THE 36th

In the days that followed, the 36th enjoyed its first rest since Italy, policing in the vicinity of Kaiserslautern. While Seventh Army thundered into Bavaria, the 36th stood guard in the Saar.

Nine days before the war's end, the 36th went to bat for its last ticks against the Nazis, near Kunzelsau, in the so-called National Redoubt.

From Kunzelsau to Kitzbuhel in Austria's Tyrol, the division fought rear guards. Fiercest resistance came at Bad Tölz, where Field Marshal Gerd von Rundstedt, German military master-brain, was captured.

There were other, equally important prisoners: Air Marshal Sperle, foremost exponent of dive bombing and director of the London blitz; Air Marshal Ritter von Greim, successor to Goering as chief of the Luftwaffe; Reichminister Frank, Poland's No. 1 war criminal; Max Amann, third member of the Nazi party and publisher of *Mein Kampf*; Leni Reifenstahl, directress of the German film industry; Admiral Horthy, regent of Hungary; Air Marshal Hermann Goering. Liberated



by the 36th were French Generals Weygand and Gamelin, Premiers Daladier and Reynaud.

With war's end in the ETO came a new assignment for the 36th—policing of defeated Germany.

After 400 days of combat, five campaigns in Italy and France, Germany and Austria, two major amphibious operations, the men of the 36th Infantry Division—the Texas Division—could look back with pride on a skein of victories woven with hardship and heroism. They could point to a record of 173,806 enemy captured, 12 Congressional Medals of Honor, six Presidential Citations, 12 Distinguished Service Plaques, a host of other commendations, medals and awards. But they could not forget that their casualty list was third highest in the ETO: 27,343, of whom 3974 were killed, 19,032 wounded, and 4317 missing in action.

The 36th was ready for its new job in the Army of Occupation. Its veterans knew what Germany had done to the world. They would do their part to see that it wouldn't happen again.



Photo: U. S. Signal Corps. LIFE

Salerno Was a Roughhouse, So 36th Took Care of Itself

Salerno was a roughhouse, and the 36th Infantry Division took care of it itself. The division's actions during the Salerno landings were a testament to its fighting spirit and self-reliance. The soldiers of the 36th fought with a fierce determination, overcoming the enemy's defenses and securing the beachhead. Their actions were a source of pride for the entire division and a shining example of military valor.

One-Man Army Tells How He Won Covered Medal Of Honor

Private [Name] of the 36th Infantry Division has won the Medal of Honor for his heroic actions during the Salerno landings. He acted as a one-man army, fighting off a group of enemy soldiers on his own. His bravery and selflessness in the face of certain death have earned him the highest military honor. The Medal of Honor is a testament to his exceptional courage and sacrifice.

Luling Soldier Was 1-Man Army in Salerno Fight

A soldier from Luling, Texas, was recognized as a one-man army during the Salerno landings. His actions were a source of inspiration for his fellow soldiers. He fought with a fierce determination, overcoming the enemy's defenses and securing the beachhead. His actions were a testament to his fighting spirit and self-reliance.

36th Division Private Wins Honor Medal

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28th Infantry Division Monuments to 36th's Courage

Monuments to the courage of the 36th Infantry Division are being erected in the 28th Infantry Division's area. These monuments will serve as a lasting reminder of the division's heroic actions during the Salerno landings. They will stand as a testament to the division's fighting spirit and self-reliance.

VETERANS OF ANZIO IN RIVIERA SMASH

Veterans of the Anzio landings are participating in a smash in the Riviera. The event is a testament to the division's fighting spirit and self-reliance. The veterans are proud of their actions during the Salerno landings and are looking forward to the future.

With the AEF in Italy The Durable Old 36th Sets Bunch of Brand New Records for War's Books

The 36th Infantry Division has set a bunch of brand new records for war's books. The division's actions during the Salerno landings were a testament to its fighting spirit and self-reliance. The records are a source of pride for the entire division and a shining example of military valor.

Immortal 36th Endured Great Hardships Says Its Commander

The commander of the 36th Infantry Division says the division endured great hardships during the Salerno landings. The division's actions were a testament to its fighting spirit and self-reliance. The commander is proud of the division's achievements and is looking forward to the future.

General Dahlquist's Estimate Of "Fighting 36th" Division

General Dahlquist's estimate of the "Fighting 36th" Division is a testament to its fighting spirit and self-reliance. The division's actions during the Salerno landings were a source of inspiration for the entire army. The general is proud of the division's achievements and is looking forward to the future.

28th Infantry Division

Veterans of Anzio

General Dahlquist





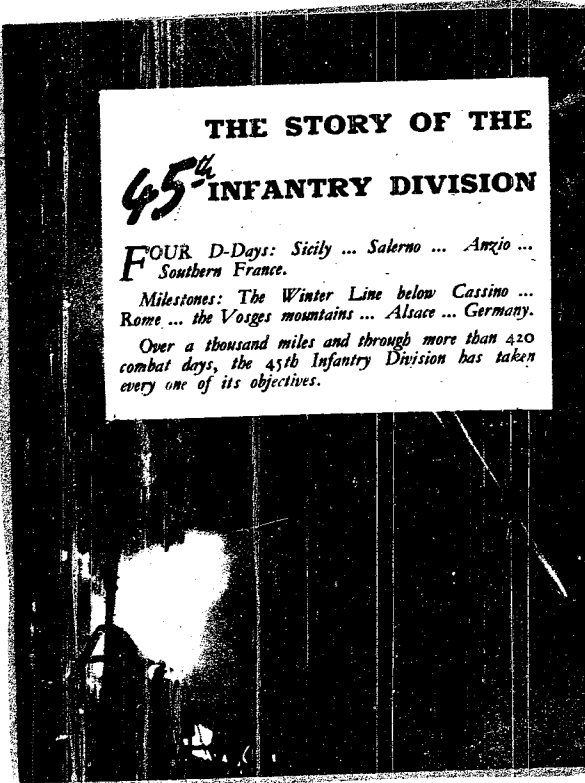
★ THE battle record of the 45th Division under my predecessors, Major General W. W. Eagles and Major General Troy H. Middleton, is well known and has brought honor and credit to the division. ★ Although my association with the division is but recent, I was close to the 45th and saw it in action during the long months in the mountains of Italy and on the beachhead at Anzio. I know its achievements and its capabilities. ★

★ We stand, today, ready to go on with the task of destroying the German defense. That task has demanded, and will continue to demand, the utmost effort by all of us. Your record of achievement under great hardships promises successful accomplishment of the task before us. It will not be easy, but I am confident that the division will continue to meet the demands placed upon it. ★

★ I wish to congratulate the men of the 45th Division and attached units. Without the wholehearted cooperation and effort you have given to the long hard fight, the division's successes would not have been possible. ★

Robert T. Frederick

Major General, Commanding



THE STORY OF THE
45th INFANTRY DIVISION

FOUR D-Days: Sicily ... Salerno ... Anzio ...
Southern France.

*Milestones: The Winter Line below Cassino ...
Rome ... the Vosges mountains ... Alsace ... Germany.*

*Over a thousand miles and through more than 420
combat days, the 45th Infantry Division has taken
every one of its objectives.*

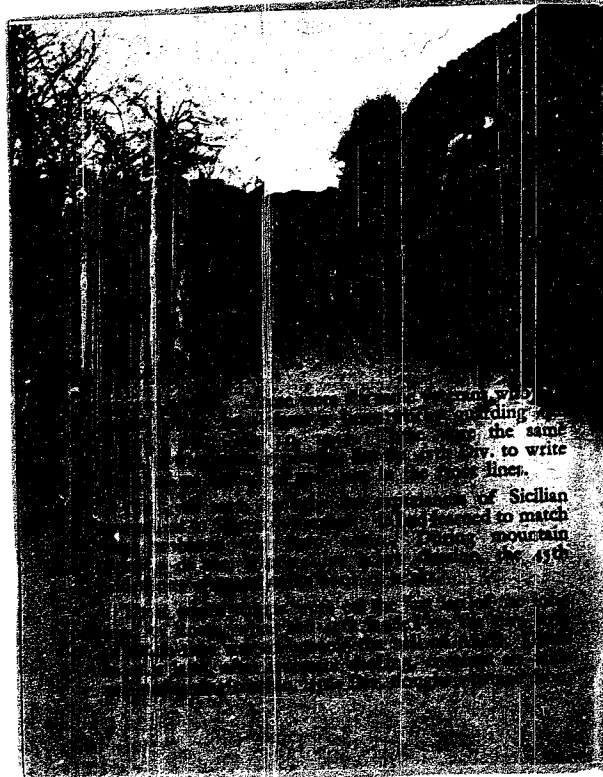
DEC. 15, 1944: Exactly four months after the veteran 45th Div. splashed onto the beaches of Southern France to make its fourth D-Day landing—a weary, mud-stained infantryman hit the dirt behind a stone marker designating the borderline between France and Germany. The marker was dated 1826, but the GI, using it for a shield as enemy machine gun fire raked the area, didn't pay much attention to that. When the fire lifted momentarily, he rolled off to one side, picked himself up and plodded forward—into Germany.

"You are going to make an amphibious landing in Europe. Your job and that of the few divisions who will land with you is to keep the enemy busy and occupied while we prepare a huge American Army."

The Thunderbird veteran wasn't pounding an iron fist against Der Fuehrer's door by accident. This marked the beginning of the showdown campaign. To reach the German border, the 45th Div. had gained one objective after another—punched through the Vosges mountains, spearheaded the first army ever to penetrate the thickly wooded Alsatian terrain. It had plunged, shoved up the 600-mile Rhone valley and captured cities like Epinal, Grenoble, Bourg.

Before this came the sweating out of another—the fourth—amphibious operation. In the background hovered a series of daring plans and an equal number of successful operations.

Italy was the jumping-off point for the landing on the Riviera. When the first landing craft scraped the beach near Ste. Maxime, men who had learned the hard way



their foxholes to smash the iron ring which crack German troops had clamped on them from January to May, 1944. They moved forward in daylight for the first time since the initial landing.

Capture of Rome, the liberation of the first great European capital, marked the beginning of the payoff in Fortress Europe. During the twelve months the 45th had carried out its mission of "keeping the Germans occupied," the invasion of western Europe was being planned. Normandy landings came on the heels of the fall of Rome. For the 45th Div., which knew what ship-to-shore landings were like, the Normandy operation represented lessons learned in the bloody laboratories that were Sicily, Salerno, Anzio.

Immediately after Allied forces smashed into Normandy, the veteran 45th resumed an old routine. It rehearsed amphibious landings.

The fourth D-Day broke at 0800 Aug. 15, 1944. Thunderbird troops, now part of the Seventh Army, struck along Riviera beaches. Once again, the 45th Div. faced north—faced towards Berlin.

BULLETIN

Pearl Harbor, Dec. 7—(AP)—Huge Japanese naval and air armada attacked here two hours ago.

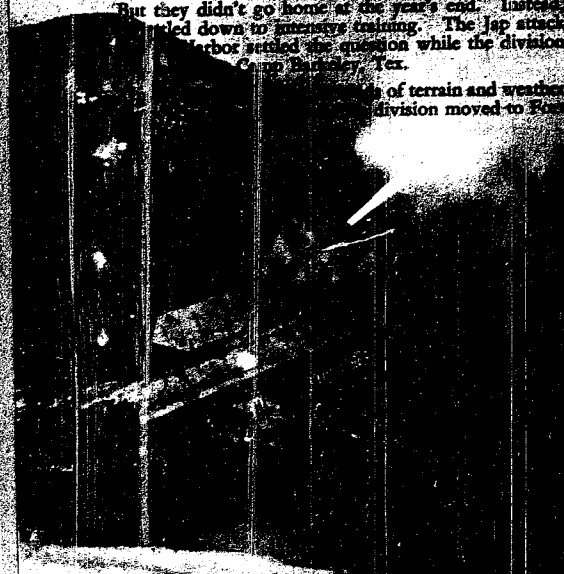
BACK in the days before Pearl Harbor, the newspapers told of Russian advances in Finland. The hit tune then was "Tangerine." Cincinnati had just taken the World Series with a 2 to 1 win over Detroit. In Europe,

gathering clouds of war darkened. But many Americans still said it couldn't happen.

On Sept. 16, 1941, the 45th Div. was reactivated, and the boys at Fort Sill, Okla., during ten minute breaks said, "We'll be back in a year."

But they didn't go home at the year's end. Instead, they settled down to intensive training. The Jap attack on Pearl Harbor settled the question while the division was at Camp Bartley, Tex.

Because of terrain and weather conditions, the division moved to Fort



...the training was conducted at Fort Sill, Okla., and amphibious training at Camp Cod, Mass., and Norfolk, Va.

This was the shake-down period when tactics were learned and physical endurance built up.

Thunder and finally was ready for flight. The formidable convoy of 45th Div. troops and equipment sailed June 5, 1943, from Norfolk for Oran, North Africa.

In the Arzew area of French Morocco, the first Arabs and their overloaded burros were encountered. Here the final polish was rubbed into amphibious operations. While doing his attempt to figure the Moroccan monetary system, final plans were made for the assault landing on Sicily.

SICILY



"BATTLE ON THEIR HANDS, BLISTERS ON THEIR FEET"

The sergeant looked at his watch. "Ten minutes to go." He wiped his forehead, then gripped the gunwales of the landing craft.

D-DAY, June 10, the Thunderbird Division swarmed the beach near Scoglitti, Sicily. It was the first major amphibious landing on the European continent.

Sicily was the scene of sharp and stubborn fighting, of long marches. Doughs had a battle on their hands, blisters on their feet.

"Man! I don't mind fightin' these Krauts, but it shore is rough tryin' to catch up with 'em!"

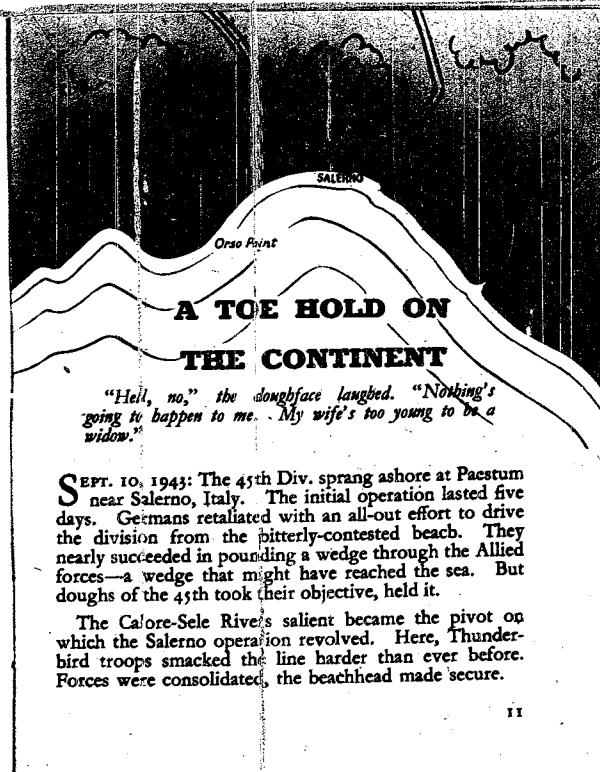
THE throttle was pulled back as the 45th rolled ahead. Caltanissetta, Sicily's largest inland city and a Fascist stronghold, fell before the sweep of Thunderbird troops. A large arsenal and considerable rolling stock were captured. North of San Caterina, a hard fight developed, but the 45th slashed along to reach the Palermo-Messina highway. Large enemy equipment stores were seized, including Sicily's largest oil and gasoline depots.

Now, the division swung east on the coast road, clearing and mopping up resistance until it reached the Motta Hill mass. This was the sector, near San Stefano, which the world was to know as "Bloody Ridge."

"Bloody Ridge" was the toughest fight of the Sicilian campaign. It was a series of five peaks with slopes so steep that equipment and supplies had to be manhandled. The enemy was dug-in with artillery and mortars on each peak. Infantry inched up the first slope, only to come under artillery fire from the next peak. The story was the same for each succeeding peak.

After four days of fighting up steep ridges under complete enemy observation, "Bloody Ridge" finally was taken. The 45th Div. had proved itself. Thunderbird pulled back to rest near Trabis—a well deserved rest after 22 days of sustained combat.

Sicily had been occupied. The first major step on the long rough road to Rome had been achieved. The next station change was Salerno.



A TOE HOLD ON THE CONTINENT

"Hell, no," the doughface laughed. "Nothing's going to happen to me. My wife's too young to be a widow."

SEP. 10, 1943: The 45th Div. sprang ashore at Paestum near Salerno, Italy. The initial operation lasted five days. Germans retaliated with an all-out effort to drive the division from the bitterly-contested beach. They nearly succeeded in pounding a wedge through the Allied forces—a wedge that might have reached the sea. But doughs of the 45th took their objective, held it.

The Calore-Sele River's salient became the pivot on which the Salerno operation revolved. Here, Thunderbird troops smacked the line harder than ever before. Forces were consolidated, the beachhead made secure.



Division
Thunderbird was
as major strength against the
defense, then turned inland. Staff
was dispatched near Olivetto and Quaglietta
where, months before, Germans had constructed strong
defenses. But the 45th breached this line and rolled
over Eboli and S. Angelo di Lombardi. Again the direc-
tion of the advance swerved as the Thunderbird moved
on Benevento, to the northeast.

It is 209 miles by air from the beaches of Salerno to
Venafro, but much longer as the infantry moves—most
of these miles were up and down.

As in Sicily, the Germans exercised great skill in
mine-laying and demolition. Nearly every bridge in this



rugged, mountainous country was blown and every
possible bypass heavily mined. Division engineer units
worked heroically to expedite the forward movement.

The fight the Germans put up at Guardia was their
strongest bid after Salerno. Here, a steep hill separated
the division from the town proper and the drive up the
hill's slope had to be made in the face of devastating fire.
During this action, Germans first used their multi-
barreled mortar. Someone labeled it "Screaming Mec-
mie." Men dug deeper. The battle for Guardia lasted
most of the day and that night. The following morning
the town had been taken and the penetrating troops
shoved ahead, adding Telesse and Piedimonte d'Alife to
the captured list.

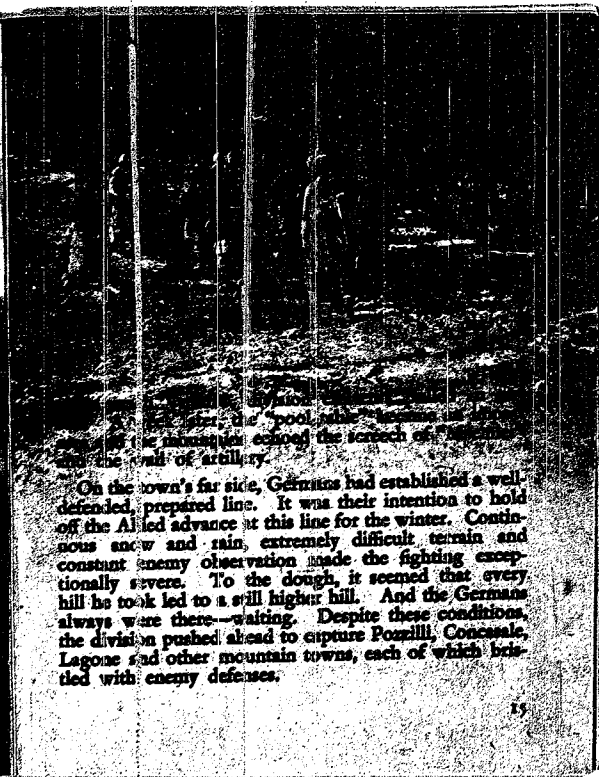
Suddenly, the terrain flattened out and veteran doughs saw the broad, flat "pool table" that was the valley of the Volturno River. The swift-moving stream, swollen by continuous rains, snaked diagonally across their path. To reach the enemy staring down at Thunderbird from dug-in positions in the hills ahead, it was necessary to cross the three-mile stretch of valley and to throw a bridgehead across the river.

BATTLE OF MEN, MUD AND MULES

AFTER 46 days of fighting following the Salerno landing, leading elements crossed the Volturno, Nov. 3, 1943, and swung north. There was another range ahead and these mountains were among the most rugged in Italy. The cold, penetrating rain splattered unceasingly. There began the battle of "Men, Mud and Mules."

Immediate objective after bridging the Volturno was Venafro. Here again, extremely bitter fighting preceded the taking of the town. With the tortuous mountain trails too steep and winding for jeeps to pass, supply problems became acute.

Mule teams were formed. Supply personnel became "mule skimmers." Food, ammunition—everything the troops needed for living and fighting—were hauled up the mountainside on the backs of these mules. Where mules couldn't go, men struggled with pack-boards to "get the stuff up there." Mule skimmers operated at night because nearly all the treacherous and steep trails were under observation by day.



After the "pool table" became an obstacle, the doughs echoed the screech of "Mules" and the wail of artillery.

On the town's far side, Germans had established a well-defended, prepared line. It was their intention to hold off the Allied advance at this line for the winter. Continuous snow and rain, extremely difficult terrain and constant enemy observation made the fighting exceptionally severe. To the dough, it seemed that every hill he took led to a still higher hill. And the Germans always were there—waiting. Despite these conditions, the division pushed ahead to capture Pozzilli, Concesale, Lagoanello and other mountain towns, each of which bristled with enemy defenses.

Germans had been using Acquafondale, Vitucoso and Lagone for supply points. Bitter fighting occurred daily in the exchange of ridges, hills and mountains surrounding these towns. These were days when Thunderbird troops built "foxholes" from mountain boulders because the ground was too rocky and solid for digging. These were the days when the wounded were evacuated by mule-back. The area was tugged, "Purple Heart Alley."

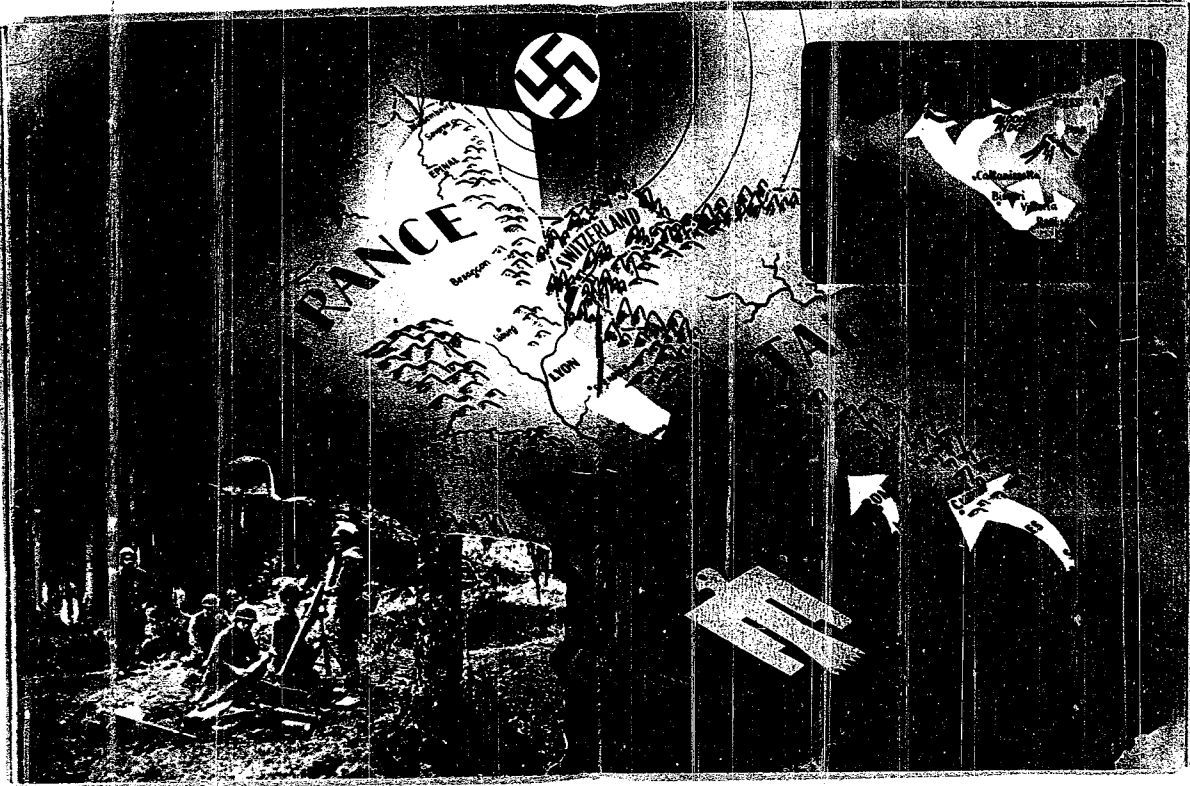
Division Artillery came into its own and hammered the enemy without letup. Combat patrols and raiding parties added to the enemy's punishment. Slowly, but steadily, the Nazis were being shoved back. Thunderbird GIs fought their way up Mt. Molino, took Hills 960, 1040, 1115, all along the road to S. Elia, which lies north of Cassino.

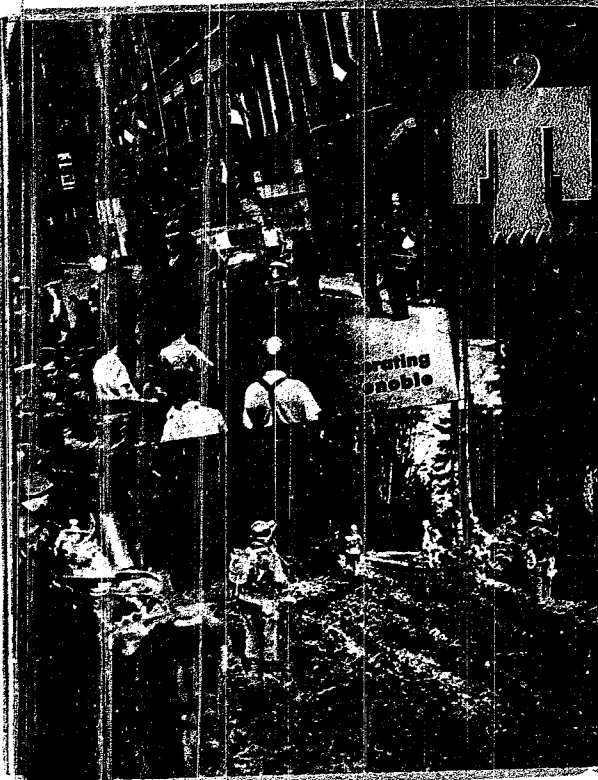
Early November sped along to Thanksgiving Day. Thanksgiving gave way to Christmas. Gifts got up to mountain foxholes by muleback. The low, occasional humming of "Silent Night" often was shattered by the rushing "whoosh" of the Purple Heart Blues.

After 119 combat days, the 45th was relieved Jan. 9, 1944. There was another job to do.

Routine: the sergeant gripped his hand grenade and crawled toward the German machine gun nest. He pulled the pin, lobbed the grenade and crawled away as his buddy sprayed the nest with his Tommygun. The "day's work" had started at nightfall for the patrols.







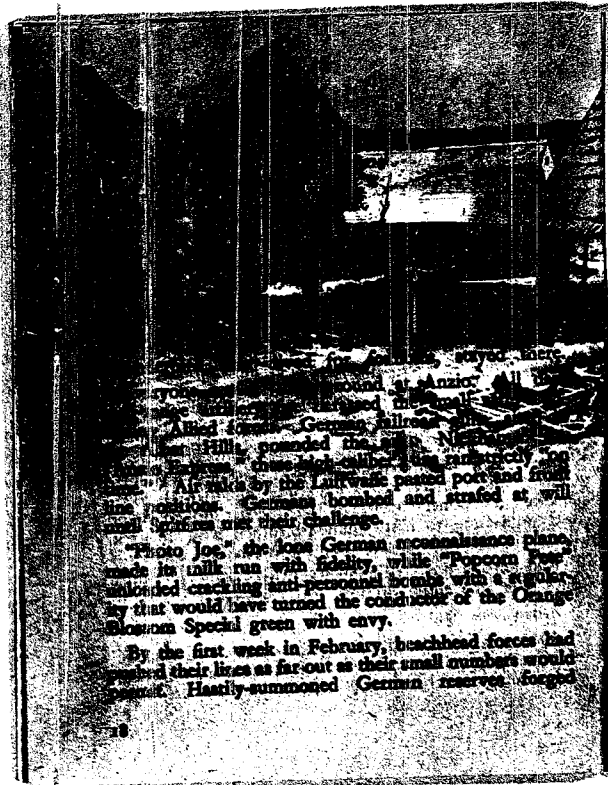
BACKS TO THE SEA, FACING ROME

THE silence of the mist-shrouded morning was misleading. It gave no warning of the hell that was to be Anzio. The lonely stretch of Italian coast looked gaunt and uninviting to first Thunderbirdmen who hit the beach on the heels of the 3rd—the Marne Division.

Elements of the 45th landed at Anzio Jan. 22. Nine days later, the entire division was committed.

Anzio was flat.

It was open to complete daytime observation because the German perimeter defense was built along the hills surrounding the beachhead. Nazis perched on these



A good time around the beachhead. This was to be the scene of four months of sunbaked battles.

Then, the Nazi worm turned.

Attempting to hurl Allied beachhead forces into the sea, the enemy unleashed three major counter-attacks. From Feb. 16 to 19, the 45th Div. sector was subjected to wave after wave of German infantry and tanks that poured down the Albano-Anzio road like steam through a whistle. Elements identified as six different divisions were thrown into the battle.

Much of this fighting was in the "Factory" (Carroceto) area. Casualties were heavy. Thunderbird artillery armor and tankdestroyer units accomplished results in helping stave off the threat.

...tenaciously-to each... each back.

...stayed here... at Anzio. All... the... Allied... German... Hills... "Photo Joe"... "Popcorn Pete"... Air... German... strafed at will... challenge.

"Photo Joe," the lone German reconnaissance plane, made its milk run with fidelity, while "Popcorn Pete" unloaded crackling anti-personnel bombs with a stinger by that would have turned the conductor of the Orange Blossom Special green with envy.

By the first week in February, beachhead forces had pushed their lines as far out as their small numbers would permit. Hastily-summoned German reserves forged

When one small group of doughs was forced to withdraw, another group pushed forward in a different sector. It was during this period that the 2nd Battalion and Co. I, 157th Infantry, and Co. G, 180th Infantry, performed so gallantly that they were cited later by the President.

"FLIES ATTACK THE FLYPAPER"

GERMAN field orders, it was discovered later, had called for complete annihilation of the division by Feb. 18. Although the 45th did suffer heavy losses, the enemy was forced to halt his attacks. Lines became stabilized again. At the point of their deepest penetration, crack German troops gained only three kilometers. They suffered extremely heavy losses both in men and materiel to get that far.

The flies had attacked the flypaper.

From that dramatic week until the final push that broke the German line, the condition was one of extreme tension for all. For the first time in its experience, the 45th was denied movement. Patrols were daily routines. Probing, searching for enemy weak points and raids by combat patrols became habitual. During March, enemy artillery and planes monotonously harassed forward and rear area installations.

In April, artillery ammunition dumps mushroomed as preparations were made for the Big Push.

After 76 days of continuous combat, Thunderbird was pulled back to what ironically was called a rest area. When GIs wrote home, they hardly recommended



...of the lines just two weeks. Time was devoted to anti-tank training.

The first three weeks in May were marked by numerous coordinated artillery shoots in which Division Artillery and its supporting battalions participated. For a week before the final attack began, every gun on the beachhead, from 37mm anti-tank guns to the giant 240s, fired into enemy positions each morning just before daylight. The number of artillery pieces alone totalled more than 800.

On May 23, after artillery and the Air Corps had combined to saturate the area, the division jumped off—destination: Rome.



The artillery preparation, aggressive and determined infantry action and the coordinated effort of the support arms and services, forced the steel trap to bend, snap open.

For the next 12 days, Thunderbird pressure on the retreating Germans never lagged. The breakthrough became a rout. Three days later, when beachhead troops contacted doughs from the Cassino front, Nazis were falling back in slap-happy disorganization.

With the division grinding on relentlessly and air support combing their rearward flight, the Germans paid dearly for the casualties they had inflicted. Stubborn rear-guard forces resisted fanatically until finally mopped up.

The 45th had been in Anzio foxholes for a long, frustrat-

ing period. Here, at last, was the chance to move. Infantrymen sighed relief at being able to stand up again during daylight hours. Artillery displaced time and again as it leap-frogged in support of attacking riflemen. Corioli, Campoleone fell before the advance; Hill K-9 was captured.

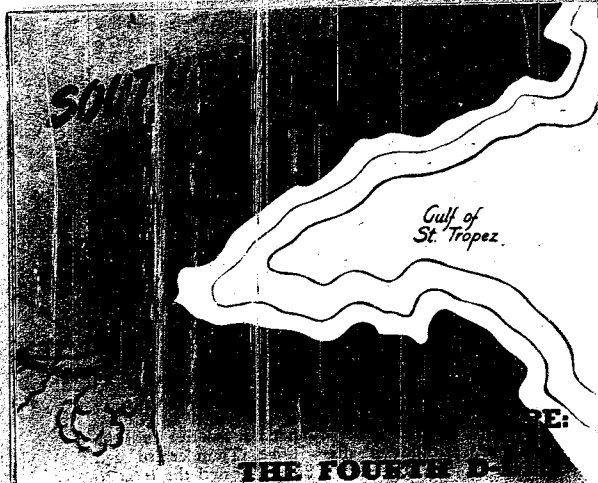
The step-by-step progress of the division gradually blended into the overall picture of relentless pressure on the retreating enemy. No one who experienced those twelve days will ever forget the bitter battles, the gallantry displayed or the physical weariness brought on by the unceasing attack.

For the 45th Div., the push on Rome climaxed the long Italian siege that began back in Sicily. On June 6, after reaching the historic hills on the far side, the division was placed in reserve and, a few days later, sent to Battipaglia for a well-deserved rest.

From the time the division landed at Salerno until the day it was withdrawn after Rome, Thunderbird had been in the line 249 days. Sicily boosted the total to 271 combat days.

At Battipaglia, after several days of sheer luxury, the division moved again, this time to southern Italy for additional training in amphibious landings. The hot, semi-tropical July sun beat down on assault craft, flame-throwers, barbed-wire obstacles and demolitions as Thunderbird troops prepared.

At H-Hour on D-Day (0800 Aug. 15, 1944), under ideal weather conditions, the 45th Div. landed near St. Maxime on the Riviera, Southern France.



THE FOURTH D

"Hell," said the sergeant. "I've been on more boats than half the guys in the Navy."

BEACH landings near Ste. Maxime were made precisely as scheduled. Initial objectives were taken against comparatively light opposition and, once again, (this time with VI Corps, Seventh Army) the Thunderbird Division pointed to Berlin.

With scattered enemy resistance pockets rocked by

the Naval Western Task Force's pre-invasion shelling and bombs dropped by XII TAC, 49th troops moved rapidly, consolidating and exploiting gains made by the surprise landing.

Riviera operations demonstrated the results of experience. Careful planning made the fourth Thunderbird amphibious landing a complete success. Men, supplies and equipment moved ashore with precision. Once ashore and inland, the 49th, for the first time in its year of combat experience, encountered friendly and cooperative civilians.

In 17 days, the division had branched out from the beachhead to Bourg. The going still was no walkaway. German troops fought fierce delaying actions, dispersing Thunderbird from the Rhone valley nearly to the Italian border.

As each resistance pocket was cleared, regiments spurred ahead until delayed by more strongpoints. Movement was so rapid and so far ahead of schedule it was difficult to provide advancing troops with maps and gasoline. Prodigious work by supply personnel, which used every available vehicle to haul materiel, kept troops supplied.

The division raced ahead to exert constant pressure on retreating Germans. Everyone strove to maintain this lightning pace. Drivers, who couldn't take time out for proper vehicle maintenance, somehow contrived to keep trucks loaded and rolling through dust, rain, mud, blackout.



communications personnel laid hundreds of wire daily so contact could be kept with various In rifle companies, kitchens moved three or four a day. Supplies, ammunition and rations were delivered with the same success that front line troops experienced.

The confused enemy never was allowed to Pressure applied by a determined Thunderbird the 17 days resulted in the capture of 4781 prisoners, representing the battered remnants of eight German divisions, 12 Luftwaffe units and 20 miscellaneous battalions.

The rapid pace limited the use of artillery, but observation planes, launched from flight decks on converted LSTs, worked overtime. During the drive to Bonn the artillery expended only 6648 rounds of ammunition, which would have represented only a fair day at Anzio.

Sharp battles, however, raged during this period. The 45th Div. long will remember the resistance met and heroism displayed by its troops at Frejus, Vidauban, Le Luc, Barjols, Cotignac, Le Puy, Grenoble, Briancon, Loyettes and Meximeux.

The Team lived in farmhouse cellars, haystacks, holes in the ground. Thunderbird learned that "de l'eau chaude" meant "hot water" and that it was customary to shake hands continually with the French. Men heard personal accounts of the treatment French civilians had received from the Gestapo. They saw concentration camps, memories of which never can be forgotten.

This was the race up the Rhone valley. After Bourg came Baume les Dames where the division crossed the Doubs River to attack the city.

By Sept. 21, 36 days after the landing, Thunderbird moved toward Epinal, the strongly-defended, strategically important city straddling the Moselle River. The river was approximately 80 feet wide. All bridges had been destroyed. Road blocks covered every entrance to the city.

Despite determined enemy resistance and the fast-flowing current, elements of the division crossed the river and assaulted the city. After three days of preliminary operations, during which strong enemy artillery concentrations pounded away incessantly, Thunderbird forced a crossing of the Moselle at three different points.

A few days after the advance from Epinal, a sign post was erected on the improvised main bridge. Arrows pointing in both directions read: "St. Tropez, 430 miles; Berlin, 430 miles."



The division then entered the heavily wooded Vosges foothills. Movement was met with resistance stronger and better organized. Increased enemy activity and heavily-mined fields hampered operations. Ramberville, St. Gorgon, Grandvillers, Fremifontaine, Brouvelieures were scenes of house-to-house fighting.

In the Vosges woods, troops engaged in rugged fighting. It was November and winter had come again. Cold and rain retarded forward movement. Density of the forests made observation difficult and sharp hand-to-hand clashes became routine.

Still the division pressed on, taking St. Benoit, crossing the Meurthe River and liberating Houseras, after clearing multiple road blocks challenging the advance.

After 86 days in which the entire division had been committed, the 45th moved to a rest area south of Epinal. Some units remained active, attached to other elements of Seventh Army. Many Thunderbird troops enjoyed Thanksgiving dinner in the rest area. After two weeks the 45th was ready for action once more.

Now it was pushing forward into the Vosges mountains, probing for a weak spot that would open Army's advance through the mountain passes. Following in the wake of an adjacent French unit, the 45th moved to Baccarat, Sarrebourg and through the Saverne Gap on to Gougenheim.

The 179th Infantry, temporarily attached to the French 2nd D.B. (Armored), cracked forts north of Mutzig, one of the heavily-defended anchors of the Maginot Line.

As they moved through Alsace, clearing the enemy from Obermodern, Utterwiller, Kindwiller and Bitschhoffe, 45th doughs found Alsations speaking less French and more German. Attacking enemy strongpoints at Zinswiller, the Thunderbird forced Germans to pull out of Pfaffenoffen, Ueberach and La Walck.

Towns succumbing to the 45th's advance were many, but the story was fundamentally the same: stiff opposition, road blocks, mines, artillery, mud, cold. Always, the forward movement continued.

EARLY December, the division crossed the Zintzel River and captured Niederbronn-les-bains after slugging it out with a stubborn enemy. Now the 45th was in Maginot country. Defenses that once were erected to



Maplewood
 45th Infantry
 advance

By Dec. 13, the 45th Infantry had captured the town of Maginot defensive line, the Lembach-Wissembach

... they had ... with crossed ... Germany ...

successful advances toward the fortress of G...
 The contribution of every man of the division was
 essential to the accomplishment.

There were those, however, who proudly wear
 honors their government had bestowed—honors
 which every man had a part.

By the close of 1944, men of the 45th had been awarded
 these decorations and citations:

- Congressional Medal of Honor 1
- Oak Leaf Cluster for Distinguished Service Cross 1
- Distinguished Service Cross 61
- Distinguished Service Medal 2
- Legion of Merit 51
- Oak Leaf Cluster to Silver Star 1
- Silver Star 1

... citations ...

CITATIONS

- 1st Infantry Regiment
- 2nd Infantry Regiment
- 3rd Infantry Regiment

AWARDS

... awards ...









of United States Army Forces in the European theatre.

PERSONAL danger, exhausting labor and great physical discomfort wrote this story of the 66th Division's part in World War II. Your valor and gallantry under your combat leader, General Kramer, have well earned the applause of all mankind who looked to you for help in an hour of great peril to the world.



Alfred Kramer
Major General, Commanding

THE STORY OF THE
66th Infantry Division

DEC. 24, 1944: Drumming motors pushed the SS Leopoldville, a Belgian passenger ship converted into a transport, through the choppy waters of the English Channel. In the troop compartment, 2500 men of the 262nd and 264th Regts.,

BZAP p.v.

1. World war, 1939-1945 - Regt. Inf. - U.S. - ...
2. ... Campaigns - Western ...
1:AH 66th Infantry Division, relaxed and dozed after the evening meal.

Wearied by the previous night's ride from Dorchester to Southampton in crowded English trains, the men stretched out on tables and the floor or curled up in improvised hammocks. They thought of America 3000 miles away where next day families, sweethearts and friends would be opening presents, drinking toasts and attending church; where Christmas celebrations would be subdued because of the German successes in the Ardennes. The coast of England was not out of sight. Ahead lay France — and combat.

There had been a brief alert earlier in the afternoon and many had gone on deck to watch the escorting destroyers dump depth charges. This was nothing new to the men. A month ago, they had heard the muted rumble of exploding "ash cans" on their trans-Atlantic crossing to Great Britain. The alert was over by 1700 and most of the men drifted back to their quarters.

At 1755 the *Leopoldville* shuddered and rocked from a thunderous explosion. A torpedo launched by a German U-boat blasted the craft on the starboard side, ripped a gaping hole below the

water line. As water poured in, the ship slowly began to list.

In the troop compartments where the projectile struck, steel beams snapped, tables and equipment spewed into the air, wood and debris crashed down on the helpless men. Ladders leading to the well deck were twisted into a mass of steel and splintered wood, leaving only two steel ladders for evacuating survivors.

Half-dazed men, some with torn clothing and bruised bodies, groped for the exit. They helped each other get to their feet, extricated others from the wreckage.

Soldiers rose to heroic heights one minute, died



the next. But there was no panic even in the wrecked and rapidly-flooding compartment in which the explosion occurred. Many severely wounded were rescued from the shambles and brought to aid men by their comrades. Most of the troops filed calmly to the deck.

Pfc Walter E. Blunt, Ursa, Ill., narrowly escaped drowning. He worked his way to a hole in the compartment wall but couldn't crawl through completely. He related: "The waves were coming faster and the water was rising. I held my head as high as I could and each time a wave came I held my breath. I was getting very weak. Suddenly, I heard a voice above me saying, 'Give me your hand, son.' It was my CO. After about three more waves, I was through the hole and on my feet."

"The men were magnificent," said Sgt. Albert J. Montagna, Agawam, Mass., who also was caught in the flooded compartment. "They were calm and very orderly. Not one of them pushed or yelled. Capt. Hal F. Crain, Pasadena, Calif., whose troops were in the compartment below us, started down. I followed. I noticed someone floating in the hold. He kept trying to catch hold of the ladder but couldn't. I reached down and pulled him up."

The same courageous calm and immediate obe-

dience to orders prevailed throughout the ship. Now the lights of Cherbourg harbor, curiously undimmed by wartime restrictions, could be seen. Lifeboats loaded with injured men were lowered. Several small boats were overturned before getting safely in the water and away from the floundering ship.

Pfc Henry R. Brassor, South Vernon, Mass., Co. I, 262nd, lowered the last lifeboat almost single-handed. In it were 30 of his buddies. Refusing a place himself, he lowered the boat with the supporting ropes and saw it rowed to safety before he was washed off the deck. In the water he broke loose from one desperate soldier, then helped him to a rescue tug where both were pulled to safety. For his display of strength and courage, Brassor was awarded the Bronze Star.

Meanwhile, a British destroyer came alongside. Long toelines were made fast to hold the two ships together and the transfer of stretcher cases and wounded soldiers began. Medical men worked swiftly to move the injured. When the majority had been transferred to the destroyer, some of the uninjured jumped or swung over on ropes and nets. The destroyer pulled away with a capacity load and a Coast Guard cutter took her place. Battered severely by the choppy sea, the cutter had



at 2035 when the big ship lurched heavily to starboard and sank swiftly, stern first.

S/Sgt. Luther A. Dennis, Durham, N. C., and S/Sgt. Robert L. Paulick, Dayton, Ohio, both of Co. E, 264th, were cutting loose their fourth life raft when the ship went down. They had made numerous trips into the hold to obtain clothes and blankets for injured and wet comrades and taught many others how to jump safely to the destroyer.

In the swirling waters caused by the ship's sinking bobbed scores of soldiers, clinging to bits of wreckage. They climbed onto the loosened life rafts or swam with life preservers and floating duffel bags for support. Those that were able to withstand the icy waters were picked up by tugs, Coast Guard cutters and PT boats that came to the rescue.

It was a sad Christmas Day when the two regiments reassembled at Cherbourg. Men searched vainly for missing buddies. Reports of deaths trickled in. From nearby hospitals came word of men suffering from injuries, cold and exposure. As stragglers arrived at the armory which served as a temporary barracks, they were given a rousing welcome. It took days of painstaking search and identification of bodies washed up on the Nor-

mandy beaches before the final casualty list was compiled.

Several months later the U.S. Navy announced that the *Leopoldville* sinking produced the second largest loss of life from a troopship disaster in the entire European war. The toll: 14 officers, including two battalion commanders, and 784 enlisted men dead or missing.

The Soldiers Medal and Bronze Star Medal were awarded to officers and enlisted men for bravery displayed aboard the doomed ship. Two days later, assigned to fight approximately 60,000 Nazis in the pockets along the French Atlantic coast, the Black Panther Division, the 66th, entered combat with grim determination—its claws sharpened to avenge those who died in the English Channel.

PANTHERMEN

Claw

STUBBORN ENEMY

THE three regiments of the 66th Division, commanded by Maj. Gen. H. F. Kramer, Lincoln, Nebr., had sailed from New York harbor on Nov. 15, 1944, aboard the Army transport *George Washington* and the Navy transport *George O. Squier*. They

had disembarked at Southampton and Plymouth, England, Nov. 20 and were billeted in various towns in the vicinity of Exeter, Dorset.

The balance of the division left the States Dec. 1, arriving in England on the *Brittania* 12 days later. The time in England was spent filling shortages in equipment and preparing for combat. Vigorous last minute training was conducted for small units.

This was the final step in one and one-half years of training. Activated at Camp Blanding, Fla.,



April 15, 1943, with a cadre of officers and NCOs from the 89th Inf. Div., the Black Panthers spent three months in individual training before moving to Camp Joseph T. Robinson, Ark., for unit exercises. There, under XXI Corps, Fourth Army, it completed division problems, including rigorous "D Series," and transferred approximately 5000 fully-trained men to ports of embarkation as overseas reinforcements.

Camp Rucker, Ala., was the next stop for the division. There, personnel underwent further specialized training including small-unit infantry-tank tactics. Seven thousand reinforcements from ASTP training centers, Army Air Forces and the AAA Command were brought into the division. Sailing orders came in October and the division moved to Camp Shanks and Camp Hamilton outside New York City to prepare for embarkation.

When the *Leopoldville* was torpedoed, another transport, *HMS Cheshire*, with other foot elements of the division aboard, was ordered to make port. It lay over in the safety of Cherbourg harbor that night. Troops disembarked Christmas Day with motor elements which shipped from Weymouth aboard LSTs. While units that had been aboard the lost vessel reassembled, the rest of the division

went to St. Jacques airport near Rennes. Plans were made to relieve the 94th Inf. Div. in the St. Nazaire and Lorient sectors on the west coast of France.

These two pockets of German resistance, left far behind in the wake of the retreating Germans, had a nuisance value out of proportion to the small bit of territory held. They consisted of die-hard fanatical troops who were determined to fight to the last ditch. At St. Nazaire there were 35,000 Nazis who had slipped into the port instead of making a run for it when the Allies began their chase across France. The impact of the Allied smash drove 25,000 more Germans into the port of Lorient. Still more withdrew into smaller pockets along the rugged coast and Channel Islands.

After G-2 had made a complete investigation of intelligence reports from other pockets, it was estimated that 100,000 well-equipped Germans—soldiers, sailors, and marines—were bottled up hundreds of miles behind the Allied lines.

Believing that the German retreat across France was only a temporary setback, the 100,000 leftovers announced with guns and shells that they intended to fight. Trapped with their backs to the Atlantic, they settled down to deny the Allies the use of the



ports of Lorient, St. Nazaire, Bordeaux and La Rochelle. At the time of the St. Lo breakthrough, the 6th Armored Div. was left behind to seal off the 60,000 in St. Nazaire and Lorient. The 83rd Inf. Div., and later, the 94th Inf. Div., took over the task, in turn.

U-boat crewmen, ground forces, pilots and crews of the Luftwaffe and naval personnel from mine-layers made up part of the German garrisons on the south Brittany coast and the islands of Belle Ile and Ile de Croix, a few miles off the coast of Lorient. In all, the territory amounted to approximately 850 square miles.

Cut off from the rest of the Reich except for occasional ships that reached the ports under cover of darkness with supplies from Germany and Spain, Nazi commanding generals organized infantry reconversion courses and even went so far as to form officer candidate schools. German submarines occasionally entered the huge U-boat pens in the two ports but supplies were not regular. The die-hard Nazis had to improvise on many war implements, although there was plenty of ammunition. Food became a vexing problem.

That was the situation when the Black Panther Division, operating under direct control of the 12th Army Group, took over from the 94th Inf. Div. on Jan. 1, 1945. Maj. Gen. Kramer was placed in command of the 12th Army Group Coastal Sector which included the 66th Division in addition to French forces numbering 1201 officers and 28,820 enlisted men. Because of the *Leopoldville* disaster, Panthermen sought revenge. They lost no time in showing the Nazis that this was going to be an active front.

S/Sgt. Fred C. Poulnot, Athens, Ga., Co. 1, 263rd Regt., had been in the line only a few days when he got his chance. Trying to spot snipers that were harassing platoon activity and limiting observation,

Poulnot and his first scout surprised some Krauts in a dugout. Firing simultaneously, they killed one. The scout was wounded by a grenade and the two men returned to their lines by separate routes. Sgt. Poulnot killed a second German on the return trip, then organized a squad and led it to the scene where some well-placed small arms fire silenced all enemy activity. He was one of the first Panthermen to win the Silver Star.

Holding a 112-mile front, the Panthers were spread thinly against a numerically superior and well-entrenched enemy. Snow and penetrating cold increased the difficulties but doughs of the 66th continued aggressive tactics.

Heavily-armed battle patrols raided the German lines day and night, destroying installations and taking a heavy toll of the enemy. Reconnaissance patrols were on the prowl constantly in search of new targets for the artillery. Other patrols laid traps to ambush the wary Boche.

First Lt. Harry O. Williams, Williamansett, Mass., a Cannon Co. forward observer, accompanied a patrol Jan. 27, charged with capturing a small enemy force harassing front-line outposts. Losing contact with the patrol when it withdrew to a better position, Lt. Williams crawled forward alone,

straight into the withering small arms fire. He killed the enemy commander with his M-1, then directed accurate cannon fire upon the remaining Germans, killing six and forcing the others to withdraw.

Compelled to fight back, the Germans at one time retaliated by sending a small fleet of gunboats up the Loire River from St. Nazaire to shell 66th positions. Forward observers saw the boats coming and called for artillery. The first shell missed the vessels but ploughed into a hidden oil dump, blowing it up in a series of roaring fires and explosions. The gunboats beat a hasty retreat.

"SINK SIGHTED SHIP -

Sink Sank Same

MAIL service for the St. Nazaire holdouts was interrupted when "Bedcheck Charlie," a Heinkel-111 so named because it came over the American lines just after dark each day, crashed near Nantes. The plane had been dropping mail and critical supplies by parachute to the pocketed Germans.

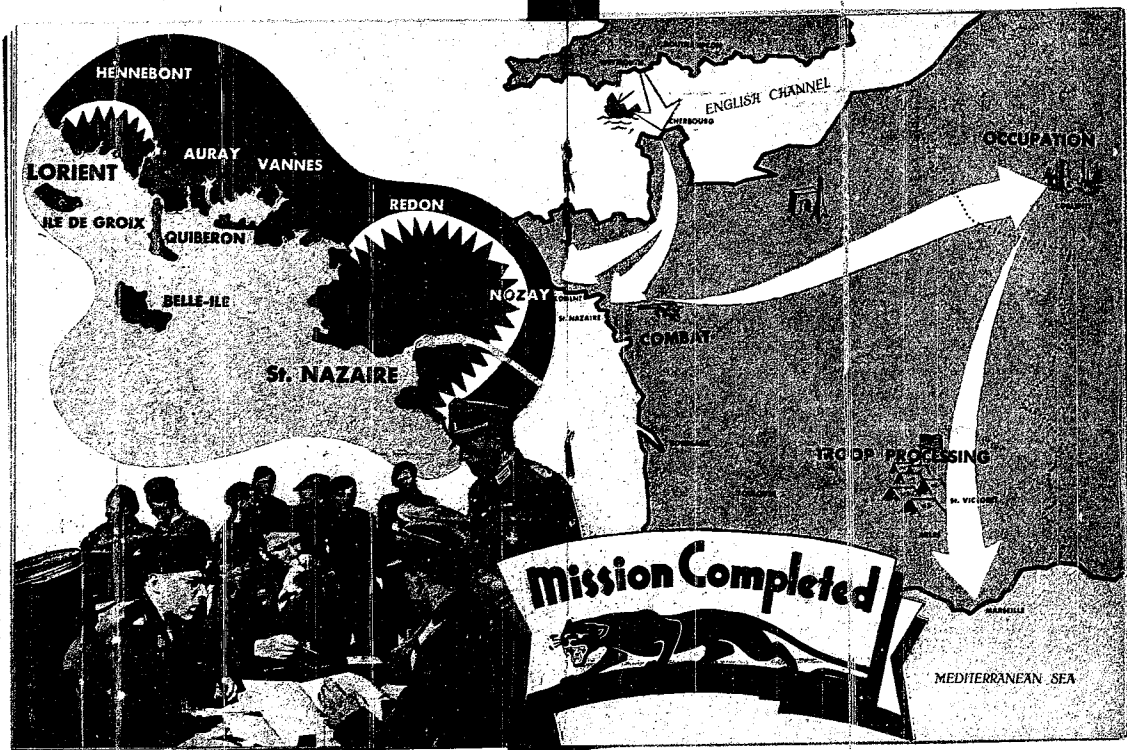
One reconnaissance patrol captured a German soldier who had a copy of the movie schedule for the biggest German theater in Lorient. Intelligence reports already had spotted the theater on a firing chart. Next night the 66th Field Artillery operated on movie schedule. The theater was demolished. The Nazis thereafter showed their films in concrete bunkers.

Lead scout in a combat patrol, Pfc. William J. MacCulloch, New York City, Co. A, 262nd, won a Silver Star for his heroic action in covering his buddies' withdrawal. When the patrol came up against strong rifle, machine gun and artillery fire, he stayed in position despite exposure to three enemy machine guns. While the other members of the patrol withdrew, he sat tight, holding the Germans off with grenades after the concussion from an artillery burst tore the rifle out of his hands. Later he gained reinforcements, returned to the area and rescued a wounded patrol member.



ST. NAZAIRE





HENNEBONT

LORIENT

AURAY

VANNES

ILE DE GROIX

QUIBERON

BELLE-ILE

REDON

NOZAY

St. NAZAIRE

ENGLISH CHANNEL

CHERBOURG

COMBAT

OCCUPATION

TROOP PROCESSING

M. VICTOR

MEDITERRANEAN SEA

Mission Completed





Several truces were arranged with the German commanders from time to time at the request of the International Red Cross to evacuate French civilians suffering from lack of food. Small prisoner exchanges also were carried out.

Artillery fire was particularly effective around the badly battered city of Lorient where infantrymen pushed forward in the early spring to gain new ground for heavy gun positions and commanding terrain for observation. Eight-inch howitzers were brought up and in short order knocked out three huge 340mm guns that had been lobbing 700-pound shells 21 miles inland from the Quiberon Peninsula.

Field artillery 155s also took their share of prizes. Flying over Lorient in mid-March, Lt. Kenneth W. Sink, Berrien Springs, Mich., an artillery observer, spotted an enemy coastal freighter pulling into port. He waited in his Piper Cub until the 3000-ton ship came within range, then called for fire. Five minutes later he radioed: "The ship is no longer visible." Paraphrasing a famous report, Lt. Sink's battalion commander reported to higher headquarters: "Sink sighted ship; Sink sank same." Within a short time, 13 German freighters that had been bringing supplies to the besieged garrison were sunk in the harbor.



Artillery searched out ammunition dumps, communication centers and communication centers in Lorient, and threw shells into the crumbling city. The city was wide open with many the food prob-

and the month was

rose to an average of 2000 rounds a day during March. The peak was reached in April when 66,000 shells lobbed into the resisting pockets.

One day an artillery observer saw a Nazi officer march a group of 32 men into a building for a class. He called for fire. On the first volley of overhead bursts, several were killed; the remainder ran inside the building. Three rounds of heavy stuff crashed into the building, crumpling it into rubble. The observer was about to put his telephone away when eight more Germans ran over to the site. There were two more overhead bursts. Result: 40 dead Krauts.

A coordinated attack by three combat patrols, one from each battalion of the 262nd, was launched April 19 in the north sector of St. Nazaire near La Desertas. Six light tanks and two assault guns, under the command of 2nd Lt. Leon F. Austin, Durham, N. H., 107th Cav. Recon Sqdn., led the assault. Lt. Austin won the Silver Star for bravery in the face of heavy machine gun and artillery fire. His action resulted in 31 enemy killed, 26 wounded and four prisoners.

In the same attack, T/Sgt. George Chun Fat, Hilo, Hawaii, Co. 1, led a support squad which followed the tanks. Sgt. Fat discovered a strongly fortified

position overlooked by tanks that threatened the entire force. At bayonet point he captured two defending Germans, then led his squad in the face of heavy fire to destroy the dugout position.

T/5 Raoul V. Glaude, Lowell, Mass., a medic in the 3rd Bn., also distinguished himself in the action. When enemy artillery was concentrated on the group to which Glaude was assigned, he sprawled over a wounded soldier to protect him from further injury. Disregarding his own wounds, Glaude dragged and carried the wounded man to litter bearers stationed 150 yards to the rear.

A Silver Star was awarded to Pfc Anthony F. Hammel, Northampton, Pa., for neutralizing two machine guns while his squad withdrew to safety.

66th Topples LAST NAZI STRONGHOLDS

THE Germans, too, fought back with savage counter-thrusts. Frequent enemy patrols were sent out to harass 66th positions, backed up by artillery fire that ranged in size from 75mm to 340mm. Several times there were enemy build-ups

for attacks in vital areas, but because of quick diversion of American and French troops to the threatened areas they never advanced beyond artillery stage.

On one Nazi raid, a 24-man patrol attacked the outpost where Pfc Richard D. Parks, Syracuse, N.Y., and three others were stationed. When the raiders called for surrender, Parks replied with successive bursts of his BAR. The gun jammed. Parks continued firing with his two rifles until all ammunition was expended. Although wounded twice, he still refused to surrender and when the Germans swarmed over the position and took two of the men prisoner he pretended to be dead. While the fourth Pantherman escaped, Parks lay quietly until the Germans withdrew to their own lines. Then, he painfully made his way back to his unit.

Bitter fighting continued as V-E Day approached, but as the German war machine collapsed it became evident that the Nazis still holding out on the coast would surrender. The Black Panther Division, now assigned to the Fifteenth Army with no change of mission, prepared to accept the capitulation of the two pockets.

Only a few days before V-E Day, Pfc Elbert H. Nickells, Fresno, Calif., 264th, had a narrow

escape. After having been relieved of guard duty, he was awakened by the cry, "Get up, they're attacking!" A grenade exploded nearby. Nickells ripped away a door, saw a second grenade roll in. He made a grab for it but missed. Luckily, it was a dud. Picking up his BAR just as a mortar shell struck the doorway, he dashed outside through smoke and dust. As he jumped over a hedge he confronted five of the enemy raiding party crouched in indecision. A sixth Kraut came over the hedge with his machine pistol ready for action. Nickells fired the BAR, then turned it on the rest of the enemy patrol. The Germans fled, leaving several wounded behind. Nickells, also wounded, received an Oak Leaf Cluster to his Purple Heart, awarded for injuries sustained during the Channel torpedoing, and a Silver Star for gallantry in action.

Foreseeing the eventual breakdown of all enemy resistance, the division laid complete plans for subsequent action and surrender terms were drawn up and revised in collaboration with the French military authorities. The first meeting with the Germans at which surrender terms were discussed took place May 7. Terms for unconditional surrender of all Nazis on the Lorient Pocket were agreed upon; hostilities on both sides ceased next day.

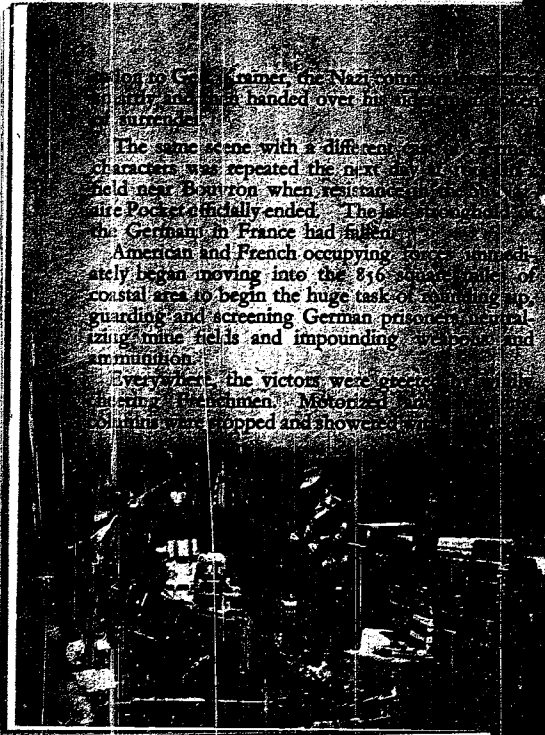
Division staff officers then turned their attention to St. Nazaire. In a shell-torn cafe near Cordemais, Col. John W. Keating, Neenah, Wis., 66th's chief of staff, met with the Nazi representatives to effect a similar surrender May 8. Once inside the cafe, the Germans started to haggle. A captain, representing Maj. Gen. Junck, was evasive, spoke vaguely of "technical" difficulties. But Col. Keating was adamant. He demanded immediate surrender and sent the Nazis back for authority to sign. They returned that afternoon and complied.

MISSION NUMBER 2:

Occupation

THE formal surrender ceremony for the Lorient sector was enacted May 10 at 1600, with Gen. Kramer accepting the surrender from Lt. Gen. Fahrbacker. A light rain fell during the ceremony in a field near Caudan. Present were the two generals and their staffs and Brig. Gen. Borgnis Desbordes, French commander at Lorient.

A French and an American rifle company were drawn up on either side of the field. After presen-



...son to General Kramer, the Nazi commander, who
...surrendered to the 66th Division on May 10, 1945.

The same scene with a different set of
characters was repeated the next day at the
field near Buxy when resistance in the
Lorraine Pocket officially ended. The last
of the German forces in France had fallen.

American and French occupying forces immediately
began moving into the 216 square mile
coastal area to begin the huge task of searching up,
guarding and screening German prisoners, neutral-
izing mine fields and impounding weapons and
ammunition.

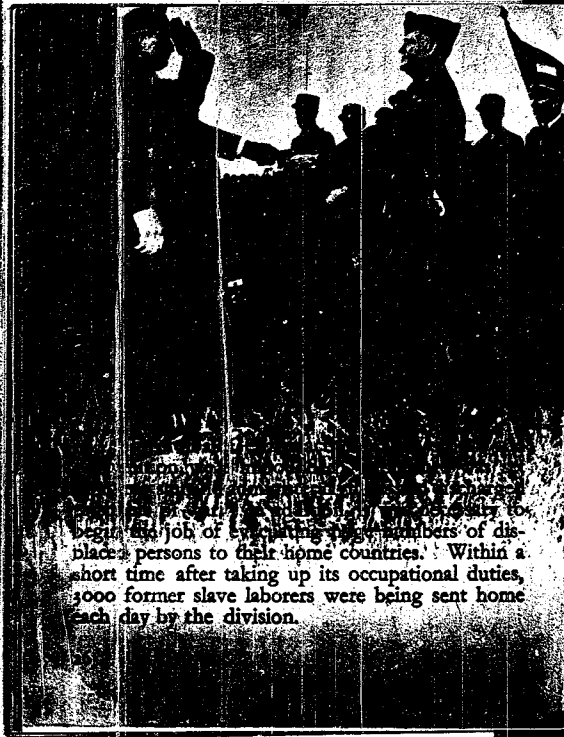
Everywhere the victors were greeted with
cheering Panthermen. Motorized
columns were stopped and showered with

the liberated people of many small villages who had
organized reception committees. Along country
roads French civilians dressed in their Sunday best
hailed the combat troops.

Hostilities in the Lorient Pocket ceased May 8,
although formal surrender did not take place until
two days later at Caudan. On May 11, the forces
at St. Nazaire followed suit. The surrender ended
all Nazi resistance in France and liberated an esti-
mated 186,000 French civilians. The 66th was
relieved in the Lorient sector May 18 and at St. Naz-
aire two days later. French forces took over both
areas.

Total casualties for the 66th Division, including
the Channel sinking, were 78 officers and 2170
enlisted men. Medals awarded to Panthermen
included: Silver Star, 31; Soldier's Medal, 34,
mostly for heroism in the *Leopoldville* disaster;
Bronze Star, 483, and French Croix de Guerre, 34.

Ordered to an occupational mission May 14, the
66th made a 700-mile trip into Germany where the
Black Panthers occupied 2400 square miles of Reich
territory, including 11 landkreises and the city of
Koblenz. All division elements were in position by
May 24. As a security guard the division was
charged with establishment of military government



begin the job of evacuating large numbers of displaced persons to their home countries. Within a short time after taking up its occupational duties, 1000 former slave laborers were being sent home each day by the division.

Hardly had the division settled down to its new role when plans suddenly were changed. The 66th was ordered to proceed immediately to the staging and assembly areas of Southern France, and units began the long trip May 26. After a speedy movement which was completed by June 7, the Panthermen were ready to take over their third mission in the ETO—billeting, feeding and processing troops being redeployed to the Pacific Theater and the United States through the port of Marseille.

"...IN THE

Highest Traditions

OF THE U.S. ARMY"

IT was a tremendous task. Officers and men staffed two huge tent camps at Arles and St. Victoret on the dusty, wind-swept plains north of the busy French port. A staggering amount of administrative work was necessary to prepare the tens of thousands of troops and the thousands of tons of equipment for shipment.

Dust, heat and windstorms were problems that had to be overcome by the men of the 66th to provide suitable housekeeping, recreational and enter-



Diesel oil over a vast area of ditches and canals. Not a single case of malaria developed in the staging areas, considered to be in a "malaria zone."

In staging the men assigned to the Pacific and the United States, the division had to tackle a number of complicated problems as well as a huge amount of paper work. High-point men had to be screened from units and their places filled with low-pointers. Complete physical examinations were required, another job for the medics. Tons of ordnance and individual equipment had to be serviced by the 766th Ord. Co., then crated for shipment.

Normally supplying one division, the 66th QM Co. was required to serve 100,000 men at the peak of the load, the equivalent of seven divisions. A bakery, attached to the QM, supplied 33,000 pounds of bread each day and in the three-month operation a total of 1,400,000 gallons of gasoline was issued.

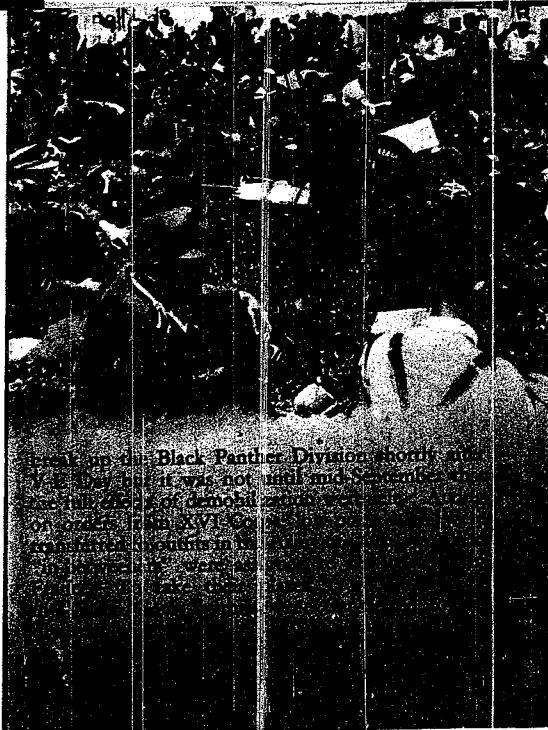
In the meantime, the 66th Cav. Recon Troop was assigned to MP duty and guard patrol along the Spanish border. The MP platoon policed the towns in the vicinity of Arles and the 266th Engr., in addition to its other duties, supplied and maintained utilities for the two areas. The 566th Signal Co. installed a telephone system that handled an average of 21,804 calls a day.

Five motion picture amphitheaters were constructed by Special Services at Arles; three were built at St. Victoret. Some 200 USO and GI stage shows played to 1,500,000 GIs. Four division dance bands furnished musical entertainment. A program of organized athletics was begun following construction of baseball and softball diamonds and horseshoe and volleyball courts. A beach was laid out on the Mediterranean to accommodate 7500 bathers. Thousands of men were taken on pass each day and on furloughs to the Riviera, Paris and Lourdes.

To prepare men for the trip to the Pacific and for a return to civilian life, personnel of the division I&E section supplied USAFI textbooks on many subjects and set up orientation centers. At Arles, the largest dental field clinic in the European Theater was placed in operation, augmenting the 250-bed field hospital.

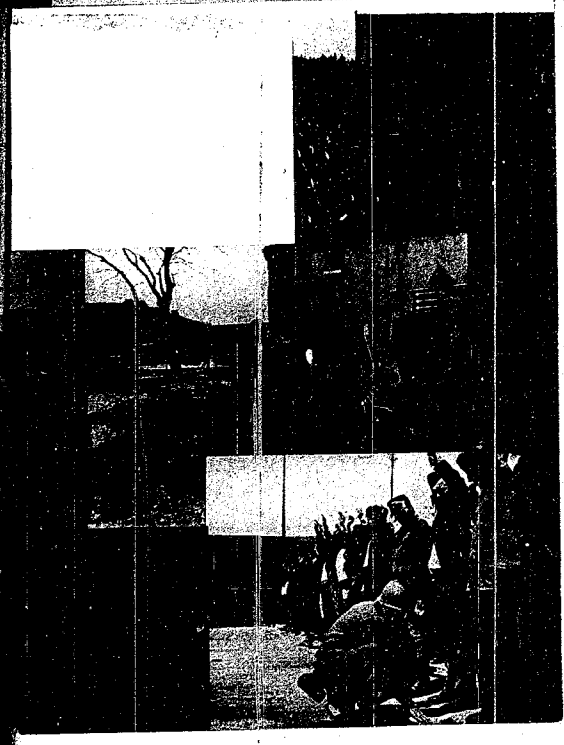
Nearly 150,000 troops—almost 40,000 per month—were redeployed before the two staging areas were closed in September. During that time Maj. Gen. Kramer returned to the States and was succeeded by Maj. Gen. Walter B. Lauer, former commanding general of the 99th Inf. Div.

Operation of the Army's point system began to

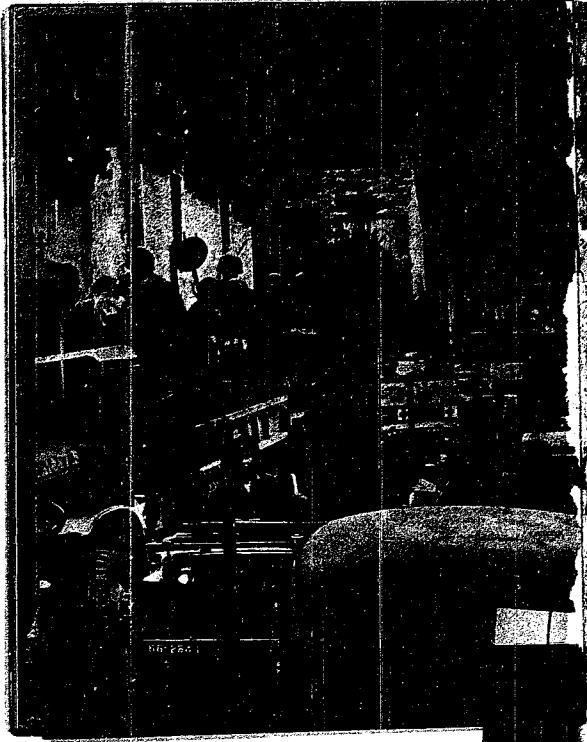




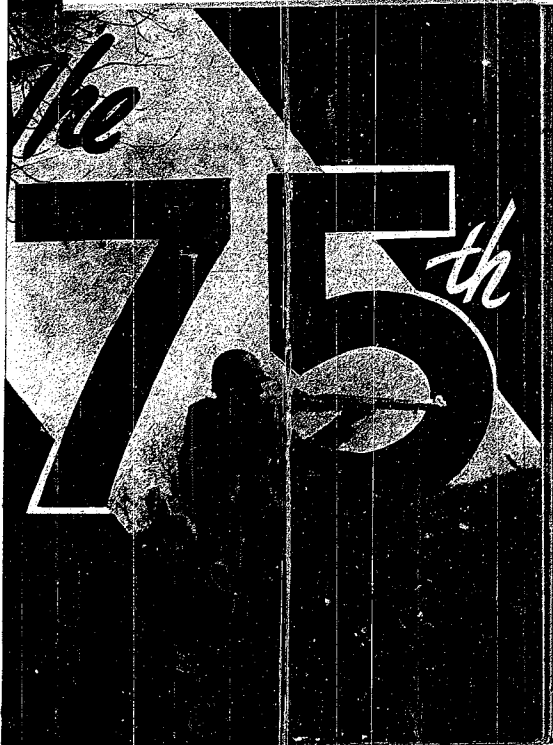
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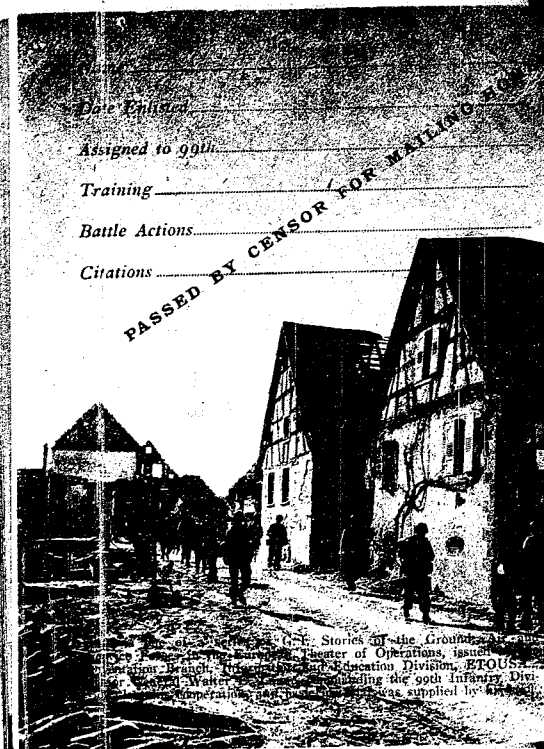


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Date Entered _____
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 Training _____
 Battle Actions _____
 Citations _____

PASSED BY CENSOR FOR MAILING

United States Army. European Theater of Operations.



It has been a source of great pride to me to be able to lead the 75th Infantry Division in action. I hope that this booklet will help recall not only the hardships we endured, but also the successes which crowned our efforts.

R. S. Patten

Major General, Commanding

THE STORY OF THE 75th Infantry DIVISION

CHRISTMAS Eve, 1944: In the biting, stinging cold of the Ardennes, men who never before had seen a German soldier came to grips with the Nazis in a slashing bayonet duel.

These were green troops — fresh from the States — these men of the 75th Infantry Division and they suffered many casualties. But their hold was tenacious. Founded here in this icy battle of life or death was the 75th's tradition: "Always Get There Somehow." And the 75th always has gotten there somehow from this first engagement until the Germans surrendered unconditionally May 8, 1945.

Doughs of the 75th could little more than anticipate war's savage fury when they sailed from New York

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Stories of the Ground...
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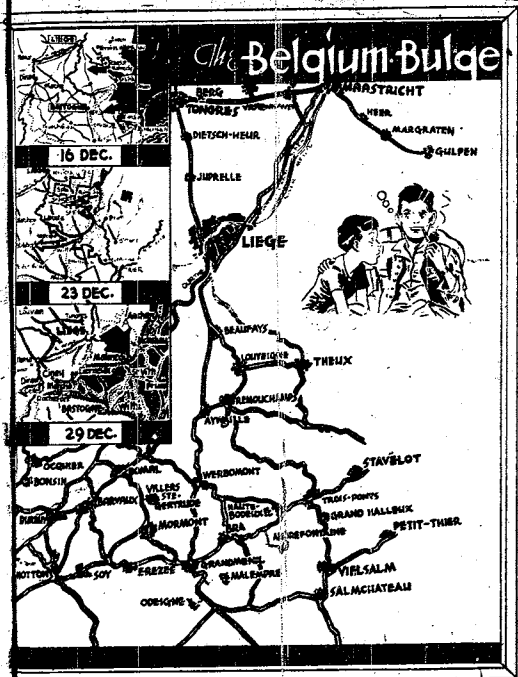
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3. World map, 1979-1945 - Campaigns - Western Europe

in November, 1944, en route to the Western Front. Behind them were 18 months of vigorous training — training in the Louisiana Maneuver Area, at Camp Breckinridge, Ky., and at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., where the 75th was activated April 13, 1943. Thirty-five hundred men from the ASTP and the Air Corps replaced a duplicate number of reinforcements who went overseas immediately after maneuvers.

AFTER pausing in Southern Wales for a month, the division boarded LSTs and LCIs for the Channel crossing, debarking at Le Havre and Rouen. First stopover on the Continent was Yvetot, 50 kilometers northeast of Le Havre where rains had made a quagmire of the "sunny" France bivouac area. The 75th was keyed for action and it wasn't disappointed. But instead of traveling 300 long, cold miles for an assignment with Ninth Army, orders suddenly were switched.

The Wehrmacht surprisingly had launched a surging offensive and von Rundstedt was pile-driving the Nazi juggernaut deep into Belgium. The objective was to split the Allied Armies in half, cut communications and push all the way to the Channel.

Time was a crucial factor. Tired Yanks needed assistance, reinforcements. They were to have both. The 75th, fresh and untried, switched its motor columns and trains in First Army's direction and sped more than 250 miles to the rescue. By Dec. 20, the division was in Belgium and the CP set up at Tongres. This was combat area 1



Next day, additional orders sent the 75th to the vicinity of Ocquier and the 289th, 290th and 291st Regimental Combat Teams moved into assembly areas a few miles from the advancing Germans. Confusion reigned during the motor march that night; no one knew exactly where the enemy was driving.

Attached to an armored division, the 290th RCT was the first 75th element to make contact with the Germans. The 289th also joined in the battle, hooking up with the 290th near Grandmenil. Together, they smashed ahead to cut and clear the Hotton-Soy road.


On Christmas Day, Co. K, 290th, supported on the flanks by Cos. I and L, made a direct assault on a high hill controlling the approach to Hampteau. Although pinned down by withering machine gun and mortar fire, these units seized enemy positions, thus ending the threat to Hotton. The high water mark of the German drive on Liege had been reached.

At least five panzer and four infantry divisions, the cream of the German Army, were spearheading the Bulge drive towards Liege. The eyes of the world were focused on this geographical point against which the two combat teams threw their might. There could have been no more historic moment for the men of the 75th Division to join battle.

Up to now, the division had been farmed out to other units as support or extra strength. It had fought well but never as a complete team. On Dec. 27, the 75th was attached to the XVIII Airborne Corps and the CP moved to Villers Ste. Gertrude on the northern



... will be reached
... putting the
... in the American Army.



Seaboard

With the New Year — at the stroke of midnight — every gun in the Corps sector opened up with a three round time-over-target on the German area. Nazis who lived through that experience probably never will forget the 75th's New Year greeting.

Although the next few days were comparatively quiet, the war progressed. Men still were cold, freezing; shelling never stopped.

Reassigned to VII Corps — "the Corps that always attacked" — the division was not surprised when the 290th RCT was called to support another division in its plunge across the important Ourthe River. The 289th and 291st screened the attack and strengthened their positions while Div Arty continued to maintain close support.

Although the 75th went into First Army reserve, little rest was forthcoming. Relief of another division was imminent and the 75th went back into the line to take over the 82nd Airborne's sector. Attached now were the 750th Tank Bn., 772nd TD Bn., and 440th AAA (AW) Bn. The last two stayed and fought many months with the 75th Division.

Immediate objectives were the strongly-defended towns of Salmchateau and Vielsalm. Their capture was imperative and the division, with the exception of the 290th which still carried out its previous assignment, took up positions along the Salm River.

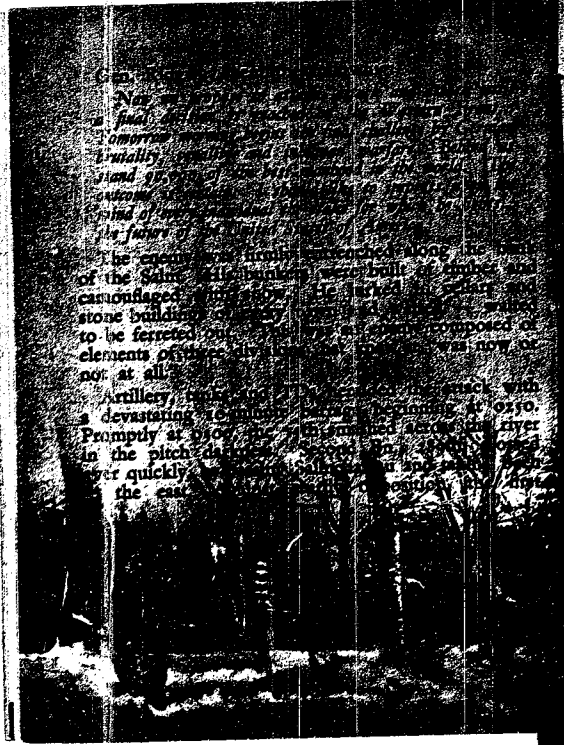
Patrols pushed through the snow to cross the river in endless succession. Men sometimes swam the icy currents to gain valuable information. They lay in snow drifts for hours to watch the enemy.

When the 290th RCT returned to division control, the entire team was ready to roll. The jump-off was but a few hours away.

UNTIL now, the Ardennes had been a defensive fight for the Americans. Every effort had been directed at stopping the Germans. A new chapter was about to be written. The 289th and 290th RCTs were battle-tested. Many of their veterans were sick from the cold and needed a rest but there wasn't time to pause.

At 0914, Jan. 14, 1945, a terse message was received by the 75th:

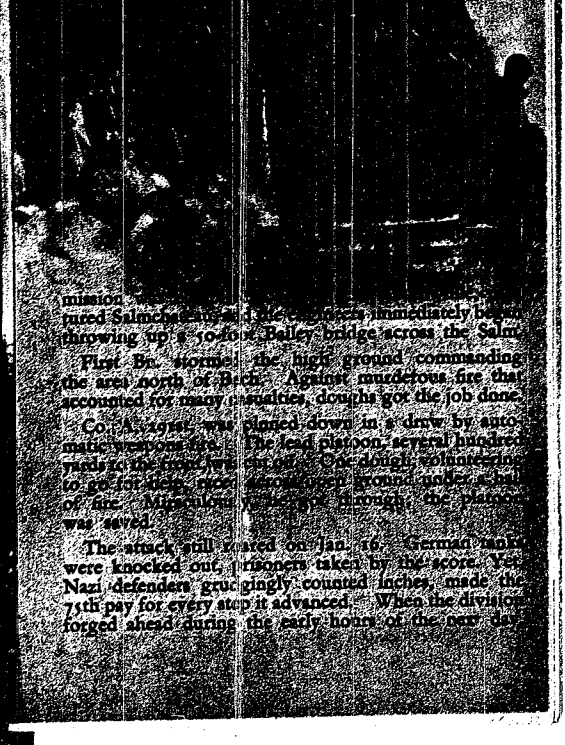
Your division attacks tomorrow. H-Hour: 0300.



Can you
 Nay, you
 a small
 tomorrow
 brutally
 stand
 extreme
 kind
 the future

The enemy's tanks searched for the
 of the Salm. The bunker was built of timber and
 camouflaged with snow. He struck a column of
 stone building, which was now composed of
 to be ferreted out. The bunker was now
 elements of the division. The attack was now
 not at all.

Artillery tanks did not reach the attack with
 a devastating result. The attack was at 0930.
 Promptly at 0900 the 7th Infantry crossed the river
 in the pitch darkness. The 7th Infantry crossed
 over quickly. The attack was now
 to the east.



mission
 pured Salmchateau and the objects immediately began
 throwing up a 10-foot Bailey bridge across the Salm.
 First Bn. stormed the high ground commanding
 the area north of Beck. Against murderous fire that
 accounted for many casualties, doughs got the job done.

Co. A-101st was pinned down in a draw by auto-
 matic weapons fire. The lead platoon, several hundred
 yards, the trenchers dug in. One dough volunteered
 to go for sticks, across open ground under a hail
 of fire. Miraculously he got through the platoon
 was saved.

The attack still raged on Jan. 16. German tanks
 were knocked out, prisoners taken by the score. V-
 Nazi defenders grudgingly counted inches, made the
 75th pay for every step it advanced. When the division
 forged ahead during the early hours of the new day.



The 75th Team

CLICKS WITH PRECISION

THE 75th not only was tired after its first campaign, but it sorely needed reinforcements. Higher headquarters agreed and decided to send the division to a rest area near Liege to reorganize and be brought up to full strength.

However, the German High Command planned otherwise. Striking this time at the opposite end of the front—at Strasbourg in Alsace Lorraine—the Nazis counter-attacked in force. The line, thinly defended by troops of the American Seventh and French First Armies, required immediate reinforcement. Again, the 75th was called to help flatten another bulge. Passes were cancelled, vehicles and trains loaded for what was to become the most difficult journey anyone could remember.

Moving a division isn't an easy matter even in peace time. Under ideal conditions it is a difficult job in war time. Add the coldest weather of the winter to the overall picture and the move becomes a nightmare.

This was the situation as the weary 75th headed south to help take Colmar and throw the Germans back across the Rhine River. Snow was falling when the division left Belgium and flakes still fell when the 75th arrived in Alsace two days later.

Doughs, loaded in 40-and-8 cars, tried to keep water on worn road between... concentrated on... freeing to reach...

The remainder... which were... by the new... sible. The... at the edge... Mountains.

The division was... for tactical... administrative... 1944 strategy...

walled city of Neuf-Brisach and blocking off the German escape route across the Rhine.

The role of the 75th was to jump off from a point just south of the Colmar Canal and forge ahead along the Horburg-Andolsheim-Appenwihr-Wolfgantzen axis. When these strategic places were taken, the objective would be to close up along the west bank of the Rhine. D-Day was Feb. 1, 1945; H-Hour, 0700. Under cover of darkness, the 289th and 291st moved up to the kick-off position, relieving the 3rd Inf. Div.



The COLMAR POCKET



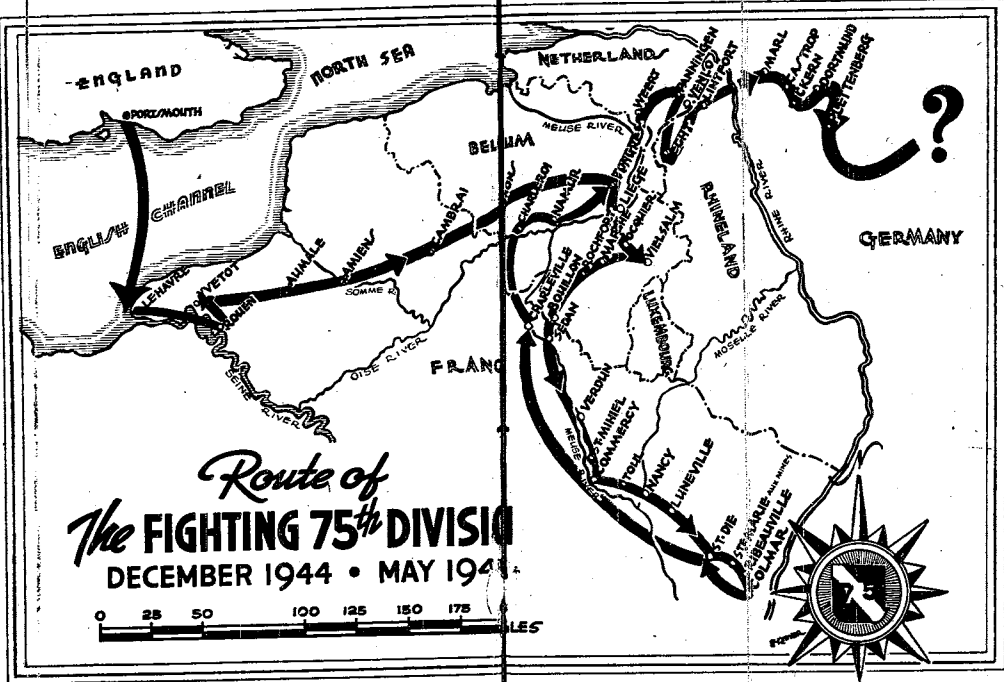
Mountain snow had transformed the valley into a lake of oozing mud. Artillery and vehicles found the going rugged, but the infantry got away on schedule. As the two regiments advanced abreast, 1st Bn., 189th, closed on Horburg and immediately engaged in a fierce house-to-house struggle. Germans were in every cellar; even a church steeple was a snipers' nest. Several rounds from a bazooka eliminated the riflemen in the steeple and the town was cleared after doughs went to work with grenades.

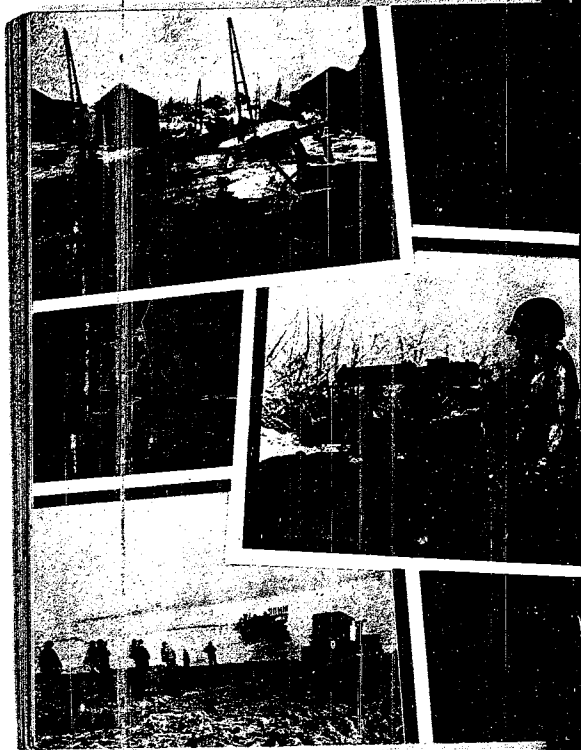
THE 189th was clicking with a fine precision as it roared through Wihr-en-Plaine and on to Andolsheim, which was buttoned up after a tremendous artillery barrage had swept the streets. Meanwhile, the 291st, spearheaded by 2nd Bn., made rapid progress towards the important Neuf-Brisach road.

But enemy resistance stiffened and the regiment found itself in the midst of a strong counter-assault. Waves of German infantry, tanks and self-propelled guns were flung at the 291st. Second Bn. did itself proud by holding its ground, repulsing every thrust.

The battle raged for three hours. Then, 1st Bn. rushed forward, slicing its way to the east. Tiger tanks slowed down the battalion's rush but couldn't completely stop the hard-charging doughs — doughs like S/Sgt. Ulrich Schwarz, Chicago, Co. A, who knocked out a pair of machine gun nests with grenades, or Lt. (then T/Sgt.) Odilo N. Bonde, Valders, Wis., who







captured 23 prisoners single-handed. Sometimes, bazookamen fired at tanks only 10 yards away.

Enemy aircraft used every trick in the book to knock out supply line bridges. The 440th AAA was ever alert and its marksmen, driving off constant threats, blasted from the skies one of the first jet-propelled planes shot down on the Western Front.

The mission may not have been spectacular, but the fighting was. Eventually the division cleared the entire northern and eastern approach line to Colmar. Elements of the French First Army drove on to capture the city proper.

Meanwhile, 2nd and 3rd Bns., 289th, struck toward Appenwihr. The 2nd Bn. worked into the heart of the town, but the Germans threw in a heavy concentration of artillery, followed by tanks and infantry, and doughs were forced to pull back.

Two members of the 289th Med. Det., Capt. William T. Leslie, New York City, and Cpl. William I. Sloan, Los Angeles, wrote a stirring chapter in the 75th's book when they braved enemy fire to drive back into the town and set up an emergency aid station. These medics went from house to house administering first aid and then loaded wounded aboard a truck for evacuation. Their job completed, the pair walked out of the town.

Getting support from the 290th, the 289th again trained its sights on Appenwihr. This additional strength turned the trick and the regiment moved back in to stay.

Holland—

OP IN AN EASY CHAIR

A record 3000 rounds was fired into the town of Wolfgantzen, reducing it to rubble. Even then, the 291st couldn't move into the city because its entrance was blocked by heavy German fire. The Germans resisted fanatically, because, only by defending Wolfgantzen could they hope to keep open the escape route to the Rhine. Nazis, crouched in concrete dugouts ringing the town, put up a defense that was equal to their savage reputation.

Many doughs fought beyond the call of duty as the 75th redoubled its efforts to crack the defenses. S/Sgt. Samuel W. Cathcart, Long Beach, Calif., Co. I, 291st, despite a painful wound, fired from the hip to lead his squad in eliminating several machine guns nests. When his ammunition was exhausted, he leaped into an enemy position and rifle-butted its occupants to death.

When it seemed impossible for 1st and 3rd Bns. to take Wolfgantzen, a ruse was employed. Information revealed that Germans had set up their defenses along the south and west edges of the town. By feinting in these directions and sending one company along the canal to the east, while simultaneously hitting the city from the remaining directions, the 291st was able to move in.

The enemy was unable to fight in all directions at

the town. The difference spelled victory for the doughs.

The 291st and 190th crossed the Rhine-Rhone Canal, sweeping several villages, the 291st swung east and closed on the Rhine. Infantrymen looked across the river and saw German soil for the first time.

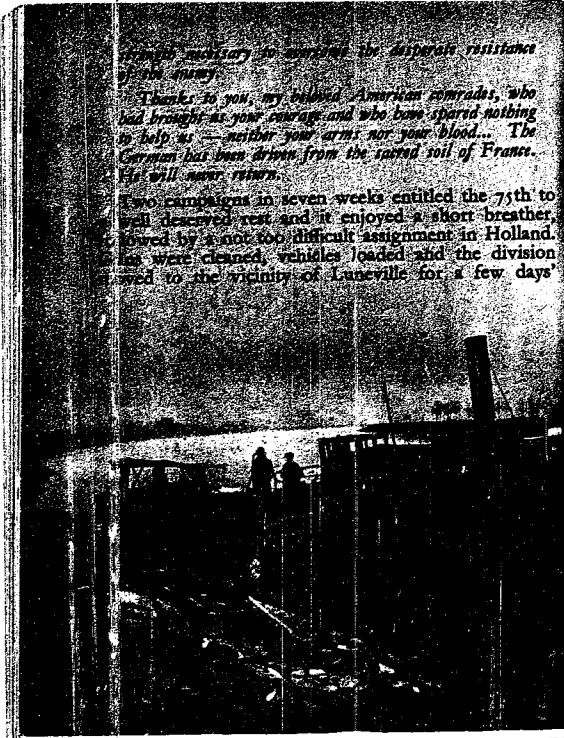
The enemy had been driven out of eastern France. It was a great moment for the doughs. Delattre de Tassigny, French First Army Commander, came the message.

The doughs had fought hard and night and day. They had to be careful of their ammunition. They were left with only a few shells. The Allies had to be careful of their ammunition. They had to be careful of their ammunition. They had to be careful of their ammunition.

...necessary to overcome the desperate resistance
of the enemy.

*Thanks to you, my beloved American comrades, who
had brought us your courage and who have spared nothing
to help us — neither your arms nor your blood... The
German has been driven from the sacred soil of France.
He will never return.*

Two campaigns in seven weeks entitled the 75th to
well deserved rest and it enjoyed a short breather,
followed by a not too difficult assignment in Holland.
The tents were cleaned, vehicles loaded and the division
moved to the vicinity of Luneville for a few days'



break. There were baths, clean clothes and Red Cross
subs. But it didn't last long. Orders were received
by the 75th to report to the opposite end of the line.
Another long trip was in prospect.

The winter had lost its bitterness by now and the
division, imbued with self-confidence and high in
spirit, had time to reflect as it took the long journey
astride.

When the 75th was activated at Ft. Leonard Wood
back in 1943, it was not only the first division organ-
ized in Missouri, but it also was the Army's youngest.
Men of the 75th averaged 21.9 years of age. Maj. Gen.
Willard S. Paul was the original division commander
with Brig. Gen. Gerald St. Clair Mickle, the only
general officer still with the division, as assistant com-
mander.

Cadre came from the 83rd Inf. Div., then stationed
Camp Atterbury, Ind. Training in the rugged Ozark

Mountains began April 19, and proceeded vigorously until July 24 when the conclusion of the Mobilization Training Program was marked by inspection of units by XI Corps. Gen. Paul wrote at this time:

Throughout unit training, during our combined training, and finally during combat, let us cherish and keep alive this spark, this 75th's way of doing things. I give you a battle cry: "Over, Around, Under, or Through."

A cadre of officers and men from the 5th Inf. Division had been stationed in Iceland, arrived for temporary quartering Aug. 1 and later was absorbed by the division. On Aug. 18, Gen. Prickett took over command of the 75th. Approximately a year later, with the final polish of Louisiana maneuvers and a stay at Camp Breckinridge added, the division shipped overseas.

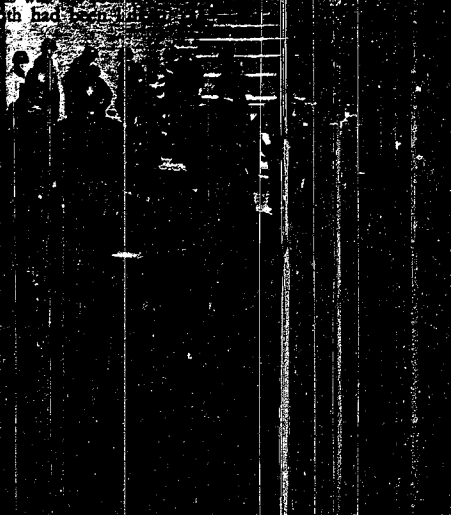
Now, as the 75th set its sights to the north, its assignment was to relieve the British 6th Airborne Division near Panningen, Holland, and to take positions along the west bank of the Maas River. On Feb. 21, 1945, relief of the British troops was complete and the 75th occupied a 24-mile stretch of front. The position was strictly defensive, the object being to keep the Germans from spanning the river and, in use of patrols, to gain any information.

Patrols crossed the Maas nightly for information on German actions and plans. Psychological warfare was carried on with Div Arty firing occasional broadsides and leaflets and surrender propaganda on German positions.

Doughs lived in reasonably comfortable homes along

edge of the river, within sight of the enemy. There were observation posts in upper story windows where every soldier could see over window sills.

its story was the same as that of the 75th. It was the same as that of the 75th.

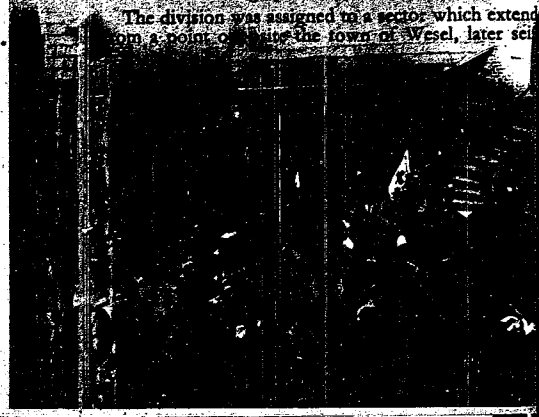


Across THE RHINE,

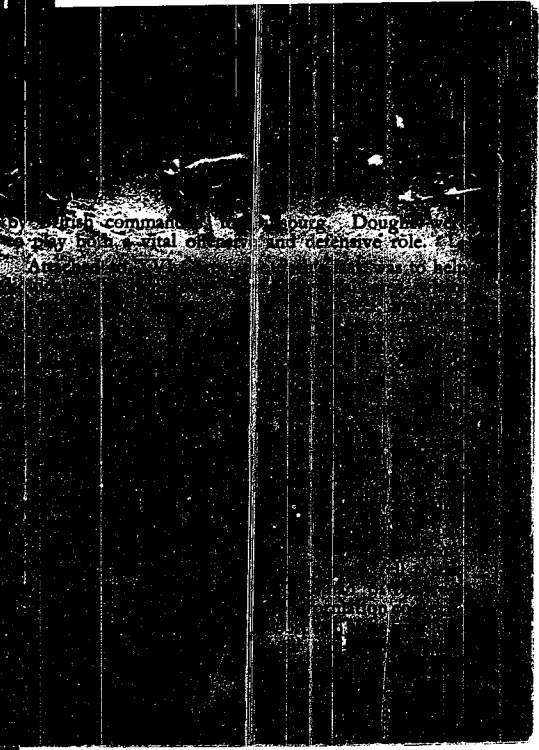
INTO THE RUHR

Although the fighting in this period had been particularly vicious, the 75th had yet to battle on German soil. The Ardennes, Alsace-Lorraine and Holland had seen the division in action, but these were friendly countries. Now, with Ninth Army's drive to the Rhine complete, the 75th shifted into position to take over a large part of that area.

The division was assigned to a sector which extended from a point opposite the town of Wesel, later seized



by British command. The 75th played both a vital offensive and defensive role. The division was assigned to a sector which extended from a point opposite the town of Wesel, later seized



in the rear, but 75th patrols, sent out by division G-2, were vitally successful as the enemy's were unproductive.

Night after night, small groups crossed the Rhine's swift currents to probe enemy defenses. Patrols learned the disposition of German pillboxes, mortars, 88s, wire entanglements. It was dangerous, daring work and the swirling waters tossed the tiny assault boats around helplessly. Black nights and freezing water made missions doubly dangerous. On the far shore, the presence of sentries made landings difficult; further in, man-made obstacles made even Indian tactics a touch-and-go affair. Experience gained from the many patrol missions along the Maas in Holland eventually turned the trick. The framework for spanning the Rhine was complete. This patrolling soon would realize a pay-off.

MARCH 24, 1945: Surging forth on the heels of one of the largest artillery barrages ever recorded, the 30th and 79th Inf. Divs. swarmed across the Rhine. Much of this curtain of fire was laid down by the 75th's artillery. Altogether, 55 artillery battalions took part, many of which came under the control of the 75th Fire Direction Center. Guns blazed until they were too hot to handle. Barrels were changed; whole guns were replaced by ordnance crews.

Meanwhile, engineers constructed and launched an anti-submarine boom across the river. Made of materials found in the area — Jerricans, wire, timber — the boom stretched more than 1200 feet. Enemy

...to stretch it across the
...night of work the job

...the east bank
...the 30th
...the 79th

...the division recon
...the 30th moved into an assem
...The 30th and
...the attack into the Ruhr
...time for the 75th to go

...the division advanced on
...the Dortmund-Ems Canal. Huls, the
...Die Hard Forest, Kol Braessert, Oer, Alt, Horneburg
...Hundreds of thousands of slave laborers
...prisoners of war released and Volksturm
...Factories, refineries, one of the world's
...rubber plants — all vital tools of
...were seized. Never before



"ALWAYS GET THERE

Somehow"

EVEN rain and poor visibility couldn't stop the 75th now. The canal system was bridged. Supplies rolled forward. Tanks moved in for support and doughs climbed aboard jeeps to keep pace with fast-moving CPs. Although there was still some heavy resistance, the Volksturm often threw down its arms, begged to go home.

Every factory, village and crossroad was a potential strongpoint for snipers and anti-tank guns. Each had to be reduced; the 75th not only was willing but able. At higher headquarters, officers and correspondents watched the 75th's ever shifting phase lines. But they couldn't see the bristling guns in the Ruhr or the 50 or more bridges blown by the retreating enemy. They did know that engineers somehow repaired these bridges so that lumbering QM trucks could roll to the front.

Second Bn., 291st, closed in on the important town of Datteln April 2. Fighting until their ammunition was gone, Germans surrendered in droves. Lt. Stephen G. Iax, Philadelphia, Co. L, reported that "as we closed on the town, two German 40mm AA guns fired point blank." Despite six casualties, 1st and 2nd platoons rushed into the town. The other two platoons were pinned down for nearly an hour before they charged

ahead in support. In rushing party, covering the east section of the town for miles, rounded up the... all in civilian clothes... of the De...

was a slow process and doughs on the opposite bank were without supplies. Cub planes of the division went to the rescue, landing necessary supplies and evacuating wounded.

With the 291st on the left, the 289th on the right and the 116th Inf., 29th Div., in the center, the drive rolled ahead to crush the town of Waltrop. As the 289th shoved forward to seize Ickern, the old story of clearing coal mines, factories and houses was repeated. Co. K, 289th, captured or killed a German platoon on meeting the Nazis in an underpass along one of the super highways.

THE great city of Dortmund, the Pittsburgh of Germany, lay ahead and it was the 75th's job to clear the approaches. If the division could splash through to the Ruhr River, the city would be isolated.

Even after heavy artillery had been poured on the city, March 6, it became apparent that the enemy still was determined to fight. Second Bn., 291st, was pinned down by fire which preceded a counter-attack by paratroopers, but artillery broke up the duel. On a flank, the 290th cleared several towns, then encountered heavy resistance and was forced to dig in for the night. The 2nd Parachute Div., which had caused so much trouble for Americans ever since the days of Normandy, employed some of its old tricks, but this time the 75th beat off every thrust.

Frohlinde and Kirchlind proved excellent artillery and air-strike targets and fell to the 290th. Simultan-

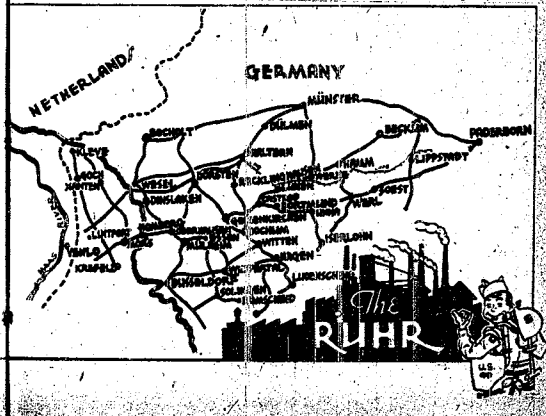
ously, the 291st surged ahead to capture Castrop Rauxel against heavy and medium tank resistance.

As the 290th neared Dortmund, the enemy gradually relinquished its grip. Prisoners poured in, filling the division cage. The battle carried one town after another. On all sides were rubble and ruin.

With Dortmund surrounded, the Ruhr ceased to exist. Hitler's breadbasket was empty. Booty ran high—flak trains, guns, ammunition, supplies.

At the little town of Herdecke, the burgomeister formally declared:

I surrender the town of Herdecke to the Allied mili-

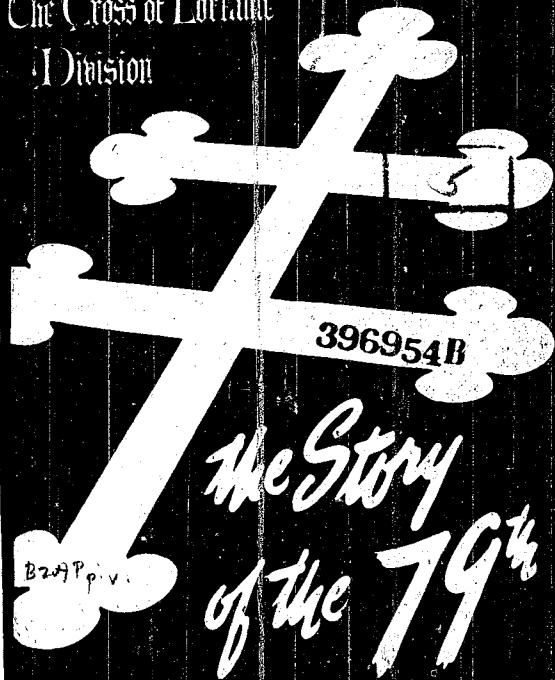




GEN. JACOB L. DEVHIS
COMMANDING SIXTH ARMY GROUP



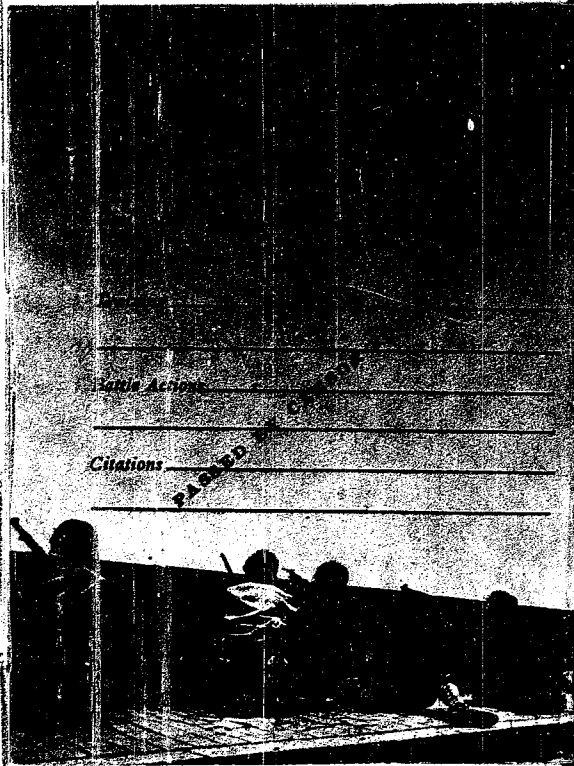
The Cross of Lorraine
Division



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The Story
of the 79th

B24 P. v.



Salute Across

Citations

PASSED

Stars and Stripes



The story of the 79th Division is fact, not fiction. The accomplishments set forth here are sufficient evidence that the individuals of the division realized and accepted their several responsibilities. To our dear comrades who gave their all to bring about these great deeds let us do homage by renewing with even greater vigor our determination to close with the enemy and exterminate him.

J. D. Myche

Major General, Commanding

THE VOLS GRENADIERS

ON Oct. 25, 1944, the G-2 report of the Nazi 361st Volksgrenadier Div. addressed the following warning note to its subordinate units:

The 79th Division is said to have fought particularly well in Normandy, and is considered as one of the best attack divisions in the U.S. Army.

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That grudging compliment could not have been more timely. As of Oct. 25 the 79th Inf. Div. was well past its 125th day of consecutive combat in France. Behind it was a record replete with records in itself, certified for permanent military annals by the unanimous praise of the various headquarters under which the division has operated.

This was the division of two outstanding "firsts:" first to enter Cherbourg, via Fort du Roule, enemy-styled "impregnable" fortress guarding approaches to this strategic port city; first across the Seine in the Allied drive on Paris. This was the division that swept through France like an avenging flame, from the Atlantic to the Seine, from the Belgian border to the Vosges foothills.

This was the division with a combat itinerary like a railroad time table: Cherbourg, La Haye du Puits, Lessay, Fougères, Laval, Le Mans, La Meule sur Sarthe, Avranches, Nogent le Roi, Mantes-Gassicourt, St. Amand, Howardries, Reims, Joinville, Neufchâteau, Charmes, Luneville and way stations.

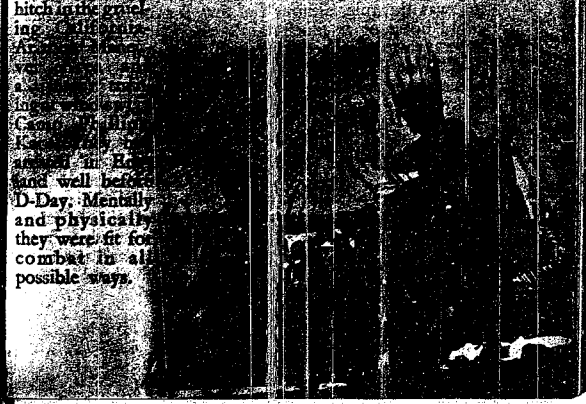
This was the division that by sheer guts and a fighting devotion to duty had ousted a desperate foe from the hell that was Forêt de Parroy.

This was the famed Fighting 79th — the Cross of Lorraine Division — back at the task it had thought completed 26 years ago.

2
D V N

The division's advance party reached France on D plus 6 and two days later its combat and service units were landed at Utah Beach, where spasmodic enemy shelling and bombing dispelled the last, lingering doubt that the current action was anything more than another dry run. It was here that T/5 Harry Rybiski, of Hq.Co., 315th Inf. Regt., was struck a glancing blow by a stray shell fragment, and thus became the first 79th man to receive a Purple Heart in World War II.

For the second time the Cross of Lorraine Division was on French soil — but there, the comparison stopped. These soldiers had behind them a wealth of pre-combat experience, plus the last word in equipment. Some had been with the division since its activation at Camp Pickett, Va., on June 15, 1942. They had undergone the toughening of Tennessee maneuvers, a three-month hitch in the grueling...



...in the
and well before
D-Day. Mentally
and physically
they were fit for
combat in all
possible ways.

PURSUANT to instructions contained in General Orders 95 and 101, War Department, dated July 18 and Aug. 3, 1917, there was organized and activated at Camp Meade, Md., the 79th Inf. Div. The men who filled its ranks were largely easterners— from Pennsylvania, Maryland, District of Columbia, West Virginia, New York and Rhode Island. Training, such as it was, reflected the urgency of the Allied situation. Six weeks' basic training was the rule, although a few fortunate exceptions could boast of as much as 18 weeks. A cadreman of the original 79th recalled, with pardonable bitterness, that "back in 1917 all we had to work with was a rifle and a bayonet and a few hand grenades—and, if we were lucky, an occasional machine gun or two."

On Sept. 2, 1918, Gen. Pershing called a conference of the Allied High Command at Marshal Foch's headquarters. Its mood was decidedly pessimistic. For four bitter, bloody years the hard-pressed Allies had attacked again and again, only to fall back with disheartening regularity. Each time they retired to ready a fresh assault, the German line was strengthened, and the foe's defense-in-depth strategy assumed fresh vigor. After

the conference, Gen. Pershing admitted that "no one present expressed the opinion that the final victory could be won in 1918. In fact, it was believed by the French High Command that the Meuse-Argonne attack could not be pushed much beyond Montfaucon before the arrival of winter would force a cessation."

Montfaucon—the falcon's mountain! The very name bespoke towering peaks and inaccessible heights. From its formidable summit the enemy controlled the entire Meuse-Argonne sector, strategically the most important on the Western Front. There had been no major action in this sector since the German assaults on Verdun in 1916 and the French counterattacks in 1917. The enemy had used the year of quiet to strengthen his already strong defenses. Preliminary Allied moves against the summit were stopped in their tracks. Then, in the chill, grey light of dawn Sept. 26, 1918, another unit—the untried 79th— moved into the jump-off spot.

Under the cover of thunderous artillery, men of the Cross of Lorraine moved from the deceptively shallow valley of the Meuse against the awesome height of Montfaucon. Inch by inch they slugged their way up the sheer face of the crest, battling with a fresh fury that the enemy had never known. For 30 terrible hours they pushed and fought and bled and died—and they captured Montfaucon.

The German tide from that hour was measured in defeats. Men of the 79th had turned that tide—had kept it turned. From Montfaucon they punched and slashed and hacked their way through fiercely contested

German lines and strongpoints. They captured Nantillois. They stormed Borne du Cornouiller, the famous "Hill 378." On Nov. 9, they enveloped Danvillier, Crepion, Wavrille, Giberoy, Etraye and Moirey. On Nov. 10 they occupied Hills 328 and 329. On Nov. 11, under cover of dense fog, they were inching slowly but inexorably up the western slopes of the final German stronghold in the sector when the order came to cease firing. The armistice had been signed.

Division Commander Maj. Gen. Joseph E. Kuhn said simply that "they have done the impossible." And, indeed, they had. Short on training, long on fighting spirit, they had wrested overwhelming victory from the cream of the Kaiser's warriors. They had gouged a salient into the German lines deeper than at any point on the entire Western Front. They had broken a deadlock in the greatest human conflict the world had ever known.

This was the magnificent heritage of the men of the 7th Div. This was the fighting spirit of the 7th Div.



"We took that rock pile step by step," said the Pfc, "and every step was a giant."

MONTHS before D-Day, Allied tacticians realized that without the port of Cherbourg and the peninsula at its back, no invading force could hope to withstand the Nazi counterattacks that must certainly come. To VII Corps, First Army, was given the tremendous assignment of seizing the peninsula. For the task it had the 79th, 4th, 9th and 90th Inf. Divs., the 82nd and 101st Airborne Divs. Urgency of Corps' mission was further emphasized by extremely unfavorable weather. For several successive days, landing men and supplies on the rain and wind-swept beaches was almost impossible. Even on fair days, facilities at the beaches were taxed to capacity. The word was passed around from brass to buck private: "Cherbourg must be taken at all costs!"

The Allied front extended inland from Quineville: the 4th Div. on the right, striking up the coast toward Montebourg; the 90th on the 4th's left; the 9th, pointed across the peninsula, sending out feelers toward Barne-

ville; the airborne units, driving as a team to the south and southwest. When the 9th pounded into Barneville, the first Allied line across the peninsula was established.

Then came the plans that committed the 79th to action. It would relieve the 9th and spearhead a three-pronged drive up the peninsula to Cherbourg.

North of the Barneville-Valognes gridline the peninsula is hilly, gradually increasing in height toward the coast. South of the line the country is flat with widespread marshes at the mouth of the several small streams crisscrossing the area. And then there are the hedgerows—those countless, centuries-old mounds of earth, stone and underbrush, bordering all cultivated fields, orchards and roads, and utilized with desperate ingenuity by the hard-pressed enemy. Augmenting these formidable natural defenses were scores of strongpoints, emplacements and concrete pillboxes. Each field was a miniature battlefield. Ask any doughfoot who helped carry the load in Normandy what he thinks of hedgerow fighting. One thoughtful 79th GI described it as "decidedly un-American."

H-Hour for the division was 0500, June 19. Initial objective was the high ground west and northwest of Valognes. Once this was in American hands, the Valognes-Cherbourg highway and feeder roads would be closed to the enemy, severing his last overland supply. The 313th Inf. jumped off on schedule from Golleville-Bini-ville. The 315th followed shortly. The 314th remained in division reserve.



It was a... Division artillery... up the regiment with heartening accuracy, and the 90th's 91st FA Bn. for a time loaned its fire to the initial kick-off. Enemy resistance, at first little more than spasmodic small arms fire and occasional artillery bursts, soon swelled into the fierce concentration that was to subside only with Cherbourg's capitulation.

Despite determined resistance 1st Bn., 313th, was on its objective at Bois de la Baïque by 1400 and the remaining units soon followed suit. The 314th, at 1920, was moved from division reserve into the attack. Its objective, Croix Jacob, was reached at 0415 next day.

This was the division's first day of combat in World War II. It was good: a vicious enemy counterattack covering four hours had been repelled with heavy Kraut losses. All 79th units had reached their objectives, most of them ahead of schedule. Officers and men, side by side in combat, noted a new and lasting rebirth of mutual respect and confidence.

Next objective was the high ground south of Cherbourg. Using the Cherbourg-Valognes road as an axis, the 313th carried the brunt of this new attack from the division's right boundary. It was a slow and painful process. As regiments neared Cherbourg's outer ring of defenses, resistance became even more desperate. The 304th Engr. Bn. worked side by side with the foot troops, blasted through hedgerows, built roads under fire when the enemy's grip on the conventional routes could not be loosened.



During the night of June 21-22 repeated broadcasts urged Nazis in Cherbourg to surrender. The Allied ultimatum expired at noon on the 22nd, and at 1240 the Air Force unleashed a tremendous 80-minute aerial bombardment of German positions within the city's defense perimeter. On the morning of June 23 victory was tantalizingly near: patrols of the 313th penetrated the outskirts of Cherbourg to pick up valuable information. The 314th, under terrific pressure, was scaling Fort du Roule. The 315th, after widespread mopping up, had taken the strategic town of Hardinvast.

But Fort du Roule, as many doughfeet had predicted, was the kernel of this tough nut. Perched at the northwest end of a high ridge commanding the city, it had been sufficiently armed and supplied to enable a defending force to hold out indefinitely.

During the siege of the fort, T/Sgt. (then Cpl.) John D. Kelly, Co. E, 314th, won for the division its first DSC. His platoon was inching up the fortress face when it was pinned down by Kraut machine gun fire from a deeply entrenched strongpoint on the slope below the peak. The area was almost bare of natural cover. In a few moments casualties skyrocketed. The DSC citation takes up the story:

**** Kelly volunteered to try to knock out the strongpoint. Arming himself with a pole charge about 10 feet long, with 15 pounds of TNT affixed, he climbed the slope under a withering blast of machine gun fire and placed the charge at the strongpoint's base. The subsequent blast was ineffective, and again, alone and unhesitatingly, he braved the slope to repeat the operation. This second blast blew off the ends of the enemy guns. Corporal Kelly then climbed the slope a third time to place a pole charge at the strongpoint's rear entrance. When this had been blown open he hurled hand grenades inside the position, forcing survivors of the enemy gun crews to come out and surrender.****

Sgt. Kelly and Brig. Gen. Frank U. Greer, assistant division commander, who, with Col. Warren G. Robinson, 314th Inf. CO, mounted the fort to drop TNT down a

ventilator, were only three of the many officers and men who made outstanding heroism the order of the day at Fort du Roule.

Although the 2nd Bn., 314th, had previously captured one strongpoint and a motor pool, complete with enemy materiel, the first white flag did not appear on the fort until 1145, June 25. This, it developed, was the act of only one part of the fort—the others chose to fight on. The 1st Bn. supported the 2nd as fighting reached the toe-to-toe stage, and the 3rd Bn. finally was moved up from regimental reserve to neutralize scattered resistance. Fighting raged until 2148 when Generalleutnant von Schlieben, "der Deutsche Festungskommandant von Cherbourg," capitulated. Even then, there was some resistance. Von Schlieben, with typical Nazi callousness, stubbornly refused to issue a blanket "cease firing" order.

Meanwhile, the 313th was smashing through Cherbourg on a house-to-house basis. Sniper fire was persistent. Four heavy concrete pillboxes threatened the entire advance. A concentration of small arms, mortar and anti-tank fire from the 1st Bn. battered them into surrender. (Later that day these guns were manned by GIs, turned against Fort du Roule.) Well ahead of schedule, the regiment reached its beach objectives and started mopping up. Simultaneously, the 314th's 1st and 3rd Bns., having left the 2nd to hold Fort du Roule, advanced through another sector of the battle-torn city.

The 315th swept into Cherbourg from Hardinvast, mopped up a large area. Near the city, persuasive

arrived in the
315th Infantry
CO. 1st Bn.
B. Mitchell
via a
public
temp.
scores

Cherbourg
rendered
More
prisoners
tured.
plies of equip
and materiel was
importance liber
Snipers' bullets
the streets to welcom
was brief. On June 2
Cherbourg and the 79th turned

"You were the chaps at La Haye du Puits, weren't you?" the British liaison officer said. "We heard you had a piece of cake over there—and a bloody piece of cake it was!"

THE Allies held Cherbourg and the Carentan Peninsula's northern tip, but the campaign in Normandy was far from completed. The enemy held tenaciously to a line through Carentan and St. Lo, eastward to Caen on the Orne Estuary. Despite Allied air superiority, enemy

supplies moved from the interior of France to this line via the roadnet south of La Haye du Puits, the 79th's next objective.

Enemy defense preparations for the small but vital city were, to quote a literary company commander, "the epitome of diabolical cunning." Northern (Allied) approaches to the city were heavily mined. Hedgerows bordering roads were honeycombed with automatic weapons and light artillery pieces, augmented by an occasional dug-in tank. Snipers operated with maddening efficiency. The city proper bristled with concrete gun emplacements, pillboxes, tank traps, trenches and barbed wire entanglements. Beyond the city mortar and artillery lobbed HE and fragmentation over the heads of defenders into the path of attackers. The Wehrmacht had been ordered by Hitler to fight to the last man.

The 79th kicked off from the line it had been holding at the mouth of the Ollonde River. Sparked by artillery support, the regiments made immediate contact in the first of the enemy's seemingly endless hedgerow defenses. Many of these "suicide" units were bypassed in the initial rush, and by dark of the first day (July 3) the 315th with the 79th Recon. Trp. surged half-way to the initial objective.

Next day Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower and Lt. Gen. Omar N. Bradley visited the division CP near Les Fosses, kbitized Div Arty's Fourth of July serenade on enemy positions. That afternoon the division's drive clicked with a rhythm that elicited warmest praise from both visitors.

Especially effective was the 314th. At 1810 the 79th was ordered to ease pressure on the 82nd A/B Div. on the left by occupying the end of an enemy-held ridge west of Hill 95. This mission was given to 3rd Bn. At 2100 the mission was completed.

Bucking a thunderous enemy artillery barrage, the 315th kicked off for "Bloody Hill" near Montgardon commanding La Haye du Puits. Comparable enemy artillery harassed a task force of 313th's Co. K and attached 749th Tank Bn.'s Co. A that had skirted enemy positions to take and hold several bridges nearby. On the sunken road that led from the north to La Haye du Puits, the 2nd Bn., 314th, moved slowly forward under even heavier artillery concentration.

Then Div Arty unveiled what GI-witnesses hailed as "the prettiest damned precision artillery in this man's war." Lt. Col. James B. "Kannonball" Kraft's 312th FA Bn. "paced" Lt. Col. Olin E. "Tiger" Teague's 1st Bn., 314th, to the very rim of the city's defenses. A German artillery OP in the city's cathedral lingered too long. A 312th burst through the steeple, and 79th doughfeet entering the town hours later found the Heinie artillery observers still sprawled where they had fallen into the public square.

Co. K, 314th, made a reconnaissance in force into La Haye du Puits and gained control of the railway station. Those who followed it swore that "Off Limits" signs,

the paint still wet, blossomed in the station hours before the last Kraut hollered "uncle!"

On July 8 elements of the 28th Inf. Regt., 8th Div., relieved the 314th's 2nd Bn. Third Bn. and the 28th attempted to push forward, but progress was slow. First Bn., meanwhile, supported by the 749th Tank and 813th TD Bns., began the final assault on La Haye du Puits. Five hours and 49 minutes later, Col. Teague reported the town taken. La Haye du Puits belonged to the 79th.

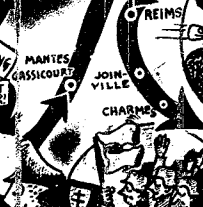
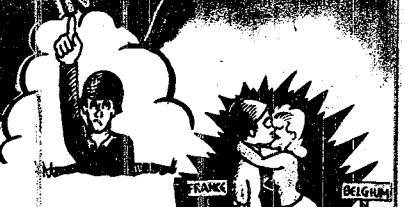
Mopping up "Bloody Hill" was the division's final chore in the La Haye sector. There, Maj. Gen. I.T. Wyche, division commander, graphically displayed the caliber of leadership the 79th has enjoyed since activation. On one of his daily visits to the front, he found a platoon pinned to the slope. There was little or no cover and an understandable degree of disorganization prevailed. Repeatedly exposing himself to enemy fire, Gen. Wyche regrouped the men and led them a distance of two hedge-rows to a position where they were enabled to knock out the strongpoint. At the peak of action he struggled in front of the battle line to help evacuate a wounded infantry scout.

"His only complaint was that he could not go back and kill more Germans."

THE enemy conceded La Haye du Puits, but it was a grudging concession. Highways south and east were infested with his mines. Last ditch combat units manned crossroads and villages. Then rain slowed



The Tail of The 49th in France





the Allied advance, curtailed Allied air operations and afforded the enemy valuable time. Three times a 313th task force stormed the tiny village of Le Bot before the enemy withdrew. The regimental objective — the Hierville-Angoville area — fell only after friendly aircraft mistakenly bombed the towns.



So many resistance pockets were encountered that the attached 749th Tank and the 813th TD Bns. were constantly forward to support foot troops. This was the situation when the 79th received orders to defend the north bank of the Ay River. The remainder of VIII Corps would continue the attack against the river front.

South of the Ay the enemy took a break while his attackers moved gingerly through the liberally-sown minefields covering the far shore. While inclement weather grounded Allied air power, he rushed up badly needed men and supplies from Lessay and St. Lo. He blew the Ay's bridges. He dug in his 88's and mortars. He even launched series of minor counterattacks to test American strength beyond the river.

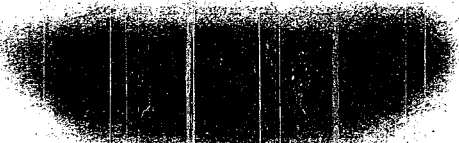
Pfc Frederick F. Richardson, Co. F, 313th, and his BAR wrecked two such enemy counterattacks, resulting in 20 prisoners and 40 enemy killed and wounded. Richardson's company was holding a line along the narrow river near a dynamited bridge. He set up his BAR in

the window of a stone house about 200 yards from the bridge site. While the house rocked under direct mortar hits, Richardson stuck to his post from late afternoon of one day until early evening of the next.

Time after time the enemy crossed the wrecked bridge to storm the house. Each time the sharp chatter of the BAR took its toll. There were two interruptions. On the second afternoon the enemy was granted a three-hour truce to evacuate dead and wounded from the BAR's field of fire. Shortly after, one German officer and 19 enlisted men—survivors of a force that had tried to exterminate the one-man nuisance—broke out a white flag. Richardson left his window long enough to see his prisoners taken, then resumed his vigil. End of the story is contained in the battalion commander's report:

"After having his leg cut off completely by a mortar shell which burst just outside the window, Pfc Richardson amazed the medical officers who cared for him by his coolness and good condition. Fully conscious, his only complaint was that he could not go back and kill more Germans."

On July 26, VIII Corps unveiled "Operation——." The 79th's plan of attack called for the 314th to follow the 28th across the river after the 8th Div. had secured the high ground southeast of Lessay. Driving with an intensity the enemy was powerless to withstand, Corps units smashed across the Ay, and the German rout in Normandy shifted into high gear.



"They're saying we won't see Paris after all," the buck corporal said, with a wry grin. "Now I know how Moses felt about the Promised Land."

THE 79th had slugged its way through Fougeres, Laval, Le Mans. It had bridged the Sarthe River in its swing north to help close the famous Falaise "pocket." Motorized, moving like an armored column, it was clicking along in the vanguard of the Allied thrust toward Versailles and Paris. Then headquarters beckoned with a change of orders: the 79th would seize the high ground south of the Seine and west of Paris through the industrial city of Mantes-Gassicourt. Paris, which many had thought the end of the line, became just another way station on the division's combat itinerary.

From the western heights commanding the Seine River valley, Mantes-Gassicourt looked like a dead city. The Air Force had battered this prime Nazi supply center relentlessly, leaving rubble smouldering in the late summer haze. Roads to and from the city were cluttered with wrecked enemy supply vehicles. When the Air Forces stopped, artillery resumed.

The 79th Recon Trp. knifed in and out of the city. Combining its quest for information with on-the-spot, hit-and-run missions, it destroyed four enemy gasoline trucks. The enemy was moving from the city to make large scale defense preparations in the "natural loop" of the Seine, northeast of Mantes-Gassicourt.

On the morning of Aug. 19, a 314th task force pushed into the city, reported it clear. Meanwhile patrols of the 313th mopped up wooded areas and prodded the vicinity of Rolleboise, to the north. The dams bridging the Seine had been blown, but a catwalk across one still was passable for foot troops.

In pitch dark and driving rain, the 1st and 2nd Bns., 313th, began moving across the river supported by Cos. A and C, 304th Engr. Bn. with assault boats and rafts. By dawn, the entire regiment was dug in and under fire from the Loop. Throughout the day, the 313th Battalion worked tirelessly under spot



and aerial fire to ferry across division vehicles. Corps engineers began installation of a 40-ton treadway bridge. But with the bridge came the Luftwaffe.

It was difficult to recognize this Luftwaffe as the same one that had contented itself before with an occasional bed-check. Rain and shine, high ceiling and low, it paid repeated (but unsuccessful) visits to the bridge site. Div Arty and attached ack-ack waxed fat. At first three enemy planes were shot down; then six; then eleven. At the nearby division PW cage glum-faced prisoners had a ringside seat for the one-sided engagements. One crippled ME-109 careened so low over the cage that the pilot's agonized face was clearly visible. The plane limped on for another mile, lost altitude steadily, crashed in flames. A Luftwaffe pilot who had walked away from his own crash that very morning turned a hopeful countenance to an interrogator. "That was a Schpitfire, wasn't it?" he asked prayerfully.

But neither the revived Luftwaffe nor the first Nebelwerfer fire the division had experienced since Cherbourg could stop the 79th. By day foot troops harried the desperate enemy. By day and night artillery thundered. In a one night firing session alone Div Arty and attached units threw a record 4600 pounds of 105mm. and 1048 rounds of 155mm. Several near-hysterical Huns walked into the division's lines next day begging for relief from "your terrible automatic artillery." These prisoners testified that German intelligence had identified the 79th as an airborne unit—landed by parachute and glider in The Loop!

For five thunderous days the enemy battered at the lone division holding The Loop. Each counterattack was spurned with staggering losses for the enemy. Lee McCardell, Sun Papers correspondent on the scene, described the division's position as "a stubby finger, sticking into enemy territory. *** It was sort of a Bunker Hill proposition, as the (79th) soldiers described it afterwards. They had placed machine guns behind the walls in which they had made embrasures. Sitting at their gun positions, calmly smoking as they watched the desperate Germans advance, they held their fire until they could almost see the whites of their eyes." A news commentator in the States lauded the then unidentified 79th as "the burr under Germany's saddle."



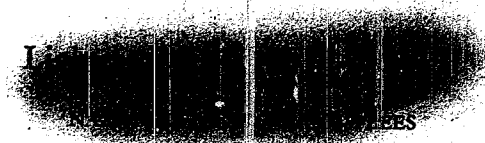
Col. Sterling Wood, 313th CO, counted 39 enemy dead in an area not more than 50 yards square. "I've never seen anything like it in any other engagement in this war—and we've had some pretty stiff ones," he declared.

On Aug. 27 the enemy uncorked his Sunday punch—a full-dress counterattack featuring everything from small arms to flamethrowers. Infantry and artillery met the assault head-on, stopped it cold. Next day the 79th was on the final objective.

After customary mopping-up operations, the division passed to XIX Corps. Behind it, safely in Allied hands,

was the Seine Loop, by far the most strategic bridgehead in ETO. The enemy's vaunted 18th GAF Division, pride of his Paris defenses, had been battered to bits. On the heights overlooking Mantes-Gassicourt moved burial squads, mute testimony to the awesome efficiency of Div Arty and attached artillery.

Beyond The Loop, Paris was free.



"This is believed to be one of the fastest opposed advances of comparable distance by an infantry division in warfare."

RECENTLY added to the 79th's glorious annals was the following letter, written to Maj. Gen. I. T. Wyche, division commander, by Maj. Gen. Charles H. Corlett, commanding XIX Corps:

"On 28 August 1944, the 79th Infantry Division joined this Corps. At that time it had already established a bridgehead and was astride the Seine River. The Corps was ordered to advance and in 72 hours the division

covered a total of 180 miles, crossing the Somme River and numerous smaller streams and closing in perfect order on its objectives in Belgium.

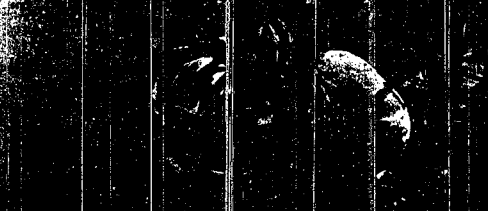
"During this period the Division fought numerous engagements, destroyed much enemy equipment and took many prisoners. This is believed to be one of the fastest opposed advances of comparable distance by an infantry division in warfare. It is desired to commend you, your officers and men on this splendid achievement. The Commanding General, First United States Army, Lieutenant General Courtney Hodges, concurs in the commendation."

Between the lines of that lasting tribute lies the 304th Engr. Bn.'s contribution to the lightning smash into Belgium. Bridges across the Somme and those "numerous smaller streams" had been wrecked by the retreating enemy. The battalion replaced those bridges—once with steel and timber collected and fashioned on the spot—and continued to keep pace with the regiments.

ON Sept. 8 the German Nineteenth Army was in full flight before the relentless prodding of U. S. Seventh Army. But the enemy had planned his retreat with painstaking care. His route, north and northeast, aimed at the natural line formed by the Moselle River and the hilly, wooded terrain of that section. Anticipating a possible thrust from Third Army, he held grimly to towns flanking the main road from Chatillon-sur-Seine to Neufchâteau, then east to Charmes and the river.

On the Belgian border, its chore completed, the 79th reverted to XV Corps to help smash the newly created defensive line. Tempo of this new division thrust was reminiscent of the drive into Belgium. Reims, Charmes, Epinal, Poussay, Joinville and St. Dizier were some of the more prominent names that flashed by in the regiments' swift advances. On one day the 79th advanced 50 miles, established a regimental combat team near Charmes. Next day it had a battalion east of the Moselle. Contact with the enemy was maintained without difficulty, but only on rare occasions did he pause to fight.

While the 79th was in the process of reorganizing, the German Nineteenth Army was in full flight before the relentless prodding of U. S. Seventh Army. But the enemy had planned his retreat with painstaking care. His route, north and northeast, aimed at the natural line formed by the Moselle River and the hilly, wooded terrain of that section. Anticipating a possible thrust from Third Army, he held grimly to towns flanking the main road from Chatillon-sur-Seine to Neufchâteau, then east to Charmes and the river.



teau, the enemy turned again toward the Rhine. His casualties in this campaign, not yet completely known, approached astronomical figures. Known definitely, however, was the fact that he was minus the famous 16th Div. According to XV Corps, the 79th had "played a principal part" in the "annihilation" of this veteran Nazi unit.

"Compared with this operation, Fort du Roule was a picnic."

THE enemy continued to retreat; his delaying actions became increasingly frequent; the intensity of his resistance reached new peaks. Each town, however small, was relinquished only after the most bitter fighting. At Chatenois, hard pressed by the 79th, the enemy turned his ack-ack on assaulting foot troops. At Rouvres-la-Chetive attached tank destroyers were called up to help force his reluctant withdrawal. At Xermamenil he threw 14 tanks of the 21st Panzer Div. and supporting infantry into the breach, only to fall back under the relentless hammering of the 313th. At the Mortagne River crossing he counter-attacked with two tanks and an infantry company, but the attached 773rd TD Bn. destroyed both tanks and 1st Bn., 314th, mopped up his infantry.



The enemy sensed that his last hope rested on the natural barriers of the outer defense perimeter of Germany proper. At his back were the Meurthe River,

the Forêt de Parroy, the Vosges foothills and the Rhine. These were to be the sites of his last-ditch stand.

"We climbed Fort du Roule, and we crossed the Meurthe River," said Lt. Col. Ernest R. Purvis, CO, 3rd Bn., 314th. "If we had to do one of the two over, we'd take Fort du Roule every time. Compared with this operation, Fort du Roule was a picnic."

The 3rd Bn. made contact with the enemy's Meurthe River line at Frambois where a German force larger than a battalion held the river proper and a comparable force was in "active reserve" in a wooded strip just beyond the river valley. Emplaced machine guns and dug-in tanks bracketed the river's breast-deep fords and blown bridge sites with a murderous fire. Battalion non-coms even now refer to the Frambois action as "Little D-Day." When the smoke of battle lifted two days later, the Meurthe River line was no more; in the wooded strip beyond, the 3rd Bn. was mopping up.

The 79th stormed into the city of Luneville, and the enemy turned again—this time to familiar haunts. In World War I he had found a haven in the Forest of Parroy; here in World War II he elected to make another stand. Third Army chose a line extending from Donnelly to Baccarat as one of several American objectives to stymie the enemy's withdrawal, but to XV Corps went the task of clearing Forêt de Parroy. Again Corps beckoned the 79th, and again it spearheaded the attack.

The 79th Recon. Trp. and 106th Cavalry Gp. unleashed the first of dozens of audacious swoops into the forest.

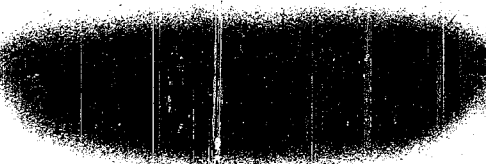


brush. The recon troop...
Sionviller and penetrated the woods about one kilometer. It pinpointed a road block, mine fields, and came away under heavy enemy fire. Patrols from the 313th and 314th spotted additional enemy positions between the Vezouse River and the forest. More than 30 enemy artillery positions, checked by sound and flash OPs, were immediately counterbattered by 79th and Corps Artillery. On all sides were evidences of dug-in enemy defenses, some dating back to the last war.

Regiments started on schedule what was to prove a tedious and bloody task. Fighting was house to house in Le Mans and Neufchâteau—in Parroy, it was tree to tree.

The enemy was dug in. Occasionally he ventured out. On Sept. 29 the 313th and Co. C, 773rd Tank Bn. in support, were mopping up the eastern edge of the forest when the tank outfit spotted an enemy column coming from the town of Bauzemont. Three Mark IV tanks and three trucks were destroyed before the surprised unit could withdraw.

Forêt de Parroy, for days a nightmare of tree bursts, clinging underbrush, ankle-deep mud and unceasing enemy harassing fire, finally was taken. The enemy, better than anyone else, knows how and why he was forced to quit this highly vital spot for the doubtful haven of the Vosges and the Rhine.



“...You have achieved a significant victory. I have full confidence in your ability to continue your relentless pursuit until the final victory.”

This story was written in early December 1944. The division is still harrying the enemy, and each officer and man is aware that a break will not come until the

last Nazi has been forced to complete and unconditional surrender. The division's story is still an unfinished book and until V-Day has been proclaimed to the free peoples of all nations, it will remain incomplete.

CURRENT entries in the journal follow closely behind a recent commendation from Seventh Army, published as General Orders 111, signed by Lt. Gen. A. M. Patch, commanding:

"Soldiers of the 79th Division: Following your continuous action from D-Day in Normandy until late October, you were committed to the attack only a few days after



a short rest. Breaking through the enemy defenses north of Baccarat, you continued to advance, in the face of powerful enemy resistance, overrunning the enemy defenses and capturing many prisoners. During the brilliant action which followed, you captured the towns of Blamont and Cirey, reducing the main enemy positions and effecting a breakthrough which permitted the Second French Armored Division to advance rapidly to the northeast and exploit the successes you had achieved.

"Having bewildered the enemy and scattered his forces, you continued the pursuit to the northeast, thus preventing him the opportunity to regroup and make a stand west of the Vosges.

"Without pausing for rest, you continued your tireless pursuit of the enemy toward Saverne, capturing numerous towns, enemy strongpoints and large numbers of prisoners in three days. Within eight days you had driven the enemy from the area of Saverne and Sarrebourg and were preparing to drive him from his last positions west of the Saverne Gap.

"This difficult assault and tenacious pursuit has contributed nobly to the success of the Seventh Army operation as a whole. It indicates a state of training and discipline of the highest order as well as a plan soundly conceived and energetically carried out. You have achieved a significant victory. I have full confidence in your ability to continue your relentless pursuit until the final victory."

No combat unit is stronger than its services and supply branches will it to be. Between the lines of the foregoing are countless untold services and assistance supplied by the 79th QM Co., 79th Sig. Co., 779th Ord. Co., 304th Medical Bn., Division Hq & Hq. Co., and Special Troops. In more than four months of consecutive combat days, involving unprecedented troop movements against rigorous enemy opposition, the 79th Inf. Div. was never in want for any item of supply or type of service available to these units. No man suffered for so much as a minute for lack of the finest medical service available.

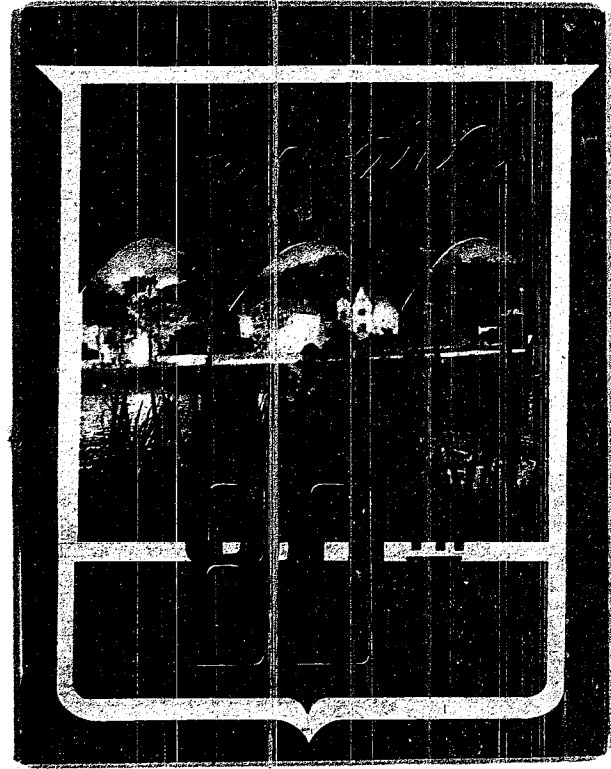
There is no... record...



The Team







Citations

Citations

PASSED AT

THE story of the 80th Infantry Division briefly relates another gallant chapter in the colorful history of the American soldier and his heroic struggle against those forces which seek to destroy man's inalienable rights.

Through its baptism of fire at Ardenne, the sweep across France, the crossing of the Moselle, fighting into besieged Bastogne and twice shattering the Siegfried Line, the division never once failed to seize its objective.

This book is dedicated to the memory of our fallen comrades. We must and we shall press on to complete the unfinished task for which they have given so much.

H. McQuae

Major General, Commanding

THE STORY OF THE 80th INFANTRY DIVISION

THUNDER of artillery occasionally broke the stillness of the murky night. Suddenly at 0200 Feb. 7, 1945, the entire front burst into flame. Artillery shells screamed towards Germany's "sacred soil" in a crescendo, drowning out the maddening din of men going into action.

The battle-tested 80th "Blue Ridge" Division again was moving forward, having helped smash the southern

made the river disappear in a dense fog, the assault craft managed to get across carrying the boys into Germany.

Despite heroic efforts of engineers, racing flood waters, continuous rain of enemy artillery, machine gunner and small arms fire prevented construction of a bridge. Only infantrymen could be ferried across in rubber floats and wooden boats.

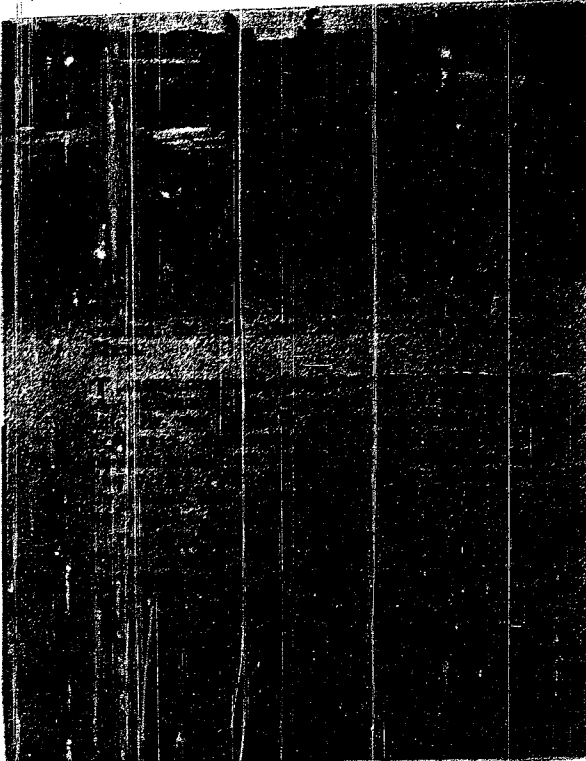
Doughs had to do it again the hard way, alone. No easy job faced them as they hit the opposite bank.

Enemy forts, situated on heights overlooking the river, were organized in depth and sited to support one another with interlocking fields of fire. Many enemy positions were cunningly camouflaged as houses, garages, and similar structures. Booby traps, mine fields were added hazards.

Faced by murderous fire, doughs stormed up the precipitous incline. Overcoming fanatical resistance, they knocked out one pillbox after another. The going was rough but Blue Riflers never had been stopped. They were not going to be stopped now.

Nazi had been ordered to die at their posts. Men of the 40th did everything possible to help them fulfill their orders.

That night Wallendorf was cleared by the 119th Inf. More pillboxes, more hills, than Reisdorf fell Feb. 10 to the onrushing 118th. The bridgehead was swelling in size. The first bridge was constructed at Wallendorf 0700, Feb. 11. Immediately troops, tanks, guns, supplies poured into the Fatherland. Rate of PWs rose from a mere handful during the first grueling hours to more than 400 daily.



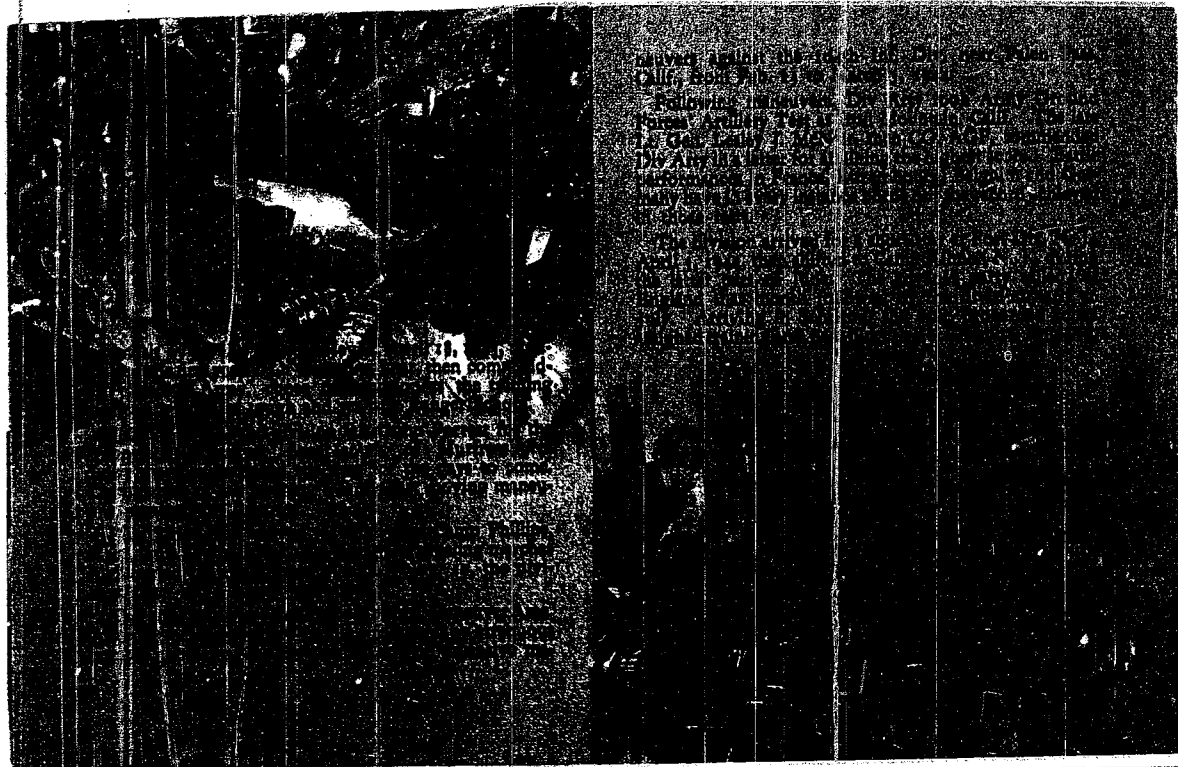
1918, and participated as Army reserve in the reduction of the St. Mihiel salient.

Outstanding accomplishment of the 80th in World War I occurred during the defeat of the German Imperial Army in the Battle of the Meuse-Argonne. Marshal Foch, Commander-in-Chief of the Allied Armies, had ordered an American-French attack to cut the vital German supply line—the Carignan-Sedan-Mezieres Railroad. So important was this railroad to the German High Command that four systems of field fortifications had been built to protect it.

This offensive, destined to break the back of the Kaiser's Armies, began early Sept. 26, 1918. Three times the spearheading 80th was called upon; three times it took its objective. Prior to being relieved by the 1st Div., Nov. 8, 1918, Blue Ridge infantrymen, along with other Allied divisions, had shattered the whole German defense system.

Excellent leadership and thorough training had paid off. The division could boast of having captured two Germans and one machine gun for each 80th man wounded. Little wonder that it was rated the best National Army division of World War I and that numbered among its many distinguished veterans are such leaders as Gen. Joseph W. Stilwell, CG, Army Ground Forces, and Maj. Gen. Patrick J. Hurley, Ambassador to China.

THE 80th Div. was reactivated at Camp Forrest, Tenn., July 15, 1942, under the command of Maj. Gen. Joseph D. Patch, Present CG, Maj. Gen. (then Brig. Gen.) Horace L. McBride, commanded Div Arty.



received again and the following...

Calif., March 19, 1944

Following information was received...

North, April 1944

LA, Calif., 1944

Dix, Calif., 1944

May 1944

Tightening THE NAZI NOOSE AT ARGENTAN

AUG. 3, 1944 (D plus 58), less than one month after landing in the British Isles, the 80th found itself for the second time on French soil, ready to assist in the destruction of the new German dream of world domination.

Landing at Utah Beach, the division was destined to play an outstanding role in exploiting the famed Third Army breakthrough at Avranches, which was beginning to assume the proportion of a major catastrophe for the Wehrmacht.

Guided by the 80th MP Platoon, Blue Ridge organizations were directed from the beach to the assembly area near St. Jores. The night of Aug. 7, all units were assembled, the division was ready to strike its initial blow against the enemy.

Next day, the 80th was given its first combat mission: to assist in stemming the powerful armored counter-attack by five panzer divisions which desperately sought to cut Lt. Gen. George S. Patton's tenuous supply line at Avranches. On this day Lt. Lloyd C. Bloomer, Osborne, Kan., 314th FA, captured the division's first prisoner, a German airman, at St. Hilaire.

Arriving too late to participate in smashing the short-lived Nazi thrust, the Blue Ridge Division, under new orders, swept eastward to seize Evron and Ste. Suzanne

These German strongholds were held by elements of a panzer division, a German Air Force battalion and a detachment of storm troops supported by artillery and numerous anti-aircraft guns. The enemy had ample time to dig in, prepare mine fields and booby traps.

Despite determined resistance, the 11th Inf. stormed into the small town of Breda on the east of Arnhem at 0900, Aug. 18. By 1135 the surrounding town of St. was cleared.

Col. Harry D. McHugh, Devil's Lane, N. D., 11th CO, led his troops through their baptism of fire. For his inspiring leadership, Gen. McArdle awarded him the division's first Silver Star.

Instead of self-satisfaction, the 11th forged ahead and another action, which, during the night and morning of August 19, 1944, the 11th Inf. captured the town of Oosterbeek, the last of the German strongholds and captured the



History REPEATS ITSELF AT ST. MIHIEL

After this stunning blow to the Wehrmacht, the division moved to a concentration area south of the Argentan-Exmes Road and engaged in a series of problems on latest methods of armor-infantry coordination.

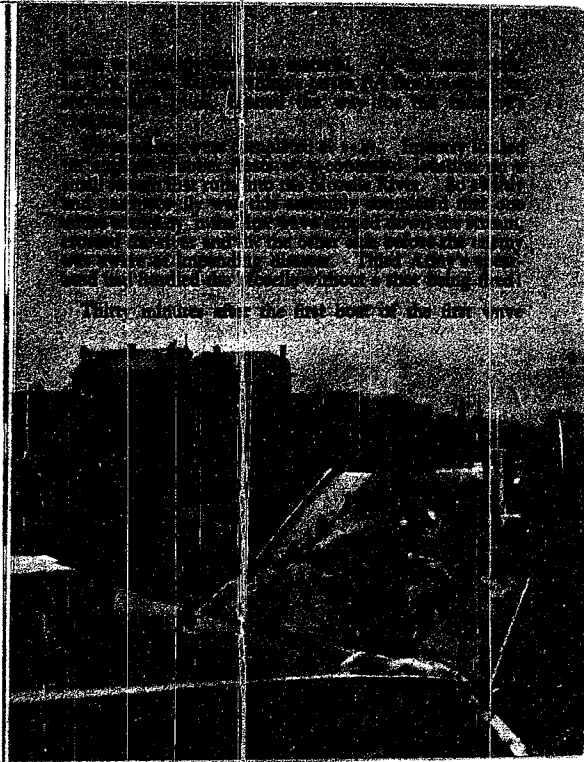
Once again a part of Gen. Patton's Third Army, the Blue Ridge Division swung south of Paris and side by side with the 4th Armored, spearheaded the Allied drive across France.

German forces rapidly withdrew, hoping to establish a defense line east of the Marne River. However, after crossing the Seine and Aube Rivers, the division hotly pursued fleeing Nazis across the Marne into Chalons-sur-Marne, Aug. 29 before they could consolidate a defensive position.

So swiftly did forces move that supply lines stretched thinner and thinner. The last 25 days in August alone, the truck fleet of the 130th QM Co. travelled more than 151,000 miles to supply the tremendous needs.

Near Chalons-sur-Marne, the 130th struck it lucky. More than 20,000 gallons of gasoline were seized in the nick of time. Vehicles now could continue their dash to the east.

Hard on the heels of still retreating Germans, the 117th



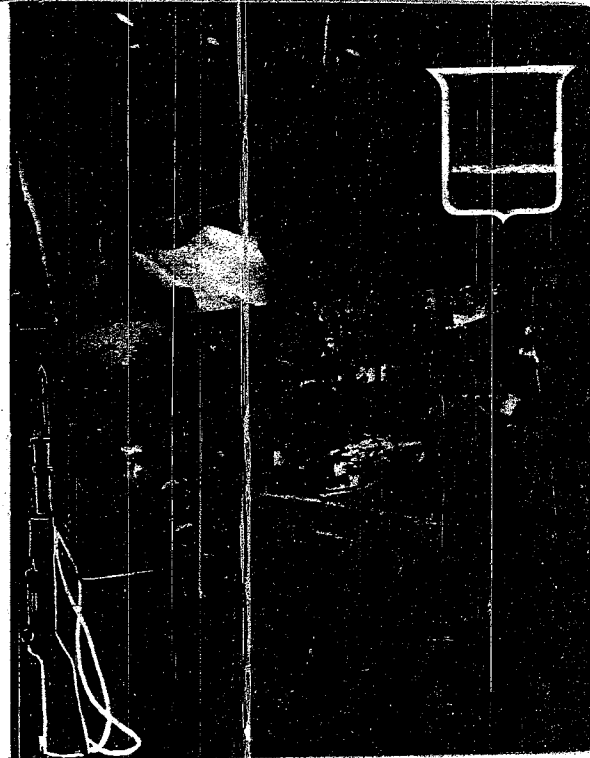
started across, the last fighting elements of Col. Cheston's battalion were scrambling up the opposite bank. The operation was accomplished without a single casualty.

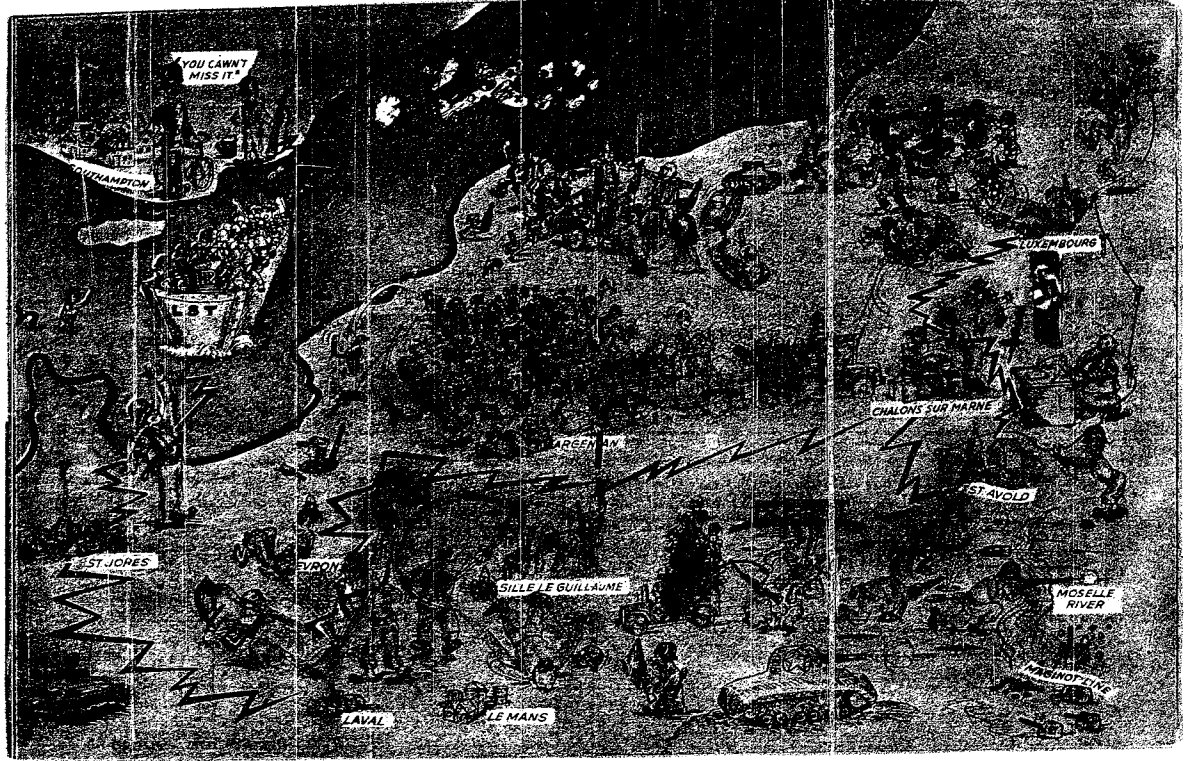
By next day the battalion, with jeeps, ambulances, trucks, ammunition and rations had crossed by floats, two power-driven ferries and over a partially repaired bridge. The first bridgehead across the Moselle River was firmly established.

Fighting their way step by step under continual harassing fire of small arms, mortars and artillery, 319th doughs captured two anchors of the enemy line, Fort de Villey le Sec and Fort de Gondreville. Later they cleared the Forêt de Hays and were advancing on Nancy as part of the newly-formed task force by Brig. Gen. Sebree, Asst. Div. Commander, 35th Inf. Div., when they were ordered to rejoin the 80th.

Meanwhile, stiff enemy resistance and unfavorable terrain combined to defeat all efforts to make crossings north of Toul in the strongly held Dieulouard and Pont-a-Mousson sectors. Germans were registered in on the area. From their OPs on the high hills east of the Moselle River, they had a commanding view of the entire valley. Enemy artillery fire was quickly brought on any movement along the river.

Just before dawn, Sept. 12, the 317th Inf. crossed the river at Dieulouard in assault boats under a storm of enemy fire. While the 317th was battering towards high ground beyond, the 403rd Engr. Bn. and the 1117th Engr. Gp. spanned the Moselle with ponton bridges, disregarding continuous hostile fire.







The 318th Inf., less its 1st Bn. which was attached to the 4th Armd. Div., crossed on these newly constructed bridges, seized Lolsy and prepared to strike north to Mousson Hill.

In the afternoon, 318th FA crossed to give close support to the infantry. Germans, trying desperately to destroy the bridges, unleashed a cyclone of heavy artillery. Across, the battalion, ignoring the rain of enemy artillery and mortar shells, dug in and fired incessant barrages, some point-blank, on the fanatically resisting enemy.

Early Sept. 13, Germans massed available armor and infantry, then launched a series of high-powered counter-attacks beginning at 0500. Striking hard, they broke through the perimeter defenses of both the 317th and 318th Regts., recaptured Lolsy, penetrated the 318th Inf. CP and nearly reached the bridges at Dieulouard.

But doughs, swiftly recovering from the blow, halted the Nazi advance by 0800, knocking out a large part of the rapidly dwindling hostile armor. All lost positions were regained before nightfall.

Maj. Karl B. Nuessner's 3rd Bn., 318th Inf., moved out of Lolsy early next morning and attacked north toward towering Mousson Hill. Crowned by a ruined castle, rising above the town of Pont-a-Mousson, this high vantage point was the key to the Moselle River in the 80th's zone of advance.

Overcoming heavy opposition, the battalion seized the town of Atton at the foot of the hill, by 1350 had stormed up the steep slope and reached its crest.

Brig. Gen. Edmund W. Searby, Div Arty Commander,

...the ...
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Before infantrymen could consolidate their positions, Nazis counter-attacked in force, supported by heavy concentrations of artillery and mortar fire. An enemy tank plunged as close as 130 yards from where Gen. Scarfy was urging on hard-pressed doughs. After a shell stopped the tank, the crew emerged, sprayed doughs with anti-tank fire.

Disregarding his own safety, Gen. Scarfy rallied the ...
 ...wounded GI and ...
 ...the general was ...



Make Way FOR THE INFANTRY!

EARLY Sept. 15, Germans launched another strong counter-attack. This time Nazis succeeded in cutting the extended supply line of the 3rd Bn. by recapturing Atton.

Surrounded and outnumbered, Maj. Nuessner's men stubbornly repelled all enemy attempts to dislodge them from the hill. Div Arty liaison planes, braving intense flak, dropped urgently needed ammunition, food and blood plasma to the beleaguered men.

Meanwhile, the 319th Inf., as part of Task Force Sebec, had swept through the Forêt de Haye to within sight of Nancy, was recalled and rushed north to reinforce the hard-pressed bridgehead. Attacking north from Loisy, 1st Bn., 319th, retook Atton and shattered the encirclement of the 3rd Bn., 318th Inf., just before dark, Sept. 16.

Aiding in the relief of troops on Mousson Hill was the 1st Bn., 318th Inf., with a company of medium tanks of the 4th Arm'd Div. Having fought its way back from Arracourt where the 4th Armored, with 318th's 1st Bn. attached, had knifed its way far behind German front lines, the reinforced 1st Bn. stormed up Ste. Genevieve Hill which overlooks the bridges at Dieulouard. Caught from the rear, bewildered Nazis were overwhelmed.

After clearing the enemy from this key terrain feature, the battalion attacked north through the Forêt de Facq,

cleared the Germans from the concealed supply and assembly area used as a base for their attacks on Mousson Hill.

Assisting in this drive through hostile territory was Lt. Phillip H. Wagner's 1st Platoon, 80th Reg. Troop. Three days before the platoon was ordered to reconnoiter the area east of the division's hard-fought bridgehead, Lt. Wagner's men had hammered through to the rear of the enemy lines, engaged the enemy on 13 separate occasions, radioed back valuable information, then assumed the point position for the 1st Bn., 318th Inf., as it advanced toward Ste. Genevieve Hill. During the recon platoon's hit-and-run mission only one man was wounded.

Gen. McBride repeatedly visited foremost units on the east bank of the river during the critical days of the bridgehead.

After strengthening positions on the high ground running from Mousson Hill, Ste. Genevieve Hill, Landromont Ridge and Falaise Ridge, the 317th and 318th forged ahead through the Bois de St. Clement. In the meantime, the 319th on the north flank expanded the bridgehead to include the small towns of Lesmenille, Morville-sur-Selle and Port-sur-Selle.

Preparations then were made for a coordinated attack, Oct. 8, on Mt. Toulon, Mt. St. Jean and high ground overlooking the Selle River near Benicourt, Clemery and Manancourt-sur-Selle.

A thunderous bombardment on hostile positions by heavy weapons paved the way for the infantry's advance. In addition, two batteries of four barrelled .50 caliber machine guns from the 633rd AAA Bn. flashed 79,500

Through THE MAGINOT, INTO THE SAAR

FROM Oct. 10 to Nov. 7, 1944, the 80th Div. held defensive positions west of the Seille River and prepared for the great Third Army sweep into the industrially vital Saar Basin. Supplies, ammunition and gasoline were massed for the mighty drive.

A bombardment of savage intensity by all available weapons, including captured German 81mm and 120mm mortars repaired by the 780th Ord. Co., heralded the jump-off of Blue Ridge men at 0600, Nov. 8. Germans were caught off-balance again. They did not think doughs would attack in such unfavorable weather, attempt to cross the rain-swollen Seille River.

Hurdling of the river was accomplished at fords, and by engineer craft, foot and ponton bridges. Resistance was thin. By nightfall, the high ground across the Seille was firmly held.

Nov. 9 saw the 80th pushing forward, stampeding all opposition. That afternoon, the division's front faced Delme Ridge, a bald plateau 1380 feet above sea level, approximately four miles long, sitting squarely across the pathway to the Saar Basin. Its importance was summarized by The New York Times: "The ridge was one of the most important objectives in Lt. Gen. George

including 18 doughboys. For almost a group valiant efforts to until reinforcements up. As rapid advance Regt. and the made possible.

This deep the great forces the way for

Arrance fell before Pfc Alphonse 319th, braved and its crew. Spurred Jankunas' mates assault his action and leadership in the 32 PWs. Jankunas was awarded the Silver Star.

Despite heavy artillery and mortar fire, demolition and road blocks, the 80th plunged across the Niedermunde River to roll back a badly shaken enemy from the important mining town of Faulquemont.

Before the Blue Ridge men lay the "invincible" Maginot Line. Now the forts were being used as CPs, supply centers and troop shelters by defending Germans. Field fortifications were prepared around these strongpoints.

Manning the reversed line were newly arrived Nazi units.

Early Nov. 23, men of the 80th under cover of an artillery barrage ripped into the attack. A German commander, whose battalion was ground to bits soon after the assault got under way, described the attack as remarkable. He was amazed by the skillful utilization of tactical advantages, and the cooperation of infantry and armor with all supporting heavy weapons.

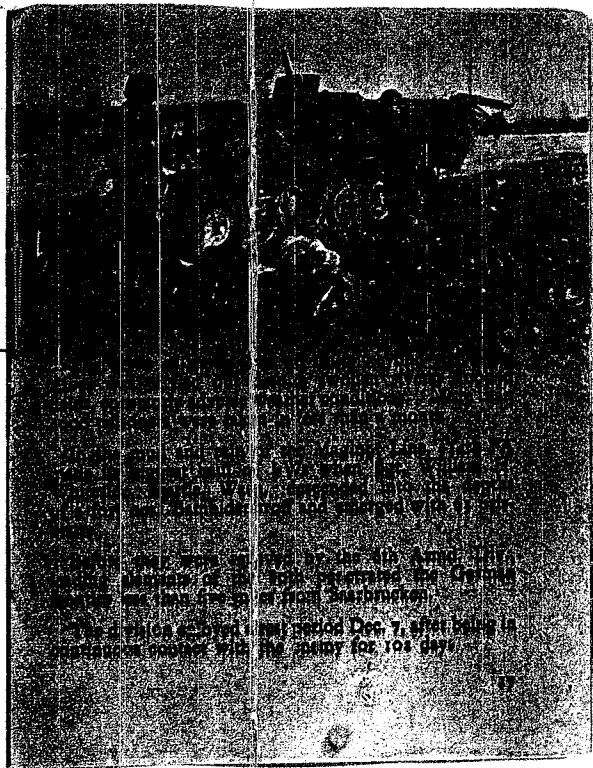
Fort Bambiderstroff was taken an hour and 13 minutes after the jump-off. Soon Forts Laudrefang, Teting Woods Kerfent, Bambesch, Kinseling, Einseling and Quatre Verts crashed under the powerhouse drive of the 317th, 318th, and 319th Regts.

Paced by 90mm self-propelled guns of the 610th TD Bn., which shattered more than 13 reinforced pillboxes, Blue Ridgers smashed completely through the Maginot Line, Nov. 26, to stand before the industrial heart of the Saar Basin.

Overwhelming strongly held enemy positions, the 80th ploughed forward, capturing Nov. 27, the key city of St. Avold, one-time German Army Headquarters and a coal center for the Nazi war machine.

Seizure of St. Avold was hailed by New York's Daily News, commenting on Third Army's dash through the Saar, as the place where "Gen. von Rundstedt suffered perhaps his greatest defeat of the present campaign."

The division continued the attack, Dec. 4, steamrolling through Farebersviller, Tenteling and Coehertn. The important town of Merlebach was liberated Dec. 6.



RACING TO THE

RESCUE AT *Bastogne*

LEAVING the rest area, Dec. 18, Blue Ridge troops slipped southeast near Rohrbach to prepare to breach the Siegfried Line. They barely had time to move into this new position when the German counter-attack and breakthrough in the Ardennes assumed the proportions of a major offensive.

Spearheads of German armor were heading towards Liege and the vital port of Antwerp, Dec. 19. The 80th was given the mission of protecting the City of Luxembourg from the rapidly advancing German columns.

Tribute to the 80th's stamina was expressed by the New York Journal-American: "The 80th Division performed a feat as remarkable as any of Stonewall Jackson's foot cavalry. It was ready to go into the fighting line south of Saarbrucken when orders came to go northward, and it went 150 miles swiftly to get into action."

Arriving north of the City of Luxembourg, the division took up positions before launching an attack early Dec. 22. This assault on the enemy's flank caught him unprepared. In Ettelbruck almost a battalion of enemy artillery was destroyed. Other targets were promptly disposed of by trigger-quick infantry and artillery. The German advance on Luxembourg City was stopped.

fired four clips into the enemy position when his company was halted by intense machine gun fire. Wounded, he hurled a grenade into the nest, silencing the gun and killing the crew. Means was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross.

Christmas Day, side by side with tanks of the 4th, 318th doughs began to batter head through murderous opposition. Over frozen, snow-covered terrain, the attack gained nine bitter miles despite constant machine gun and mortar fire.

Next day the gap between rescuers and besieged had been reduced to 4000 yards. A coordinated plan of action for both now was necessary; means of communication had to be established.

First Lt. Walter P. Carr, Huston, Miss., and Bn., 318th Inf., leading a four man patrol, undertook the hazardous night mission of slipping through the ring of steel into Bastogne. The patrol reached an engineer outpost in the besieged city 0430, Dec. 27.

"They did everything but kiss, they were so damn glad," Lt. Carr said later. "I told them how the relieving forces were progressing. I felt like a GI Santa Claus."

After an exchange of information at the 101st Airborne's CP, Lt. Carr and his small patrol returned to their own lines with an overlay of defense positions within the city and a situation report of the 101st. Lt. Carr delivered the documents, then rejoined his outfit in time to attack with his unit at 0800.

Aided by the detailed information of the Bastogne situation, Blue Ridge doughs and 4th Armored tankers plod-







BZAPP
THE STORY OF THE
87th INFANTRY DIVISION

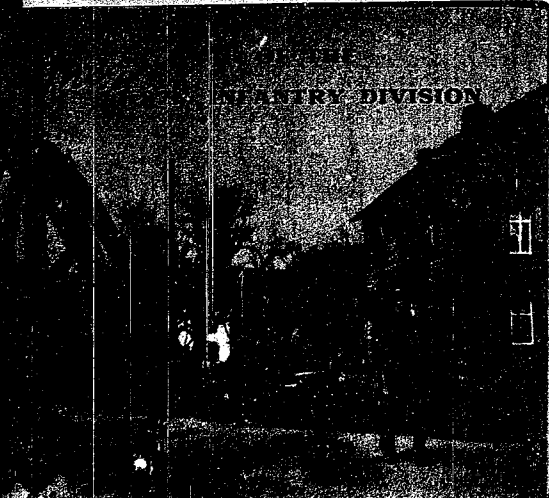


This is the story of the famous "Golden Acorn" Division—and its participation in the most brilliant campaign of World War I. The vicious battle of the Argonne, the heroic defense of the Meuse, the brilliant capture of the Siegfried Line; the Kyllburg; the smooth execution of the Moselle crossing; and the capture of historic Koblenz; the brilliant forced passage of the Rhine; the irresistible surge eastward across Germany to the borders of Czechoslovakia. These stirring events are all recorded here for you and yours, and all who may, to read and cherish. And if your hood warms as you read, remember those who spilled their blood as the Golden Acorn earned the "Can Do" commendation of its brilliant corps commander.

I am truly and humbly grateful for the high privilege of command of this fighting division. With a mounting pride in the achievements of the past, I ask the living, determined that our noble dead shall not have died in vain, to turn firmly toward the future, "Stand Firm and Strong."

Paul L. Culver, Jr.
 Major-General, Commanding

Major-General, Commanding



From Metz to Plauen. Across the German-Saar border. Through the Belgian Ardennes and Luxembourg. Cracking the Siegfried Line... Spanning the Moselle River and on to Koblenz... Over the Rhine... Racing with savage fury through the heart of Nazi Germany to the Czechoslovakian border.

47 DE 36

That's the battle path of the 87th Infantry Division during 154 days of action in the European Theater of Operations—154 days from Dec. 6, 1944, when 1st Bn., 345th Inf., and Div Arty moved in on Metz until May 8, 1945, when German Armies surrendered unconditionally.

Gen. George S. Patton, Jr., Third Army Commander, in commending VIII Corps personnel, wrote:

The relentless advance to the Kyll River, thence to the Rhine, your capture of Koblenz and subsequent assault crossing of the Rhine at its most difficult sector, resulting in the rapid advance to the Mulde River are events which live in history...

Wrote Maj. Gen. Troy H. Middleton, VIII Corps Commander:

It has been my duty to assign the 87th Division difficult tasks while it has been in VIII Corps. I am pleased to say the division has always accepted its assignments with the spirit "Can Do."

The "Can Do" spirit, consistently proven in the Golden Acorn Division's every battle, was born of the training, determination, courage and exceptionally well-coordinated teamwork in which every man played a vital role.

Hitler's West Wall—the Siegfried Line—was designed to stop any enemy from setting foot on the "holy soil" of Germany. Massive steel and concrete pillboxes would stop invading infantrymen; dragon's teeth would

Rochester Junction N. Y. which extended an end run to capture German supply bases at Schönborg and Andler.

When Lt. Col. Robert B. Cobb, Usk, Wash., 1st Bn., CO, 347th, entered a house in a small Belgian village during the drive, a German corporal handed him an old letter which had once accompanied the man for a commission in the U. S. Army. The German probably had lived in Cleveland and had been a C.M. D. candidate.

Using the aid of his former partner, a Lt. McCrein C. East, Company, 347th, who had a steep slope to wipe out machine gun nests and the 347th automatic rifle. East had climbed the hill as the 347th made its attack.

As the 347th moved forward, the 347th Reconnaissance Troop, 347th, was ordered to clear the Schönborg Line. The 347th, led by 347th, captured the position and captured the machine gun nests.

Partially hidden by the snow-cloaked forests of the Schnee Eifel Mountains, the defenses loomed ominously in the light of pyrotechnic bursts laid down by Brig. Gen. William W. Ford's Div Arty and attached Corps units.

The sector of the Line to the division's immediate front formed a huge Y with the two prongs leading northward from Ormont. Two other towns, vital links in the defensive chain, were Olzheim and Neuen-dorf, both several kilometers south of Ormont.

While 2nd Bn., 345th, launched a surprise attack on the crossroads formed by the intersection of the Kobschied-Olzheim road and the main military highway extending south from Ormont, Sgt. Ethridge's patrol made a reconnaissance of the intersection where the Roth-Olzheim road crossed the military highway.

When 2nd Bn. gained its objective, 3rd Bn. rushed through the hard-won position and lashed ahead to the cross roads probed by the patrol. Pillboxes camouflaged by the dense forests, mine fields hidden by the snow, tree bursts from enemy artillery and stubborn German infantry made the going extremely difficult and costly.

When leading elements of 3rd Bn., 345th, were pinned down by machine gun fire, Lt. Col. Robert B. Moran, Eagle Pass, Tex., battalion CO, advanced through the mines and enemy fire to spot the Nazi machine gun nests. Under his direction, two TDs roared in to destroy the positions. Col. Moran was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for his action.

T/sgt. James B. Evans, College Station, N. M., Division Signal Officer, and a crew of six men, located the Siegfried cable—main communications line between two widely separated centers along the West Wall—and cut the wires in two places. The cable was located after evidence of recent repairs had been spotted. Working with Col. Evans were Lt. Richard A. Dunn, St. Paul, Minn.; T/5 Robert C. Miller, Toledo, Ohio; T/5 John J. O'Donnell, Chicago; Pfc Anthony B. Nardone, Newton Highland, Mass.; Pfc Raymond E. LaPlante, Berlin, N. J.; Robert L. Freeman, Hazelhurst, Miss.

Crashing THE SIEGFRIED LINE VIA "GOLDBRICK HILL"

DURING the next two weeks, the division rested, was reinforced and resupplied preparatory to the final push against the Siegfried Line. Infantrymen helped the 312th Engrs. in maintaining and rebuilding the chopped up roads over which increasing amounts of supplies and equipment were being moved.

Div Arty softened up the opposition with a heavy preparation as the division resumed the attack Feb. 26. Ormont was the initial objective for the 346th and 347th Inf. Regts. while the 345th headed for Reuth, Schonfeld

and Lissendorf, key towns along the road extending east from Neuendorf and Olzheim.

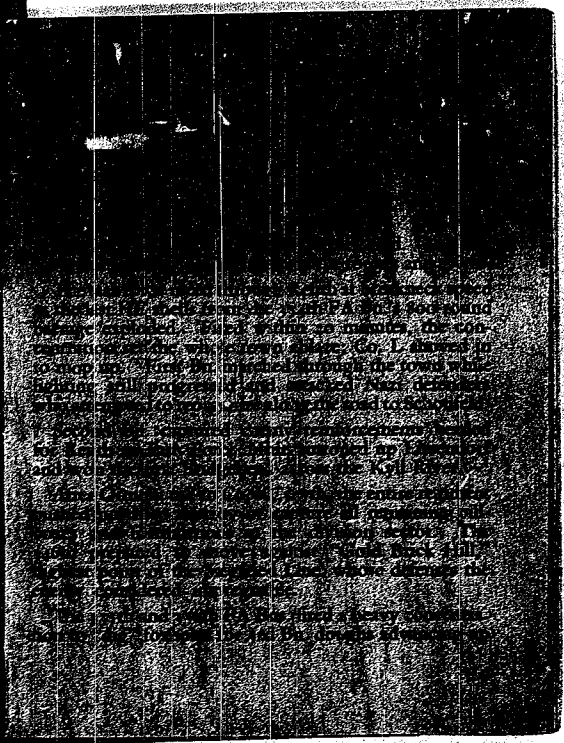
Co. I, 346th, pointed the attack on Ormont, moving along the heavily mined and booby-trapped road until it encountered a road block covered by two pillboxes. The company was pinned down for 36 hours.

Hit on a wrist by a burp gun bullet, 1st/Sgt. Charles Register, Baltimore, had the wound dressed at an aid station, then went back up the road to kill the German who fired at him. The sergeant was acting platoon leader for three days before allowing himself to be evacuated. For that action, he was awarded a battle-field commission.

Under 1st Lt. Vincent L. McCarty, Hartley, Ia., a platoon of combat engineers from the 312th Engr. Bn., attached to 3rd Bn., 347th, relieved pressure on Co. I. Working their way forward under covering fire from doughs and tankers, the engineers blasted the road block with 500 pounds of high explosives. Then they rushed ahead to a bridge, neutralizing explosive charges before the enemy had time to blow the span.

After the 912th FA Bn. blasted the small town of Ormont with a 540-round concentration, Co. K., 347th, commanded by Capt. Howard Jennings, San Diego, Calif., moved in to win this important stronghold in a brisk, 20-minute action.

Simultaneously, a 345th task force under Capt. John E. Muir, Sioux City, Ia., composed of Co. A, the 87th Recon Troop, 735th Tank Bn. and 607th Tank Bn., roared





Russell G. Barkalow commander of Div Arty.

Officer and enlisted cadre came from the 81st "Wildcat" Inf. Div. and replacements, arriving in February, 1943, included a portion of the first draft of 18-year-olds. Basic, unit and advanced training was staged at Camp McCain until November 1943, when the division moved to the Tennessee Maneuver Area for six weeks of intensive field work.

Fort Jackson, S. C., was the next stopover as several thousand junior officers and men were transferred from the division for overseas shipment. Vacancies were filled by ASTP, Air Corps and AAA personnel, many of whom had volunteered for the infantry.

In May, 1944, Maj. Gen. (then Brig. Gen.) Frank L. Culin, Jr., who had distinguished himself in the battle of Attu, assumed command of the 87th following the transfer of Maj. Gen. Eugene Landrum, who had succeeded Gen. Clarkson during maneuvers. Brig. Gen. John L. McKee was Asst. CG while Brig. Gen. (then Col.) William W. Ford commanded Div Arty. In early October, the 87th left for the Camp Kilmer, N. J., staging area.

The bulk of the division sailed from New York City aboard the *Queen Elizabeth*, Oct. 17, landing near Glasgow, Scotland. Assembling in England, the division moved across the Channel to France the last week in November. By Dec. 6, the 87th had reassembled near Metz and the 345th Combat Team went into action as an attached unit of the 5th Inf. Div.

Golden Acorn READY TO FACE THE FOE'S BEST

DEC. 6, 1944: The tiny Cub plane bobbed lazily over Fort Jeanne d'Arc at Metz. Below, the 334th FA Bn. awaited the order that would send the division's first shell screaming into German positions. Gen. Ford, who conceived the use of "grasshopper" liaison planes in artillery fire direction, was at the controls of the aircraft, making his first combat flight.

Radio flashed the target directions. As Gen. Culin stood by, Pfc Donald F. McCabe pulled the lanyard of a Btry. A 105mm. The shell ripped into the target.

Two days later, the 345th accepted the surrender of Fort Driant. By Dec. 9, the 346th and 347th Inf. Regts. had shifted to the vicinity of Gros Rederching, near the Saar-German border, where they relieved the 26th Inf. Div. The 346th launched the 87th's first attack next day, storming a hill overlooking Rimling.

Gen. Patton visited the division CP at Oermingen and welcomed the 87th as a new addition to Third Army. The division officially was committed to action Dec. 13 when Gen. Culin assumed command of the sector. Special units attached were the 549th AAA Bn., 761st Tank Bn., 602nd and 610th TD Bns. Rimling fell to the 346th as the 347th pointed its sights toward Obergaibach.

The 347th's attack moved slowly as four enemy rifle companies, supported by tanks, offered sturdy opposition. Third Bn. was the first division unit to fight on German soil when it captured a heavily wooded hill 1000 yards west of Obergaibach.

Pfc Harry D. Ellis, Riverside, Calif., was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for his action when Co. G was pinned down on a hillside near the German border. Advancing 100 yards across open ground, automatic rifleman Ellis knocked out two machine gun nests, killed five Nazis and captured four others.

The same day, 1st Bn., 346th, punched inside Germany while 2nd Bn. captured Guiderkirch, France. Cpl. Irving D. Carpenter, Mabank, Tex., Co. F, earned the division's first battlefield promotion when he was upped to a sergeancy for leading a patrol behind enemy lines and pinpointing infantry and tanks so accurately that one artillery concentration destroyed the positions and knocked out the tanks.

The 345th waged a vicious three-day battle in a wood inside Germany after pulling abreast of the other regiments following its assignment with the 5th Div. at Metz. Second Bn. shoved ahead to capture a sector of woods approximately a mile long but only 50 yards wide in places. The battalion held this strip against repeated counter-attacks from three sides.

When the Germans launched their do-or-die winter offensive in the Belgian Ardennes, Third Army shifted to the south side of the salient. The 87th, pending move-

ment orders, dug in and fought a defensive action for five days while waiting to move to Belgium.

In its 10 days of combat, the 87th had advanced across the German frontier, captured several towns and gained more than 10 miles. Now, Golden Acorn doughs were ready to face the Nazis' best legions.

Under the direction of Gen. McKee, the movement to Belgium—a distance of 350 miles—was made in three stages with bivouacs at Dieuze and Pont Favarger, France.

TILLET *Topples* AFTER BITTER BATTLE

DEC. 29, 1944: In biting, stinging cold, 87th doughs boarded open trucks for the 100-mile motor march to Seviscourt and Bertrix. An icy wind that whipped across the snow-covered hills was torture for the men who rushed northward to help curb the rampaging German surge.

After 20 hours of continuous riding, the nearly frozen 345th RCT arrived at Seviscourt. There wasn't time for rest or food. The enemy approached along the road from Pironpre in an attempt to encircle Bastogne from the west. Leaping into action immediately, the



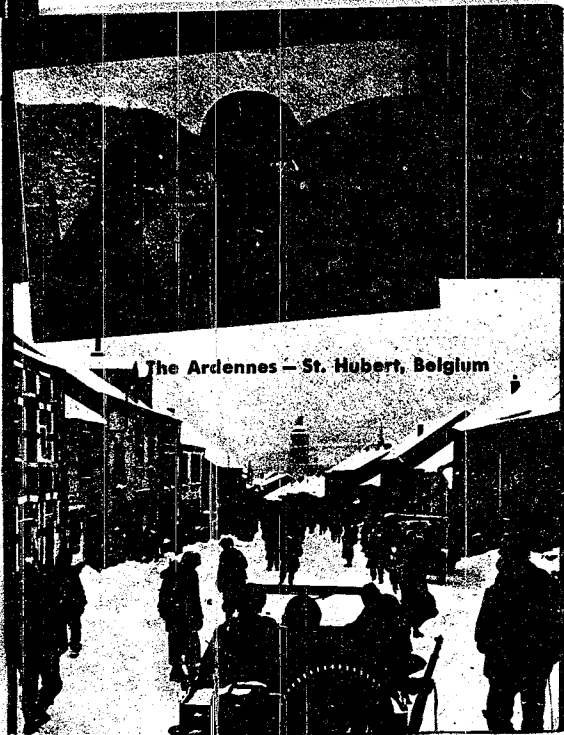
During an attack on Tillet, the town was captured by the Nazis who had moved into Mosley. The town was recaptured next morning in what was the German first sound of the capture of Bastogne on the southern side.

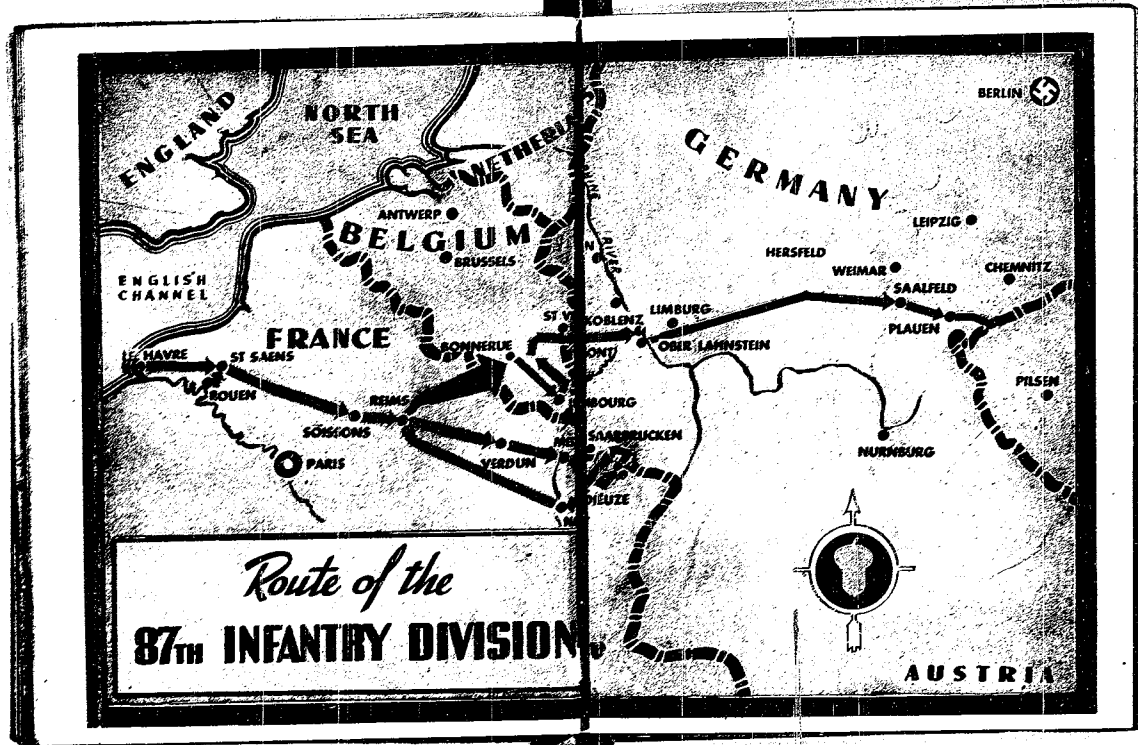
The 345th wheeled east and grabbed Remagne Dec. 31. Meanwhile, the 346th had marched nine kilometers to take up positions along the roads leading into St. Hubert and Vesqueville. The 347th passed through the 345th in advancing on Jenneville, one of three villages clustered near the Moircy-Houffalize-St. Hubert road junctions.

The Germans had set up elaborate defensive positions at Jenneville, Bonnerue and Pironpre to protect their main supply road from Houffalize. The entire area was heavily mined and booby trapped, the mountainous terrain covered with dense evergreen forests. In places, snow was waist deep; the temperature neared zero. Battling this weather and a desperate foe, 3rd Bn., 347th, spurred forth to crack Jenneville before noon, Jan. 1, 1945. Heavy fighting raged as the Nazis retaliated with a strong counter-assault.

Next day, Co. L, 347th, kicked off for Bonnerue after the 912th FA Bn. had fired a barrage to soften the opposition. Cos. I and K advanced to the woods west of the town. Three tanks supporting Co. L were knocked out and a fourth forced to withdraw during the bitter house-to-house struggle. At daybreak, Germans launched the first of a series of counter-attacks. Co. G rushed into the town to give support as Co. K repulsed an attack in the woods 35 minutes after it was launched.

Cos. E, F, and G tossed the Germans out of Pironpre as the Nazis prepared a next counter-attack on Jenneville and Pironpre. Elements of all 347th's battalions rushed to stem the drive which was spearheaded by eight tanks.





Route of the
87TH INFANTRY DIVISION



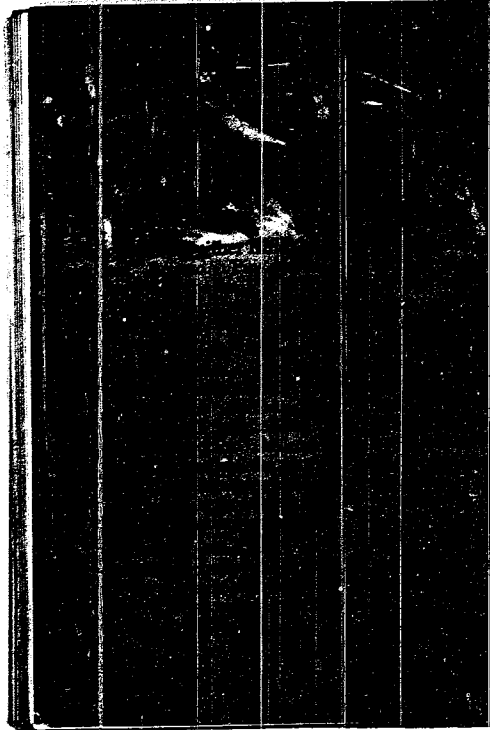
When the column of tanks was trapped in a deep road cut, artillery destroyed two of the vehicles before the column could disperse. The threat was turned back by the infantry and 1st Bn. drove 200 yards into the woods as the Nazis pulled back.

The 345th relieved the 347th late Jan. 7, and 2nd Bn. was called out of reserve the next day to help repel a German drive to regain Bonnerue. Lt. Col. Frank L. Bock, 1st Bn. CO, was severely wounded in the action. The fight for the town raged three days until enemy resistance collapsed all along the line. During the final phases of the battle the 912th FA Bn. fired approximately 1500 rounds.

The battle for Tillet was launched early Jan. 7 by 3rd Bn., 346th, when Lt. Glenn J. Doman, Manoa, Pa., serving his first day as platoon leader, led a 21-man assault platoon from Co. K into the south portion of the town and attacked a house concealing more than 40 Germans. The attack was coordinated with Co. I's approach on Tillet from the east.

In a free-for-all fight, Lt. Doman's men fired rifles, machine guns, bazookas and tossed grenades into the house. A German officer, running from the building, attempted to choke Sgt. Don Corbin, Zanesville, Ohio. Running to Corbin's assistance, Sgt. Emil Piger, Allentown, Pa., emptied a full "grease" gun clip into the German.

Pvt. Warren Horton, Madison, Kan., walked up to S/Sgt. George Blankenbacker, Borden, Ind., with a



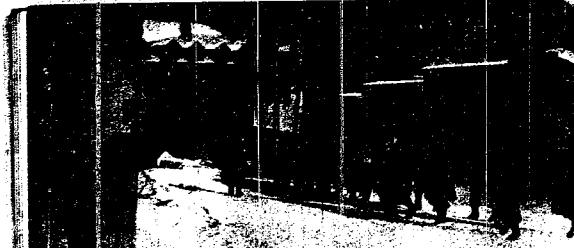
the house. The tank withdrew after firing 19 rounds, but the fight continued for seven hours until the lieutenant was ordered to withdraw.

Splitting into two squads, each covering the other, the platoon succeeded in passing the enemy's outposts at the edge of the town. During the battle, the platoon killed more than 60 Germans while losing only one killed and one wounded.

When Co. I struck Tillet from the east, the enemy pinned down the company with devastating fire from well-protected machine gun positions. Firing his automatic rifle from the hip, S/Sgt. Curtis F. Shoup, Buffalo, N. Y., charged forward and rushed one nest. Although hit and suffering severe wounds in his body and legs, the sergeant crawled within throwing range of the house sheltering the gun crew and killed all of the occupants with a grenade. A sniper killed Sgt. Shoup as he crept toward another house.

After three days and nights of bitter fighting, Co. I won the town by ferreting out the enemy, house by house. Determined that the men get hot food, 1st/Sgt. Register and T/S Peter M. Buyas, Portland, Ore., the company's second cook, left their CP positions to move into the town. Buyas prepared the food, then he and Register hauled it on a sled through enemy lines at night.

First Lt. John E. Connolly, Pittsburgh, forward observer with the 336th FA Bn., often fought with the infantry. Noting that an enemy machine gun fired from a basement window couldn't be dealt with effec-



ely by artillery fire, the lieutenant borrowed an M-1 and killed the machine gunners. On another occasion when Lt. Connolly wanted to set up his OP in an enemy occupied house, he joined doughs in capturing the building.

Three squads under Lt. Robert Watson, Watertown, N. Y., Lt. Harold Lamont, Springfield Gardens, N. Y., and T/Sgt. Wardlaw Watson, Birmingham, Ala., mopped up final resistance in Tillet Jan. 10. Sgt. Watson, who had transferred as a corporal to the division from the Air Corps, earned a commission for his leadership. Of the 85 Co. 1 men who originally attacked the town, only 32 marched out when relief came. Of the 53 casualties, seven were killed. T/Sgt. Erasmus Pistone, Yonkers, N. Y., company aid man, was directly responsible for saving many lives.

Simultaneously with Co. 1's battle was the successful attack on the Haut de Tillet woods by 1st and 3rd Bns., 347th, while 1st and 2nd Bns., 346th, attempted to gain

the high, barren ground northeast of Tillet. Thwarted when their tank support was unable to drive up the steep, icy hillside, 346th doughs gained their objective in a second attack.

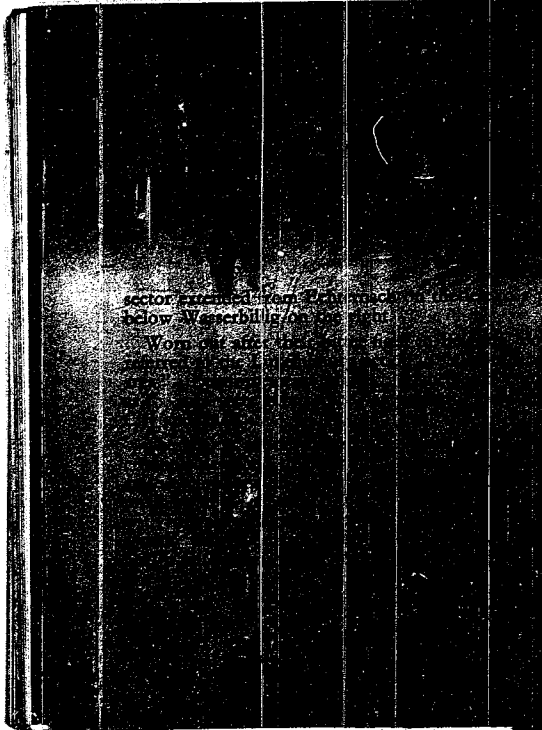
On the western fringe of the sector, 3rd Bn., 347th, occupied St. Hubert. The center of the area—in the vicinity of Jenneville, Pironpre and Bonnerue—was won after a hard, sustained fight that lasted from Jan. 1 to Jan. 10, in which nearly every combat battalion in the division participated.

By Jan. 11, the 347th had driven the remnants of a beaten foe from Bonnerue and Pironpre. Next day, Co. E, 347th, captured Tonny and Amberloup, while 1st Bn., 347th, occupied the division objectives, a double road junction northeast of Amberloup and a bridge across the Ourche River two days later.

Across THE MOSELLE AND INTO KOBLENZ

THE 87th was temporarily pinched out of the fighting in the rapidly shrinking Bulge and moved to the Duchy of Luxembourg, Jan. 15.

Taking up defensive positions along the Luxembourg-German boundary on the Sauer River, the division's



March 6 when the division was given a week's rest and resupplied. Then, on March 13, the 346th RCT moved to a new sector on the west side of the Rhine and Moselle Rivers, opposite the historic city of Koblenz. The remainder of the 87th followed next day.

A city of nearly 100,000 population, Koblenz was situated on a triangle formed by the Moselle and Rhine. With the 346th on the left flank and the 347th on the right, patrols crossed the Moselle during the next three days to probe the city and vineyard-covered mountains to the south.

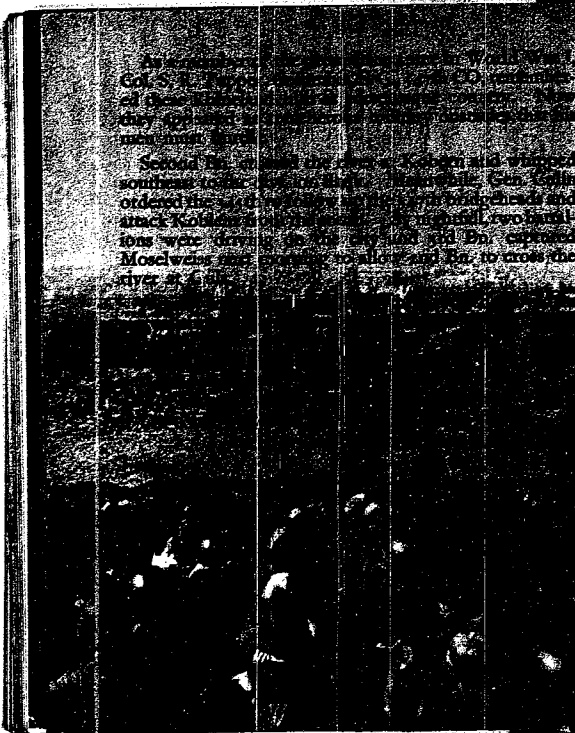
In addition to being a target for air force bombings, Koblenz took a heavy pounding from Div Arty for almost a week in advance of the doughs' jump-off.

Gen. Patton, in making a reconnaissance flight over the city, saw a statue of Kaiser Wilhelm in a park at the tip of the city's peninsula and ordered the symbol of Prussian imperialism destroyed. Lt. John W. Stuckey, Jr., Port Tampa City, Fla., who earned a battlefield commission as forward observer for the 336th FA Bn. in the battle for Wasserbillig, directed fire for an eight-inch howitzer battery which destroyed the monument.

March 16, 1945, 0345 hours: Against light opposition, 1st and 3rd Bns., 347th spanned the Moselle, the 1st at Winnigen, the 3rd at Kobern. Seizing the high ground directly to its front, 1st Bn. set out to clear the enemy from the terraced vineyards on the steep hillsides. By evening, 3rd Bn. had swooped east, capturing two small towns.

At 10:30 a. m. the 2nd Bn. was ordered to attack Koblenz. The 1st Bn. was ordered to attack Koblenz from the north and the 2nd Bn. was ordered to attack Koblenz from the south. The 1st Bn. was ordered to attack Koblenz from the north and the 2nd Bn. was ordered to attack Koblenz from the south.

Second Bn. was ordered to attack Koblenz from the south. Gen. Golin ordered the 1st Bn. to attack Koblenz from the north and the 2nd Bn. to attack Koblenz from the south. The 1st Bn. was ordered to attack Koblenz from the north and the 2nd Bn. was ordered to attack Koblenz from the south.



Col. Song reported that the city was captured. The 1st Bn. was ordered to attack Koblenz from the north and the 2nd Bn. was ordered to attack Koblenz from the south. The 1st Bn. was ordered to attack Koblenz from the north and the 2nd Bn. was ordered to attack Koblenz from the south.

Meanwhile, elements of the 1st Bn. moved from the mountains to the south, entered Koblenz and the patrol reached the Rhine south of the town and the main highway paralleling the river.

A determined force of Germans held out in Fort Konstantin, atop the city's highest hill, as the 1st Bn. continued its fight in Koblenz. Late afternoon, March 10, the German commander came out of the fort under a flag of truce to negotiate surrender.

Col. Moran, 3rd Bn. CO, went forward with an inter-



preter. The colonel's scarf covered his insignia and the Nazi commander said he couldn't negotiate with a man who didn't have rank.

Col. Moran told the interpreter: "Tell him that I have the rank and that I also have the artillery!"

The fight was resumed. Tanks and TDs brought direct fire on the fort throughout the night. At 0830, March 19, the German commander surrendered unconditionally along with 94 officers and men. All resistance in Koblenz ceased with the fall of the fort. For the next two days, the 347th continued to clear enemy pockets in the hills to the south that had been bypassed in the rapid advance to the Rhine.

"Can Do" RECORD SPEAKS FOR ITSELF

WITH the highly touted Siegfried Line shattered, Nazi Germany stood anxious watch on the Rhine. The myth that hung over the mother river originated with legends linking the river with gods, giants and maidens. But at 0001, March 25, doughs of the 345th and 347th, waiting to step into assault boats, were not concerned with pagan gods and giants; they saw no maidens.

gun fire, the sergeant moved ahead to wipe out the nest with a carbine and a grenade, killing five and capturing four Germans.

Pouring devastating fire from their positions in the hills, Germans pinned down 2nd Bn. before it could cross the river. Meanwhile, 2nd Bn., 346th, spanned the river at the 345th's Boppard bridgeheads and advanced along the east bank to assist the 347th.

Vicious fighting continued March 25-26 as the division struggled to clear the entire eastern bank of the river immediately opposite its jumping-off positions. As soon as the river towns were burtoned up, two task forces were organized.

Under command of Lt. Col. Harald S. Sundt, Las Vegas, N. M., one was composed of half of his 607th TD Bn.; 87th Recon Troop; Co. K, 346th; Co. A, tanks from the 735th Tank Bn.

The second task force under Lt. Col. William S. Bodner, Corvallis, Ore., was made up of 2nd Bn., 347th, now motorized, along with tank, TD and field artillery units. The 335th FA Bn. was in support of both forces.

With the task forces as spearheads, the division raced 45 miles during the last week of March. During the month, the Siegfried Line was cracked wide open, the Kyll, Ahr, Moselle and Rhine Rivers crossed and the city of Koblenz captured. On March 31, the division CP was set up at Weilmunster, deep inside Germany.

3rd Cavalry Bn.; 42nd Engr. Bn.; 87th Recon Troop;
87th Signal Co.; 787th Ordnance Co.; 87th Quarter-
master Co.; 87th MP Platoon.

One month before Germany's unconditional surren-
der, the 87th moved from Weilmünster, approximately
50 miles east of Koblenz, to the vicinity of Hedenfeld,
a few miles south of Eisenach. It was here that the
unit was through the line, tipped the scales, and
was promoted to major general's rank.

The 87th was the only unit of the 1st Army to
be awarded the German Cross in Gold. The
award was given to the 87th for its
participation in the capture of
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First Bn., 147th, captured Oelenitz where the division encamped. It also destroyed trains on the same day. Meanwhile, 2nd Bn., 146th, cleared Frauen and 3rd Bn., 146th, captured Lengenfeld. Other elements of the division moved to the Czechoslovakian border, six miles southeast of Oelenitz in the next few days.

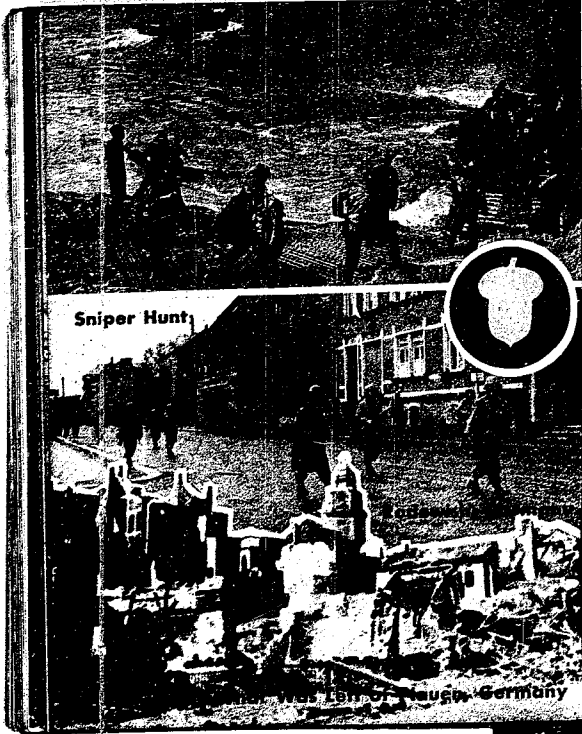
May 8, 1945, a notice was placed outside the 1st Bn., 147th, CP. It reads: "Achtung! Season closed on all Germans. By order of Lt. Col. Robert B. Cobb."

On V-E Day, the seasoned veterans of the Golden Acorn Division took a break and then adjusted their sights. There were new missions ahead. Stalwart and strong, the 147th were ready for new assignments. Their "Can Do" record speaks for itself.

The TEAM

Autographs





Sniper Hunt

The Was 1st of Naught, Germany



TOUGH 'OMBRES!



NOV 31 '45

Passed by Censor For Mailing Home.

This is one of a series of G.I. Stories of the Ground, Air and Service Forces in the European Theater of Operations, to be issued by the Stars and Stripes, a publication of the Information and Education Division, Special and Information Service, ETOUSA. Maj. Gen. J. A. Van Fleet lent his cooperation to the preparation of the pamphlet, and basic material was supplied to the editors by his personnel.

Name _____

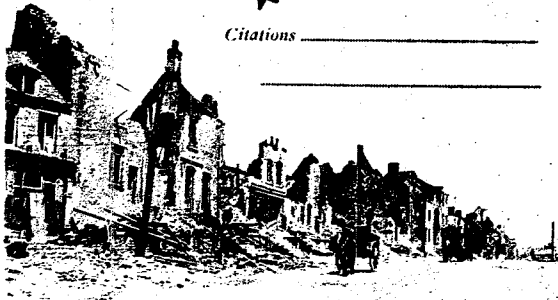
Date Enlisted _____

Attached to unit _____

Training _____

Written by WOJG Carl Jenkins and
Pfc Edward G. Hartmann, Div. Historian

★
Citations _____



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Enclose copy of story of
90th Inf. Division. Please place
it in library for future reference
Please acknowledge receipt of
booklet

W. E. Hartman
D. W. Hartman

Copy 2.



This is only the beginning of the heroic story of the 90th Infantry Division in World War II. I wish that we could tell you all of it—thousands of words more of the details of the triumphs and the trials, but that will have to wait until after victory. Even in this short account, there is so much for the Tough 'Ombres of the 90th to be proud of, and I am proud with them. I am new to the division, having assumed command on

17 October, 1944, after the events related here, but I know well the 90th's record. Let's carry it on and build it higher and higher until everyone of us can say proudly at the end: "That's the way it was. I was there with the 90th."

J. A. Van Fleet
Major General, Commanding

The Story Of The 90th Infantry Division "BLOOD-RED FOR TOUGH 'OMBRES"

WHEN the 90th Infantry Division landed on D-Day, the blood-red T-O insignia meant Texas and Oklahoma. Today the T-O stands for "Tough 'Ombres." The men who wear that patch fought for fifty-three consecutive days. They landed among the first, took the staggering blows of the prepared German might and came back with even more decisive blows of their own to sweep across France and onto Hitler's front porch.

B2 AP v.

D-Day and D-plus-1 were the beginning. When the troopship *Susan B. Anthony* struck a mine and sank, the 2nd Bn, 359th Inf and Co C, 315th Engr Bn, waded ashore without a loss—except for their weapons. When the 4th Inf Div needed reserves, the 1st and 3rd Bns, 359th Inf, plunged through water and artillery to back them up. When a German patrol spied on the assembly area near St Martin de Varreville, Pfc Samuel C. Maples of Stella, Mo, Co A, 359th, killed the division's first two Krauts.

The 'Ombres were tough and stayed tough. They had to be tough to plough through the hedgerow defenses of Normandy in the famous dash to the important rail junction of Le Mans, and to form part of the Falaise pocket at Chambois that brought terrible disaster to a frantically fleeing Nazi.



They had a sense of humor, too. When B Btry, 915th FA Bn, hurled its 50,000th round at the enemy from the same gun that had fired the first, stencilled on the shell was "To Adolf with love from T-O."

T-O FOR TEXAS AND OKLAHOMA

THE letters T-O of the insignia actually stand for Texas and Oklahoma, being a carryover from World War 1, when the 90th, made up of men from these states, fought at St Mihiel and Meuse-Argonne. The Tough 'Ombres of this war hail from everywhere in America.

The division was reactivated at Camp Barkeley, Tex, Mar 25, 1942 and after training there went to the Louisiana and California-Arizona Maneuver Areas before sailing for England on Mar 23, 1944.

With the division assembled near Turqueville, and its first CP in France at Loutres, Brig. Gen. Jay W. MacKelvie, Battle Creek, Mich, (then CG) received warning orders. The division would attack across the Merderet River, through the 82nd Airborne Div.

Early morning June 10, the 'Ombres moved to attack and to deepen the VII Corps bridgehead established earlier by the 82nd Airborne Div, aided by a devastating barrage laid by the 90th's own 345th FA Bn.

The 357th Inf struck out on one flank for Gourbesville while the 358th Inf steered for Pont l'Abbe (Etienville). The bulk of the 359th and B Btry, 915th FA Bn, was still with the 4th Div.

The 358th crossed the Merderet River and brushed aside heavy enemy resistance before Pont l'Abbe. A strong German counterattack repelled them from

the town but they
clung to the edges.
The 357th crossed
the river causeway
at La Fiere through
a murderous artillery
and mortar barrage.



The first day of fighting netted one and a half miles. Odds had heavily favored the Krauts. Hedgerows were hardpacked, root-filled walls of earth four or five feet high, overgrown with thick hedges and trees. Ditches lined the earthen walls, and the enemy was entrenched in well-prepared positions. The terrain was well known to the occupying Germans.

Automatic weapons and small arms were in the first row. Mortars held the second. Eighty-eights backed them up. Flanking hedgerows concealed more automatic weapons and mortars dug in under brush and covered with logs and dirt.

When our troops ventured into a field, machine guns opened deadly crossfire, followed by mortars peppering the area. Those lucky enough to get back to the hedgerows' protection were harassed by 88's zeroed in on the trees above them.

Our own artillery's forward observers often were unable to see beyond the next hedgerow and had to fire blind. Observers in trees were targets not only

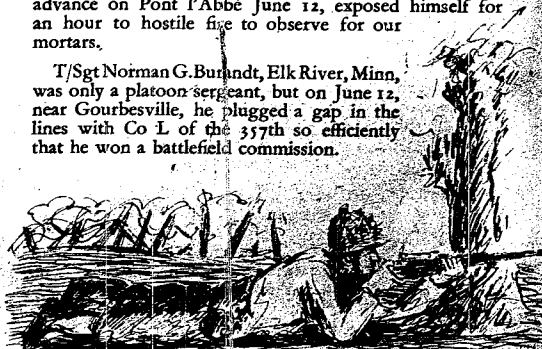
for the enemy but for our own troops wary of snipers. Once, Capt Donald B. Hutchens of Oregon, then commanding Co B, 359th, climbed a tree to direct fire only to fall when enemy shrapnel snapped the limb. Undaunted, he shinnied up the tree again and resumed his fire direction.

COURAGE CREATES HEROES

It was this determination to win that produced heroes by the score.

S/Sgt Warren N. Snider, Gainesville, Tex, squad leader in Co H, 358th, whose squad was supporting the advance on Pont l'Abbé June 12, exposed himself for an hour to hostile fire to observe for our mortars.

T/Sgt Norman G. Burandt, Elk River, Minn, was only a platoon sergeant, but on June 12, near Gourbesville, he plugged a gap in the lines with Co L of the 357th so efficiently that he won a battlefield commission.



S/Sgt Jarral M. Moore of Perrin, Tex, Co I, 357th, in an attack on an enemy strongpoint defending Gourbesville June 14, calmly hurled such well-directed hand grenades in a storm of enemy fire that he inspired his men to reduce three emplacements.

HELP WANTED—CO GETS IT

THERE was gallantry, too, in the rescue of the wounded. Pfc Victor Boxberger, Fort Collins, Colo, light machinegunner in the 358th, administered first aid under devastating fire to his wounded CO near Picauville, June 12. Then in sight of the enemy, he dragged the officer to a ditch in which they huddled for five hours until rescued by volunteers. With Pfc Boxberger's help, they pulled the wounded officer 500 yards to safety, still under fire.

During the Merderet crossing, June 10, linemen kept open communications. Cpl Richard R. L. Slobig, Palermo, Calif, Hq Btry, 343rd FA, under constant eighty-eight fire, laid a telephone line 600 yards across a bridge, repaired it four times, relaid it waist-deep in water to prevent it from being shot out.



Annals of the 90th are crowded with such stories but these demonstrate the spirit that routed the Germans out of their burrows.

Two battalions of the 359th at-

tached to the 4th Div reverted to the 90th on June 10. The 359th went into the 90th's line June 11 near Picauville, flanked by the 358th and 357th but confronted by the same type of harrowing hedgerow warfare.



The 358th continued to strike at Pont l'Abbé June 11. Action next day started 400 yards east of the town. Command of the regiment fell to Lt. Col. (now Col.) Christian H. Clarke, Jr., Atlanta, Ga, 2nd Bn commander. P-47 fighters dive-bombed the town at 1700. Then after a smashing artillery barrage the troops attacked. By 2130, Pont l'Abbé, now little more than a rubble pile, was mopped up.

Meanwhile, to the north, the battle for Gourbesville raged. Since the 3rd Bn, 357th, was badly spent, Co A of the 315th Engr Bn was sent as infantry to capture Gourbesville, June 13. Fierce opposition a quarter mile north of Amfreville forced them to withdraw. The 359th continued its slow attack northwestward.

On this day, Maj. Gen. Eugene M. Landrum, Columbia, SC, assumed command of the division.

The 358th secured a crossroad 1000 yards northwest of Pont l'Abbé, June 14. The 359th advanced 700 yards in more bitter fighting. The 3rd Bn, 357th, with Co A of the 315th Engr squeezed into Gourbesville, but was smashed back.

The 90th Infantry Division Iron Door

GOURBESVILLE GOBBLED UP

CAPTURE of Gourbesville was accomplished late on June 15 by a wide flanking sweep to the north.

Two days later, in a reshuffle of sectors, the division wheeled northwest into a defensive position around Ste Colombe while the 9th Inf Div pressed west to cut the Cherbourg peninsula.

The defensive position maintained through June 18, Combat Team 357 was motorized and sent to take up a line extending from St Sauveur le Vicomte west to Portbail. Its job was to prevent southward escape of Germans trapped in the peninsula, thus freeing the 9th to join the 4th and the newly arrived 79th Inf Div in the drive on Cherbourg.

The 90th shifted from VII Corps to VIII Corps on June 19. Ste Colombe remained fairly quiet. But the 357th had a lively time with enemy troops and tanks around Portbail. Sixty-six German prisoners trying to escape the trap were taken June 19, and 99 on June 20.

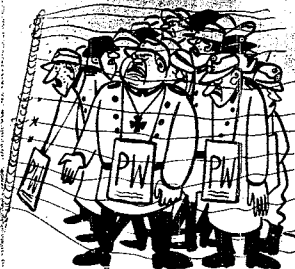
On June 23, the 358th and 359th moved to a defensive sector south of the Douve River near Beuzeville la Bastille, remained there until June 29. The 357th returned the next day.

STAGE SET FOR FORET FIGHT

THE stage now was set for the battle of the Forêt de Mont Castre which began July 3 south of the Douve. It was like the slow forcing of a massive iron door with hinges rusted solid by the Beau Coudray marshlands. To the northwest, at the other end of the 90th's sector, the door was locked fast by the formidable forêt and Hill 122.

Hill 122 was the eyes of the enemy. This 400 foot rise was a bastion from which Caesar's legions 2000 years ago repelled an enemy horde in the Gallic Wars. From a bald crest on the north, the forêt stretched to the south in a trackless and jungle-like growth.

For three years the Germans had fortified the forêt and had learned every inch of its terrain during maneuvers. The hill dominated the Cherbourg peninsula



and keyed the entire southward drive to break out of the hedgerow country.

The 90th found itself smashing against fresh, fanatical paratroopers and SS men. The jumpoff, July 3, was a line from Baupte, northeast past Pont Aunoy to the east edge of Pretot. The division faced southwest.



The first day, the 359th, on the west, advanced through Pretot for roughly 2000 yards despite savage machine gun, artillery, mortar fire and mines.

The 358th, in the east sector, chalked up 2000 yards to St Jores. By 1410, one platoon of the 1st Bn battered its way into the town. Enemy tanks smashed them back. The 3rd Bn maneuvered wide past the east flank to present such a threat that by 1930 the 1st Bn, having crashed through St Jores, pressed on to Les Belles Croix. Enemy self-propelled guns delayed the advance, but Les Belles Croix fell to the tanks of the 712th Tank Bn, fresh from the beaches. (The attached 712th became a blood-brother of the 90th in the Mont Castré campaign and since then has fought as part of the division.)

The 358th fought off a counter-attack as the battle continued, July 4, and by the end of the day had pushed

on to La Butte. The 356th in the meantime had swung down to the St Jores—Le Fry road. Then it gained Ste Suzanne, was driven out in the morning, plunged in again that afternoon.

Back in the east the 357th had entered the battle on July 5 to relieve part of the 358th. The outfit was stopped cold outside of Beau Coudray in a day-long battle but continued to trade blows there for six bitter days. Constant battering only loosened the hinges but diverted German attention to the east so that the lock on the west was picked and the portal was forced open slowly in a southeastern swing pivoted on Beau Coudray.

"J" CO PUT TO BATTLE TEST

THIS sector was comparatively quiet, but on July 10 boiled up again. A provisional "J" Co of 120 cooks, mechanics and headquarters specialists had been organized and put up front to prevent enemy infiltration. But the enemy still kept Beau Coudray. The 357th's 2nd Bn finally flanked the town from the west on July 11 and the Germans withdrew that night. The 2nd Bn snatched Le Plessis without opposition the following day and the 1st and 3rd Bns moved through Beau Coudray.

The door finally had swung wide and the hinges now had torn loose.

While the 357th was tied up at Beau Coudray, the rest of the division had moved around to the north of the

forêt. But 1st Bn, 359th, hit the west nose of the hill on July 6 and the punch caught the Germans off balance because they had expected the main effort from the east. Bypassed by the 1st, however, the retreating Nazis greeted the 3rd Bn, 359th, driving up on the left, with enough artillery to halt them and surround both battalions. Ten counterattacks were repulsed in twenty-four hours. At one time the situation was eased only by artillery directed on the enemy by the 1st Bn CO, Lt. Col. (then Capt.) Leroy R. Pond, Fayetteville, Ark.

Ammunition was low. The men were surrounded for thirty hours. Each round fired had to spell death for a Hun. Relief finally arrived when the 2nd Bn, 358th, plus eight tanks, knifed through the enemy wedge at 1830, July 7.

The 2nd Bn, 359th, and 1st Bn, 358th, had moved



into the eastern edge of the forest July 6 while the 3rd Bn of the 358th, having moved south from Lithaire to the crest, occupied Hill 122, July 8. Thus a line across the entire heights was established.

One result of the battle was a two-day haul of 430 PWs.

Meanwhile, the division's right flank was open. The enemy, driven out of La Haye du Puits by the advancing 79th Div, was infiltrating eastward. Another "J" Co was activated from 359th cooks and mechanics to protect the right flank.

The 315th Engr Bn again was brought into play as infantry assuming a defensive position July 7-8 atop the hill, where for three grim days it held fast under heavy enemy pressure.

MENACED BY NATURE AND NAZIS

THE 90th continued its mission July 10. If Hill 122 had been bad, the fight down the south side through the forest was just as bad, perhaps worse. German paratroopers, almost invisible in camouflage clothing, were young, strong, fanatically determined and skilled in individual combat. Direction and contact were difficult to maintain. Undergrowth and murky weather limited visibility to twenty-five yards, more often to only five.

The 3rd Bn, 358th, took the center sector, flanked on

the left by the 2nd Bn and on the right by the 3rd Bn of the 359th.

The advance hit fierce resistance. When Co I was pinned down by a Nazi nest behind a twenty-five foot hill, Pfc William L. Smiley of Centertown, Ky, scaled the obstacle and fired point blank into the enemy. Pfc Theodore Wagner of San Antonio, Tex, followed his example and lobbed several grenades. Pfc Wagner then urged the Germans to surrender. Eight did, the other nine were found dead.

Lt. Col. Jacob W. Bealke of Sullivan, Mo, and his command group of eight followed Co L. While Co I was occupied, the group was attacked by a squad of Germans that had emerged from the west and behind Co L's assault platoon. Beaten off by small arms fire, the enemy hit again from the west and the rear but this time was routed by another platoon of Co L.

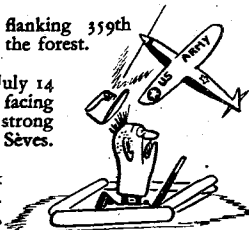
Four tanks thrashed through the thickets and hacked out the trail by which wounded were evacuated. Later in the battle two tanks were knocked out by the enemy, and a third immobilized by a marsh. Co K thrust forward but was thrown back by fire from three sides.



On July 11 rifle companies of the 358th's 3rd Bn shifted to the right

and with the aid of the flanking 359th drove the Germans out of the forest.

The division halted on July 14 along the Sèves River facing south toward the enemy's strong position on the Island of Sèves.



To the 90th fell the task of eliminating this obstacle. The 1st and 2nd Bns, 358th, punched across the hip-deep river in bitter fighting, but were so hard hit by superior German forces that retreat was the only practical move. Most were able to scramble back but four officers and 200 men were captured. The island was lost and the 358th resumed its old defensive position north of the river.

Chaplains Joseph Esser of Cleveland, Minn, and Edgar Stohler, of Ipava, Ill, accompanied by 12 litter bearers, later retrieved 16 wounded.

T-O JOINS FIRST ARMY DRIVE

The First U S Army began its great drive to eliminate the enemy from the lower stretches of the peninsula, July 26.

The day before, the American Air Force had blasted the enemy at St Lo. The 90th, sitting morosely on

the Sèves licking its wounds, perked up as clouds of bombers roared over.

On July 26, the division, attacking with VIII Corps, bypassed Sèves Island by sending the 357th to the left. The 359th attacked due south, while the 358th continued to face the island.

Heavy resistance was encountered during the first day, and only small progress was made. The advance of the VII Corps on the left was so rapid that the enemy realized the danger of entrapment and hastily withdrew. The division's units raced ahead to overtake the enemy rear guard south of the town of Perriers, overrun by the 90th during the day.

Small isolated groups of Germans were quickly eliminated by July 28, and the town of St Sauveur de Lendelin, 10 miles south of the Sèves, was occupied. By nightfall, the 90th had reached its objective—the newly captured sector of the 1st Inf Div of VII Corps, which lay across the front of the 90th's path south. In the preceding three days the 90th had covered 10 miles. Compared to the deadly slow fighting experienced previously this was blitzkrieg movement, and it was indicative of better things to come.

From July 28 to Aug 1, the division remained in the vicinity of St Sauveur and for the first time in the 53 days since D-Day was completely out of contact with the enemy.

The rest period was utilized for reorganization and training. Here on July 30, Brig. Gen. (now Maj. Gen.)

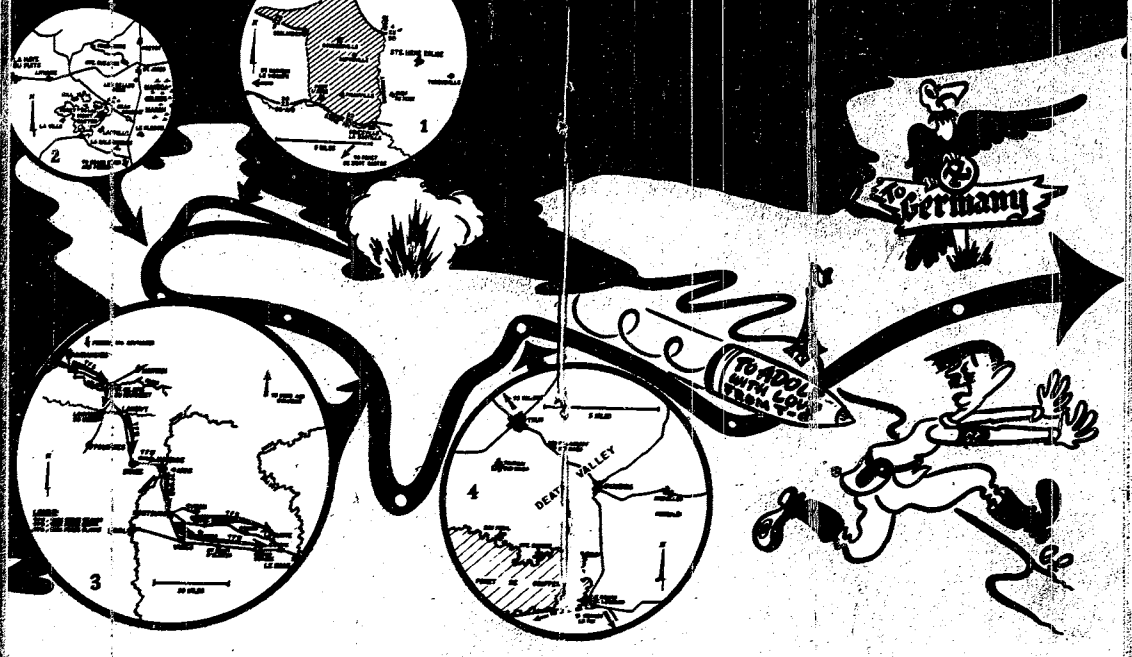


Maj. Gen. E. M. Landrum extracts the bottle from a cache.



A captured German mortar defends Hill 122, July 7--10

Route of the 90th Division through France





The 315th Engineer Bn built this bridge over the Selune



Company CP inside a typical Normandy hedgerow jungle

Raymond S. McLain, Oklahoma City, Okla, a veteran of the Sicilian and Italian campaigns took command. Brig. Gen. William G. Weaver, Louisville, Ky, became assistant division commander the same day.

HITTING THE ROAD AGAIN

THE 90th passed to control of the newly arrived XV Corps of the Third US Army on Aug 1 and prepared to hit the road again. The division's mission, to move south and seize the bridges over the Selune River near St Hilaire du Harcouet, resulted in the organization of two special task forces, one under Lt. Col. George B. Randolph, Birmingham, Ala, (commanding the 712th Tank Bn), the other under Lt. Col. Clarke (commanding the 358th).

Task Force Randolph moved Aug 2 on the Perriers-Coutances-Avranches road, screening Task Force Clarke in the manner of advance cavalry and sweeping aside negligible resistance. Task Force Clarke followed immediately.

At the end of the 50-mile motor march to St Hilaire, Col. Clarke, finding the main highway bridge across the Selune west of the city intact, seized the high ground overlooking it. Racing across the bridge, two platoons of Co K met enemy small arms and machinegun fire but fought their way into town, followed by the rest of Task Force Clarke and other division elements.

Task Force Clarke pursued the enemy south to Lou-



...vigne du Desert, taking it Aug 3. Patrols streamed into the town of Landivy.

XV Corps was ordered Aug 4 to move on Le Mans, an important railroad center 73 airline miles southeast. The 90th was ordered to seize the bridge and city of Mayenne 45 miles away. Relieved there by the 1st Div, it was then to swing southeast to the Laval-Le Mans highway and advance to Le Mans. The 79th Div was to capture Laval and push forward on the 90th's right, entering Le Mans from the southwest.

ARMOR SPEARHEADS THE ADVANCE

For its part in this bold stroke, the 90th organized another task force—strong in armor—under the command of Gen. Weaver to spearhead the advance. From this force was made up Sub-Task Force Randolph, which started Aug 5, followed by the remainder of Task Force Weaver. The force poured through Landivy

and Ernee. It seemed strange to be rolling along at 20 miles an hour in enemy territory where before every yard had been contested. The men's spirits rose, especially when the French, recovering from their surprise, lined the streets to pelt them with flowers and hand out cider during pauses of the 12-mile column.

By noon the head of the column hit the first appreciable resistance two miles east of Mayenne. While the 90th Rcn Trp scouted, a hard hitting force of the 357th's Co B, plus ten medium tanks, punched ahead. Learning that Mayenne was held in force, it was decided to envelop the town to the south with the 357th's 2nd and 3rd Bns while the advance 1st Bn moved straight ahead to seize the only undestroyed bridge across the Mayenne River.

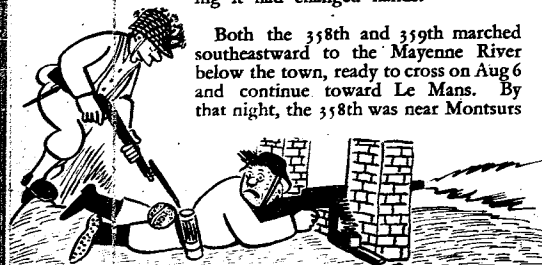
Col. G. B. Barth, Washington, DC, commanding the 357th, soon located a likely crossing south of the town. A skiff and a larger but leaky old boat were found. A torn-down fence provided oars. Col. Barth took the first boat over, then with an engineer rowed back for the second load. Co I crossed first. Rubber boats ar-



rived and the crossing of the two battalions was completed by 2030 hours.

Meantime, the 1st Bn under Maj. Edward S. Hamilton, Washington, DC, pushed forward so rapidly that it was able to storm the bridge and prevent its destruction by the Germans, who had mined it with eight 500-pound airplane bombs. Our artillery hit a caisson of ammunition on the German side. A terrific explosion resulted, and a pall of smoke blanketed the bridge. Maj. Hamilton called off the artillery and B Co rushed the bridge. The battalion had the town mopped up by 2030, while the other two battalions took positions for all-around defense.

A hundred prisoners were taken, including some bewildered Germans who came into the town, not knowing it had changed hands.



Both the 358th and 359th marched southeastward to the Mayenne River below the town, ready to cross on Aug 6 and continue toward Le Mans. By that night, the 358th was near Montsurs

and the 359th near Vaiges, paralleling Task Force Weaver's route.

Gen. McLain now split Task Force Weaver into two columns, one under Gen. Weaver and one under Col. Barth, to set a trap for the Krauts. He sent them on toward Le Mans Aug 6. The two forces were to rejoin at L'Arche to form a pocket to catch the Germans swept before them.

At Aron, five miles out of Mayenne, early Aug 6, Task Force Weaver hit a strong enemy force attacking to recapture Mayenne. A fierce engagement continued the rest of the day. Leaving the enemy to the 1st Div, Gen. Weaver withdrew under cover of darkness to seek a more satisfactory route. He reversed his column, heading south to Vaiges to hit the main Laval-Le Mans highway.

At Vaiges he found the 359th Inf, commanded by Col. Robert L. Bacon, Columbia, SC, grappling with the enemy east of the town. With speed paramount, Gen. Weaver hurried around the 359th's left flank. At Chemmes, however, sharp resistance again was encountered. The enemy was driven out of that town, but clung to a position on the flank of the route eastward. Gen. Weaver again reversed under cover of darkness and returned to Vaiges where the main highway to Le Mans now lay open, the 359th having eliminated the enemy there.

Task Force Weaver sped on, quickly reducing successive points of resistance with the aid of artillery and highly effective air support put on targets by radio.

Just before dark, Aug 8, Task Force Weaver joined Col. Barth who had arrived at L'Arche after a brilliant dash through the enemy. Col. Barth left Mayenne at 1500, Aug 6. Ripping two minor pockets of resistance, he advanced swiftly through Montsurs and stopped for the night at Ste Suzanne. Maj. Hamilton, his 1st Bn and the tanks dashed on to Viviers. At 2200, Col. Barth was notified that the enemy had reoccupied Montsurs and cut off the remainder of his column. Soon after, the Germans began preparing an attack on Ste Suzanne. Maj. Hamilton was recalled from Viviers just in time for his tanks to scatter the German's formation.

Much of the opposition was knocked out by air support and artillery fire prior to the approach of the task force. An infantry attack was required just east of Joux en Charnie, and the Tough 'Ombres carried it through successfully. The accompanying artillery was continually firing with one or two batteries, while the others dashed forward to set up new positions.

The air support was highly effective, constant cover being maintained by four to twelve P-47 fighter-bombers, which were kept on the target by radio. All along the road were evidences of the air accuracy -- bombed out tanks and wrecked vehicles. So rapid was the advance that enemy vehicles were found pulled up alongside the road with their motors still running.

The Kraut drivers had dashed off the road to avoid the murderous hail of artillery and came back to their vehicles just in time to meet the rapidly advancing infantry.

Tough 'Ombres Dashed On To Metz

ARTILLERY SUPPORT TANKS

At 0900 came word that the remainder of the column had cleared the enemy from Montsurs, and at 1000 the delayed battalion arrived at Ste Suzanne. About 1300, as the advance was ready to continue, 15 German tanks lumbered out of a wooded hilltop and thundered towards Ste Suzanne into the fire of the 345th FA, which drove them back.

Assured by Lt. Col. Frank W. Norris, Austin, Tex, commanding the 345th, that his artillery would keep the tanks at bay, Col. Barth decided to push on. The column stopped for a night at La Quinto, six miles short of Le Mans, after brushing aside small delaying groups.

The advance continued Aug 8. At L'Arche, the column met a German anti-aircraft battery trying to escape. First Lt. Charles H. Lombardi, Ozone Park, NY, firing the lead tank's 75, destroyed 15 tanks in about two minutes. Tankriding infantrymen killed more than half of the 60 Germans. Progress into the city was slowed by four German gun emplacements and the need to coordinate with the 79th Div approaching

on the right. But our troops entered the city at 0030, Aug 9, to find the 79th in control of half of it, having entered from the southwest.

Back at L'Arche, the 358th locked with the rear of Col. Barth's column, forming a solid barrier to trap the Germans fleeing northeast from Weaver.

Gen. McLain now directed Col. Clarke to cross the Sarthe River to the north of Le Mans and sever the main highways. The enemy, trying to flee, was killed or captured. The rest of the combat units took up positions, Aug 9, north and east of Le Mans, ready for the next phase—the "Chambois Shambles."

The McLain Machine in its seven-day dash from St Sauveur de Lendelin had marched a total of 146 miles, fought three hard engagements and numerous skirmishes and, taken 2054 prisoners. Many Germans were killed. Large numbers of tanks, armored and other vehicles were either captured or destroyed. The 90th's casualties were light.



The division moved north from Le Mans Aug 11, following the 2nd French Arm'd Div. In the first three days it consolidated the French gains,

mopped up the Forêt d'Ecouvès between Alençon and Sees without major incident, bagged 1329 prisoners.



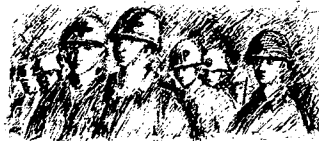
On Aug 15 the 359th took over a system of road blocks, from Le Bourg St Leonard on the west to Le Merlerault on the east. The 358th held the Nonant Le Pin road north of Sees, while the 357th remained behind to maintain the Alençon bridgehead.

The great Falaise pocket, sewed up on the south and east by the capture of Le Mans and the subsequent swing north, was closed only by fire. No firm line of troops sealed the mouth of the trap in northwest France. Until the shooting was over, there remained an escape gap through the valley where the little village of Chambois is located. So much fire was poured into the bottleneck that a large part of the proud German Seventh Army was annihilated in its struggle to withdraw.

The 90th Div alone took 12,335 prisoners and killed an estimated 8000 from Aug 16 to 22. In addition, 308 German tanks, 248 self-propelled guns, 164 artillery pieces, 3270 motor vehicles, 649 horse-drawn vehicles, and 13 motorcycles were destroyed.

The big fight started Aug 16 in the Le Bourg St Leonard sector, which the 90th had taken the day before. Co A, 359th, holding Le Bourg, was hit by a vastly

superior force of German infantry which drove the company partly from the town. It later developed that 100 remaining Nazis of the proud SS Panzer Division Das Reich were beginning the enemy's desperate efforts to keep open their escape route.



Co. A regained its ground by 1513. A platoon of tanks of the 712th arrived to reinforce the garrison. At 1700 German tanks and infantry lashed out again.

"WILD BILL" WHOOPS IT UP

This see-saw continued until the next day when Gen. Weaver arrived. He was everywhere, rallying the men and the tanks and living up to his nickname of "Wild Bill." The town was secured at 2300, Aug 17, after having changed hands twice completely and having been partially lost twice.

The 2nd Bn, 359th, relieved the 1st in the town after midnight and sat tight all day Aug 18 while our artillery ground up the Germans trying to slip through the Falaise gap.

Meanwhile, Aug 17, the 90th had passed to control of V Corps of the First U S Army. V Corps planned

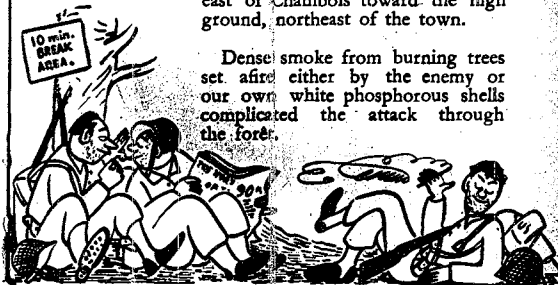
to take a line northeast from Argentan to the high ground northeast of Chambois while the British closed in from Falaise.

The 358th Inf was brought up to attack through the Forêt de Gouffern to the west of the 359th, heading for Chambois. The 357th was in reserve.

This attack began Aug 18 with the 2nd Bn, 359th, driving for Chambois and the 359th's 1st and 3rd Bns heading for Fougy to block roads west of Chambois.

The 1st and 2nd Bns of the 358th pierced the Forêt de Gouffern to seize Ste Eugenie and Bon Menil on the north edge of the woods. The 3rd Bn of the 358th, supported by the 3rd Bn of the 357th, moved to the east of Chambois toward the high ground, northeast of the town.

Dense smoke from burning trees set afire either by the enemy or our own white phosphorous shells complicated the attack through the forêt.



After a sharp skirmish at the edge of the forest the 1st Bn got underway again at 1500, Aug. 18, accompanied by two platoons of the 712th's tanks. There was little opposition until the column reached a point three quarters of the way through the forest. Here anti-tank guns opened fire and knocked out the leading tank, halting the entire column.

The enemy laid down an artillery concentration at this point, and the remaining tanks were ordered to back out of the deadly fire. The 1st Bn withdrew with the tanks, and until the next morning the Krauts held possession of this small part of the forest.

On Aug 19 Ste Eugenie was taken over by the 2nd Bn after the 1st Bn swung over to Bon Menil. There, early on Aug 20, "The Balcony of Death" was completed.

The 2nd Bn, 357th Inf, patrolled the woods to the west and made contact with the 80th Inf Div in the vicinity of Argentan.



There was a sharp tussle at the southern edge of Chambois Aug 19, but the 2nd Bn, 359th wrested control before midnight, nabbing 1000 prisoners. Chambois' ruin was indescribable, the result

of our constant artillery-pounding.

The night was full of suspense, without occupying force outnumbered by the 1000 prisoners, frequent outbursts of small arms fire, and two German tanks careening wildly through the town chased by our bazooka men. One tank was destroyed by a bazooka fired at a range of 15 feet by S/Sgt John J. Czekovsky of Westfield, Mass. The other tank escaped.



"BALCONY OF DEATH"

During Aug 20, the 90th sat on a "Balcony of Death" extending from Bon Menil through Chambois, pouring death into the Germans running the murderous gauntlet. The frantic enemy was initiated by the guns of the 358th at Ste Eugenie-Bon Menil, pummeled by the 359th at Chambois, mauled by the 3rd Bn of the 358th northeast of the town.

The Tough 'Ombres first made contact with another of their Allies, the Poles, when Co L, 359th Inf, which had reached a position west of Chambois and was

blocking the road from Trun, was passed through by reconnaissance elements of a Polish armored brigade. This brigade had been cut off by the Germans, and for several days was supplied by the 90th and by the air forces.

If the infantry is Queen of Battle, then artillery is King. And Chambois, which afforded perfect observation, was a dish fit for any king. Our artillery chewed up and swallowed the three-mile valley. Frequently, during the afternoon of Aug 20, firing ceased to permit wholesale surrender of Germans.

First Lt. William R. Matthews of Lawton, Okla, one of the air liaison pilots for the 344th FA Bn, was credited with starting a new motto for the division artillery. When he had spotted one target and fire was a trifle slow in coming, Matthews howled into his radio microphone, "Quit computin' and start shootin'!"

The 344th's story was duplicated by the division's other artillery battalions—343rd, 345th, and 915th. Five battalions of corps artillery also added to the cacophony of death, as did the temporarily attached 773rd TD Bn, towed guns of the 607th TD Bn, and tanks of the 712th. (Like the 712th, the 607th is considered a blood-brother of the 90th through long association.) Another relative is the 537th AA Bn, which has enjoyed a comparatively quiet time with the division owing to the Luftwaffe's reticence.

On Aug 21 after an unsuccessful attempt by the Luftwaffe to drop supplies, the operation simmered down to a mop-up. On that day and the following, the 90th enjoyed a rest in the ruins. The following day it was relieved by a British division.

GALLANT JOB DONE BY MEDICS

THE story of Chambois wouldn't be complete without mention of the gallant job done by the 315th Med Bn—not only in caring for our own wounded but for record-breaking numbers of enemy wounded as well. On Aug 21 alone, the battalion evacuated 698 injured German "Supermen."

Behind the lines other division units — 90th MP Platoon, 90th Sig Co, 790th Ord Co, and 90th QM Co—all played their parts well.

The success at Chambois, coupled with the striking Le Mans campaign, won for Gen. McLain the command of a corps. He was succeeded as commander of the 90th by Brig. Gen. J. A. Van Fleet of Bartow, Fla, on Oct 17, who was promoted to Maj. Gen. in December 1944.

After Chambois, the division rested near Nonant le Pin until Aug 26 when it passed to control of XX Corps and began a long drive eastward, arriving outside Reims Aug 30. It occupied the Reims bridgehead

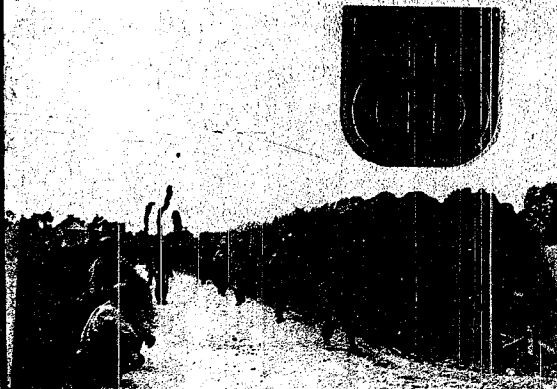
until Sept 6 when it thrust east to participate in the
siege of Metz.

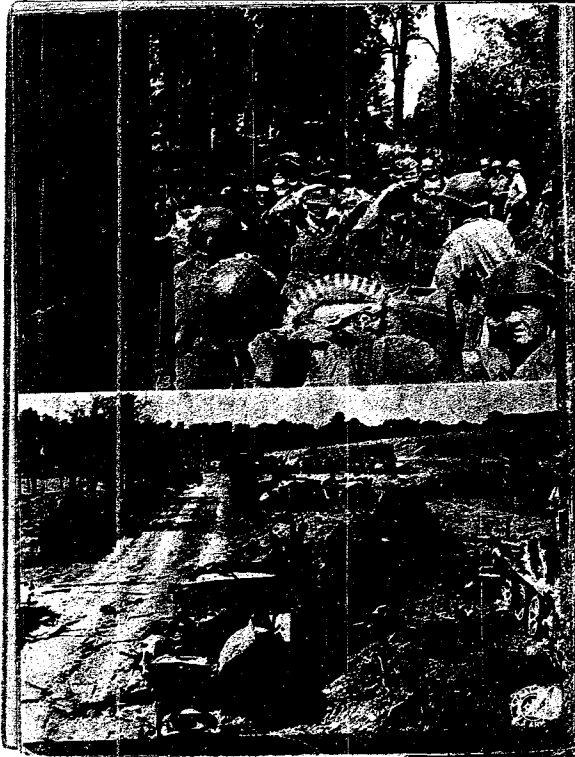
Here, preparing to advance on Metz, the 90th found
that it had caught up with its own history. In World
War I the division had fought through St Mihiel and
Meuse-Argonne and at war's end was furthestmost of
the Allied forces—at the gates of Metz.

*Now, in late October 1944, the Tough 'Ombres, confident,
battle-tested successors of the Texas-Oklahoma, found them-
selves at these same gates. But this time they weren't stopping.
This time Metz was not to be the finish line. Metz would be
the starting post for the 90th's race to Berlin.*

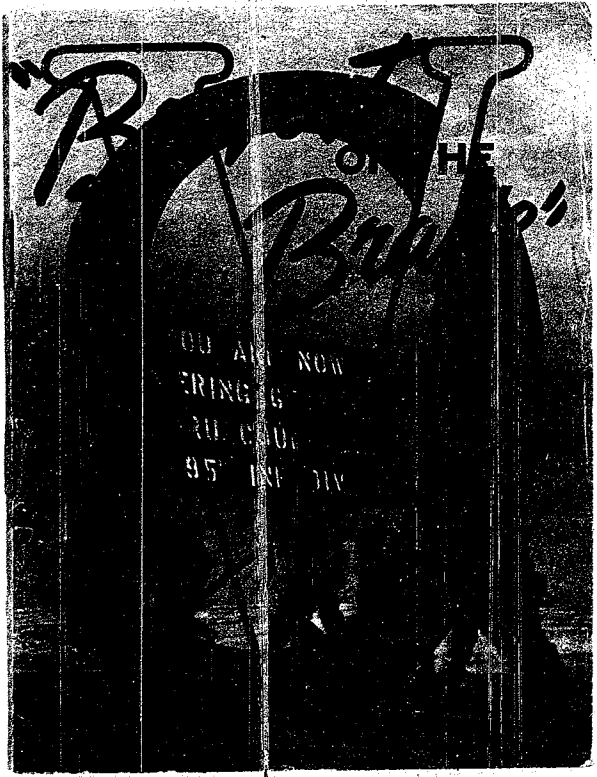


The Team - Autographs





THE COMMUNITY MEETING



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THE STORY OF THE

95th Infantry
DIVISION

The American infantrymen of Maj. Gen. Harry L. Twaddle's 95th Division had to be the "bravest of the brave" to move as they did in the face of heavy enemy machine gun and mortar fire down into the exposed city (Saarlautern), which lies like a goldfish bowl between the high ridges on either side of the Saar. This battle-tried division had crossed the Moselle to help capture Metz and was now up against the principal river between the Moselle and the Rhine.

— JOSEPH DRISCOLL, N.Y. HERALD TRIBUNE

THAT was written on the day before the Saar was crossed. On Dec. 3, 1944, Joe Driscoll had a bigger story, because the way the river was crossed without loss of a man was one of the war's slickest tricks.

At 0545, the first wave of the 1st Bn., 379th Inf., slipped across the river in boats manned by Co. C, 320th Engrs. Not a shot was fired. No one slipped or got hurt. Across the river, doughs turned south toward the approach to the main highway bridge across the Saar. Here they hit a German armored car in which a radio operator was frantically pounding out a message. He was bayoneted. A second Kraut sprinted for the demolition switch on the bridge. He missed—crumbling in his tracks, five feet short.

Star of the show was Battalion CO Lt. Col. Tobias R. Philbin, Clinton, Mass. He and Col. Robert L. Bacon, Harlingen, Tex., 379th CO, hatched the scheme which, on paper, didn't have the proverbial snowball's chance of succeeding—then Col. Philbin went along to make sure it did. Among other things, he took care of the German heading for the switch.

At 0721, Col. Philbin's men hit the bridge and began cutting all demolition wires. They were nine minutes to the good. German engineers were on their way to blow the bridge. The German schedule was set for 0730.

By the time 320th Engrs. had located 6000 pounds of explosives, the enemy realized what was happening to his prize bridge. All hell broke loose from every machine gun and pillbox within range. Germans splattered mortar shells after losing the initial counter-thrust. Heavy artillery cut loose to pulverize the bridge.

Meanwhile, 3rd Bn., 379th, had renewed its attacks at Saarlautern and reached the south side of the bridge.



The operation won a nod from the War Dept. when Under-Secretary of War Robert P. Patterson told a press conference:

"The 95th Division performed with great distinction in taking, intact, the Saarlautern bridge."

On both flanks, the 377th and 378th were mopping up final pockets of resistance to the Saar. The river was the front line in the division zone. While 377th took Wallerfangen, 378th swept Lisdorf, a Saarlautern suburb.

THIS was the way it had been at Metz, where the 95th and the 5th Divs. shared the history-making reduction of the bristling fortress. This was the way it had been in the push to the Saar and subsequent fighting in the Siegfried Line. The 95th Joes were living up to their name—Victory Division.

The 95th jumped off for the Saar Nov. 25. Troops instinctively knew the goal. The German border was about 25 miles to the east, and the whole team was looking forward to the day when it could write "inside Germany" on letters home.

Beyond stretched the Siegfried Line, an obstacle which everyone knew would be tougher to crack than Metz forts. No one was disappointed.

The 377th Inf., under Col. Fred Gaillard, Greenville, Tex., spearheaded the division's main effort. The 378th held the right flank with the 379th in reserve. The going was mild but still no walkaway that first day. Dough-feet met nothing heavier than mortar fire, and the division moved its line forward four miles, chewing up 12 towns.



pany away from the zeroed-in area, then returned to give first aid to his CO. Next, Bishop reported the company's position and called for artillery and mortar support. He stuck around to observe shell bursts, called in corrections, then asked for a smoke screen.

When the smoke came over, he evacuated the seriously wounded, led others to safety behind a knoll. After reporting to the battalion commander, he rejoined his outfit. He now wears the Distinguished Service Cross.

NEXT day, the two regiments pushed ahead, bothered as much by mined roads and fields, blown bridges and culverts as by sporadic mortar fire and scattered machine gun nests. Withdrawing Germans used concrete emplacements of the Maginot Line as temporary shelter, but there was no sign of a stand in this once-powerful string of fortifications.

Although resistance stiffened, the division grabbed Valmunster, Velving, Eblange, Bettange, Remelfang, Bouzonville, Tromborn, Alzing, Chateau Rouge, Oberdorf, Coume, Falck and Varsberg during the third day of the fresh offensive.

The big day came Nov. 28. Shortly after midnight, 377th patrols crossed the German border. At 0945, Co. F blasted Krauts from Leidingen, a village squarely astride the French-German border. By day's end, the 377th had added six more German towns to its list—Bedersdorf, Ittersdorf, Guerstling, Ihn, Kerlingen and Rammelfangen.

Advancing troops looked for boundary markers along the road. Germany didn't look any different than France.

The people didn't look different either. They had been pushed back and forth between the two nations so long that both languages came naturally. The 95th merely muttered, "We're in Germany," and went on fighting.

The deeper the 95th penetrated into Germany, the harder Krauts fought. The Germans were going all out to cover their main withdrawal back across the Saar. On Nov. 29 the two regiments rocked under ten counter-attacks, six of them in the Falck area. One of the roughest was the tank-infantry scrap at St. Barbara. When the 377th's 1st Bn. finished, the town was levelled. The division now was near enough the Siegfried Line to reaste artillery—from 88s up.

As November faded, division elements could look down from the high ground near Oberlimberg, Duren and St. Barbara and see the Saar. Across its banks, in towns and villages, farmhouses, fields and woods, were the guts of the German West Wall.

GIs PLAY TUNE FOR NAZI

Death Dance

NEW field orders arrived Dec. 1. The 379th Inf., in reserve since Metz, took over the 95th's major effort. These Joes had only to punch through the remaining two miles to the Saar, make the hazardous crossing,

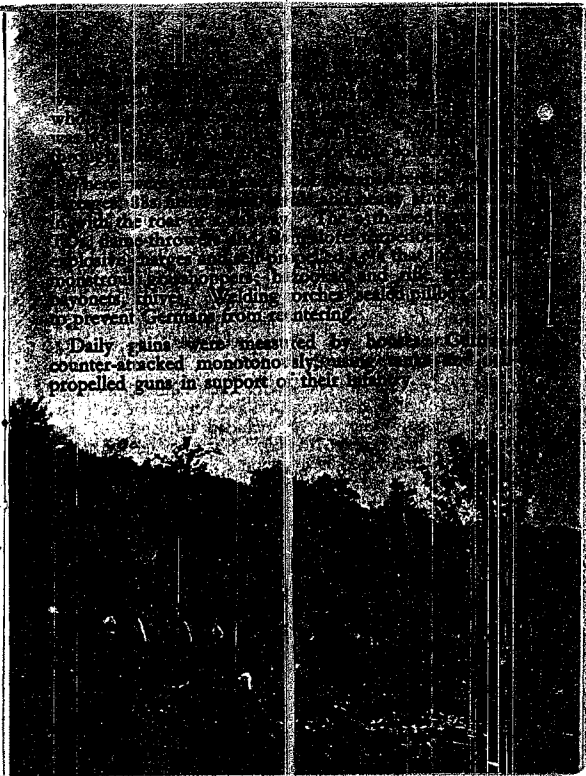
then smack the Siegfried Line. A month earlier, that would have sounded like Section VIII chatter.

All three regiments cleared the division area to the river. It was an even start for all. For the first time in its combat history, the 95th was assigned direct air support. Preparatory to the crossing, eight groups of medium bombers pounded the east bank of the river in the Saarlautern area. The XIX TAC provided fighter support. The 377th and 378th ploughed ahead against bitter resistance while the 379th wheeled toward Saarlautern from its rear reserve position.

THE Air Corps returned Dec. 2 for another assist with 400 mediums giving the Saarlautern area a second pasting. Fighter-Bombers rocked enemy barracks to the west of the city.

On the heights overlooking the river, the 377th's 1st Bn. pulled out of St. Barbara, let Div Arty pump in shells, then moved back to mop up. The town was left a shambles. In the Merten and Falck areas, the 378th experienced particularly rugged fighting. The 379th's 2nd Bn. struggled into Saarlautern, slugging it out through streets and parks, sniping and blasting from buildings.

Fighting maintained this sizzling pace once the Saarlautern bridge had been secured. Saarlouis-Roden, Saarlautern and Ensdorf, three suburbs across the river, were integral parts of the Siegfried Line. Massive pillboxes and bunkers were sandwiched between houses, others cleverly camouflaged as private or commercial buildings.



The way it shaped up, the 379th made Saarlouis-Roden its personal project; 377th rolled up its sleeves before Fraulautern; 378th battered its way into Ensdorf.

This last operation was roughest in one respect. Engineers played a grim game of building-and-rebuilding bridges with German artillery the top competitor. The river flooded Dec. 8, making even boat crossings extremely difficult.

THERE was a dance macabre in the main ballroom of Fraulautern's biggest hotel Dec. 10. Bloody hand-to-hand fighting raged when 1st Bn., 377th Inf., lunged into the building. S/Sgt. Andy Skrele, Springfield, Ill., now a Co. B lieutenant said, "There was plenty of dancing there, but it wasn't a slow fox-trot."

With only a few blocks cleared in each suburb, Germans pulled out their 21st Panzer Div. and replaced it with less skilled troops. The group included inductees of the Volksturm, or People's Army. Some were over 50 years old. Although the 95th could notice the personnel switch, even old men could do a good job of holding 10-foot-thick concrete bunkers.

The division was tired. It had been in the line for 58 days, whipping along with incredible speed for the past month.

There were no timeouts. Regiments were rotated, allowing outfits to be shifted for short rest periods, rehabilitation, training. A week earlier, Germans had initiated their northern offensive. The Saar sector entered a holding phase.

The 95th was proud of its two-month combat record. It had inflicted an estimated 21,000 casualties, including more than 10,000 prisoners. In the bitter fighting across the Saar, it demolished 1242 fortified houses and buildings, cleaned out 146 pillboxes and bunkers. One hundred sixty cities, towns and villages were liberated, 225 square miles engulfed, 31 major Metz and Maginot fortifications captured.

Recalling the months before combat, Joes could see how their rigorous training had paid off.

Training PAYS BIG DIVIDENDS

THE regulars remembered when the 7th Inf. Div. formed the cadre. They remembered the activation ceremony at Camp Swift under a hot Texas sun, July 15, 1942. The division's brand-new GIs, most of them just a few days out of Midwestern reception centers, paraded for the first time at that ceremony.

Basic training completed, the 95th made its first move, traveling to Fort Sam Houston, mammoth San Antonio post which at first glance looked like a college campus. Next door to Fort Sam was Leon Springs Military Reservation, which included Camps Bullis, Cibolo, Stahl and others. It was at these tick and chigger-infested camps

that the Victory Division underwent its first appreciable field rehearsal for Metz and the Siegfried Line.

The division moved to Louisiana for its first large-scale maneuvers June, 1943. Here Joes of the 95th took advanced courses in how to beat Germans to their knees. These maneuvers were wet, dirty and cold, but the division was taking shape.

Camp Polk, La., was just a stopover before the move to California. Desert training was to pay big dividends in France and Germany. But the desert wasn't all work. Once or twice a month, the men breezed into Los Angeles and Palm Springs.

AFTER four months, one-to-two odds found no takers that the 95th was headed for the boat. But next stop was Indiantown Gap Military Reservation, Pa. Six months at the Gap rolled by with rugged training—mountain training in the West Virginia Maneuver Area as the principal dish.

"If nothing else," one officer pointed out, "we learned in the West Virginia mountains how we would fight without communications."

There was plenty else, and Metz, Saarlautern and the Siegfried Line served as proof.

Although the 5th and 90th Inf. Divs. played highly important roles in the reduction of Fortress Metz, the 95th certainly wasn't reading its lines from the wings. Metz was the division's first offensive action. Metz produced the 95th's first heroes like Lt. Bill Kreuger of

Co. I, 377th Inf., and Pfc Joe Lerma, Co. E, 378th, who won Silver Stars.

Lt. Kreuger, Pitman, N.J., was leading a section in an attack on a German-held chateau. Paralyzed from the waist down because of a shrapnel wound in the head, he still didn't quit. He directed reorganization of the squads and led them back to the CP.

All that Lerma, San Diego, Calif., did was capture a German pillbox and 20 of its occupants with no more firepower than a jammed rifle. On Armistice Day, 3rd platoon, Co. E, 378th Inf., was held up, so he took off for the hotbox. As he climbed the pillbox, his rifle jammed—but he didn't. The Germans were so surprised by his determination that they surrendered. Lerma escorted the entire group back with a weapon borrowed from one of his prisoners.

Veterans ARE BORN OVERNIGHT

THE Metz drive began rolling with a couple of separate pushes, Nov. 8. The 2nd and 3rd Bns., 377th Inf., attacking at night, wiped out the enemy pocket east of Maizieres to the Moselle. The going was rough. It was trial by fire. Men who proved themselves that night did a lot of the ball-carrying on the power drive down to Metz the following week.

The division had seen many slag piles before, but it had never attempted to fight one. Co. K. tried it the same night and ran into concentrated hell from mortars, machine guns and mines of deeply dug-in Germans. It was hell in the woods at Fereau Farm too where the untried Co. F waded through mine fields and booby-trapped brush to blast Germans from thick-walled farm buildings. Mortar fire rained unceasingly. Co. I found a similar reception on its assignment.

ONLY momentarily stopped and bitter now, these outfits jumped off again the next day. It wasn't any pushover, but the job was completed. Again the regimental commander learned the caliber of his men. Lt. Col. Robert L. Walton, 2nd Bn. CO, was an example—during that murderous night attack he rallied platoons that had been chopped up by mines and machine guns. That was just a warm-up. Next morning he was at the point of the attack into the woods above the farm. When a machine gun killed a sergeant next to him, the colonel tore into the position, his own submachine gun blazing. Although hit three times, he kept running the show. It wasn't until late afternoon that he slowed down long enough for the medics to examine him.

Lt. Raymond J. Albano, (then a T/Sgt.) Small, Idaho, was another standout. Slugging his way to the top of a slag pile, Albano dug in, laid out an array of weapons, got ready for business.

Germans were most obliging. They even sent a 15-man patrol up the pile after him. Few returned to tell about the one-man army and his arsenal. In four

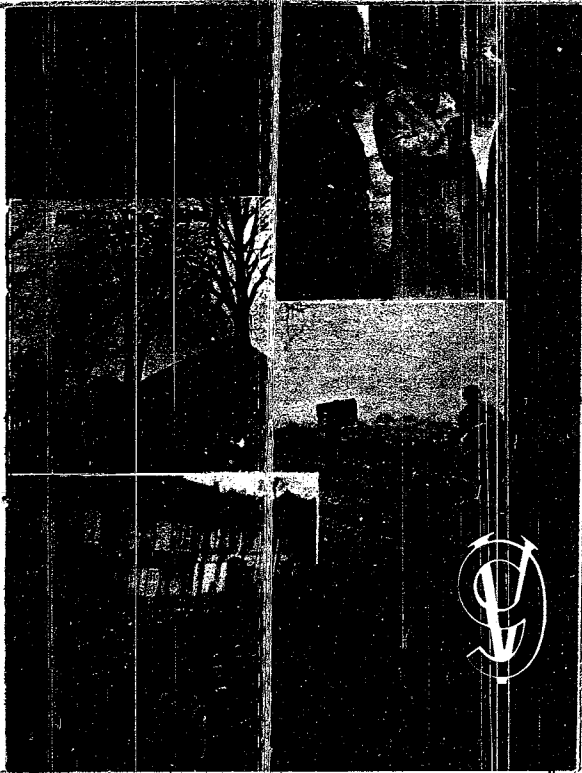


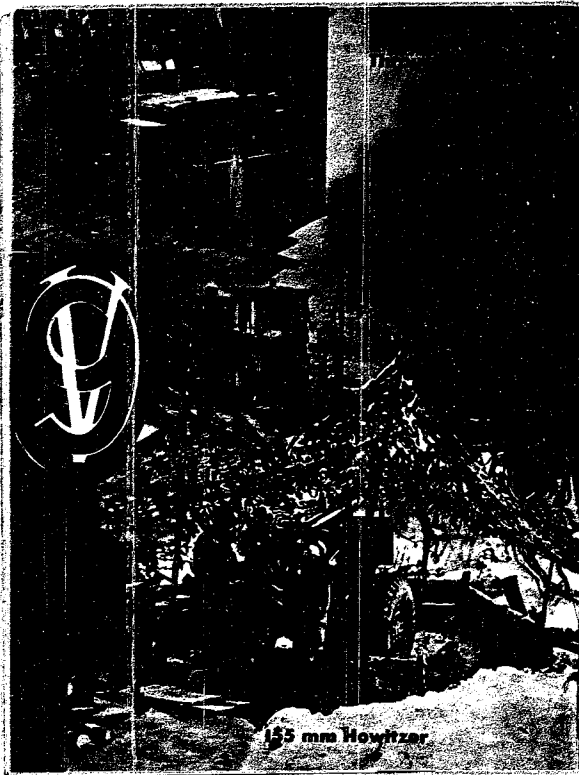
Another preliminary bout to the main event took place when 1st Bn., 377th, Joes crossed the flooded Moselle at Uckange, Nov. 8. A neat assist came from the 320th Engr. Bn., which put them across in the face of heavy fire. The Germans threw the book at the battalion—mortars, artillery, 88s, rifles. After Cos. B and C and part of D reached the opposite shore, business picked up.

The troops pushed to the high ground east of the Moselle, dug in and began defending their newly-won bridgehead. But the Moselle began to rise and reached its highest level in 29 years. First Bn. doughs were getting hungry; they needed more ammunition. Mother Nature and Germans, both on the loose, provided a rugged combination. Normal supply means were impossible, but the 95th found the answer. The division's Air Corps—artillery liaison planes—were used to supply the isolated troops.

Division infantrymen naturally are fond of their artillery, but the 1st Bn. was even more devoted after this extremely tricky operation. Planes made better targets than clay pigeons because they had to drop down to 25 feet to release supplies, then pull up swiftly to miss trees. Pilots appropriately dubbed their run the "Red Ball Airway Express." They made 104 trips the first day alone, dropping food, ammunition, medical supplies.

By Nov. 12, the Moselle had subsided enough for supplies to be transported by assault boats. Next day, the remainder of 1st Bn. crossed to the east bank and began pushing to Bertrange and Imeldange, the final objectives. Cos. A and D overran both towns during





155 mm Howitzer

the day, and Co. C charged into Bertrange to make certain Germans didn't regain it.

But the "13" jinx cursed the battalion, because Nazis brought up infantry and armor the next day to cut off forces in the two towns. Enough heroism was displayed by 1st Bn. the next two days to fill a book. Lt. Fred Brandenburg, 377th Med. Det., Denver, was a sample. He set up an aid station at Bertrange, worked tirelessly taking care of wounded.

Then a report came from Imeldange, a mile away, that Kraut artillery had hit six men. The enemy also was zeroed in on the road between the two towns, particularly a 1000-yard open stretch.

Lt. Brandenburg started out although warned that the trip was too hazardous to attempt. He started out, but the road was so churned up it would have been like going over Niagara Falls in a Lister bag. So he came back and resumed work.

Next morning before dawn, the lieutenant started out again. The Krauts still poured it in. He dove into a shallow ditch along the roadside and crawled. The stuff crump-crumped all around; some of the big hunks of shrapnel sang a dirty song as they flew overhead. Down in the ditch the lieutenant crawled all the way to Imeldange. Grimy and exhausted, he went to work on the six injured men. Lt. Brandenburg was awarded the Silver Star.

The battalion fought savagely until Nov. 13 when the newly-organized Task Force Bacon drove down from the north to relieve the pressure.

Victory

DIVISION GOES ON OFFENSIVE

ANOTHER of the Metz chapters was the Thionville bridgehead operation, an expert accomplishment by Lt. Col. Aubrey J. Maroun's 2nd Bn., 378th Inf.

This battalion was in division reserve until Nov. 10. Although the Moselle and the enemy worked hand in glove to prevent bridging the swollen river, the 2nd swung over to Thionville, forcing a bridgehead.

The enemy not only held the east bank of the river but depended on Fort Yutz, the moat-surrounded stronghold, to choke off attempted crossings. The battalion initiated the operation Nov. 11; almost all of the troops were on the opposite bank and driving on the fort by day's end. Cos. F and G were fighting inside the fort by noon the next day as Germans resisted with flame-throwers and every weapon they could man.

The fort fell at noon, Nov. 13. Without delay, troops pushed on to swarm Basse-Yutz. With the capture of Haute-Yutz, the battalion was poised to tackle the prize objective—Fort d'Illange.

Fort Yutz was tough enough, but by comparison with d'Illange, Yutz was a tea party. Perched on high ground



The fort commander was told he 'could cash in on the spot with no loss of life. Otherwise, the battalion would be obliged to assist his men in meeting Hitler in hell. The German CO refused; 2nd Bn. went about the task of fulfilling its obligation.

Co. F pointed the assault, closely followed by Co. G. By nightfall, these veterans had pried their way into a portion of the fort. Fighting raged all night. Early Nov. 15, the fort was captured. There still was work to be done. Subsequent capture of the town of Illange relieved pressure on the beleaguered 1st Bn., 377th Inf.

The battalion's first try at offensive action lasted three days—three days in which the Maroun Marauders had uncorked Fort Yutz and the more formidable Fort d'Illange, Thionville east of the Moselle and three more towns, all in the face of stiff German opposition. No sooner had the 378th's 2nd Bn. finished the Thionville bridgehead operation than the unit became part of Task Force Bacon, together with the 1st Bn., 377th Inf.; the 95th Recon. Troop and Co. D, 778th Tank Bn.

Task Force Bacon was commanded by a man who could never hope to win a German popularity contest. He was Col. Robert L. Bacon, who played so much hell with the Germans they undoubtedly had a bounty out for his scalp. He whipped his troops down the east bank of the Moselle into Metz like a lawn mower cutting grass.

The colonel moved fast, his itinerary read like this: jumping off Nov. 16, Task Force Bacon roared through Tremery, Ay sur Moselle, Bousse, Rurange and Montre-



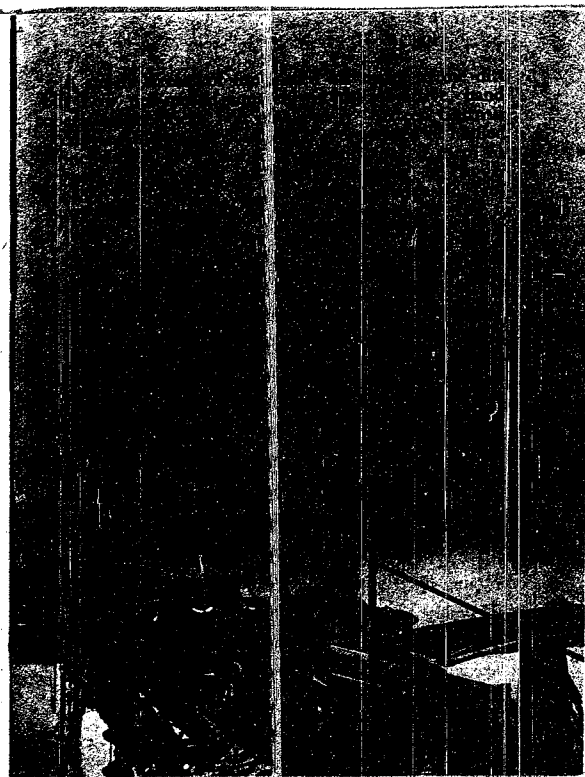
Second Bn., 378th, took Fort St. Julien Nov. 18 after a bitter fight, while the 1st Bn., 377th, overran St. Julien les Metz. As the 377th's 1st Bn. was preparing to assault Fort Bellecroix, Krauts came streaming forward, hands in the air. Battalion troops started into the fort as Co. C swooped around to the north of Bellecroix to enter Metz.

Two tremendous explosions shattered heavy masonry walls as the fort collapsed. First Bn. was hard hit. That's one of the reasons the 95th took so much pleasure in plastering the Germans. Bellecroix never will be forgotten.

Task Force Bacon blazed into the outskirts of Metz the same night, later spanning the Seille River, which streams through the city. A pitched battle in the heart of town followed.

TASK Force Bacon had its share of heroes. One in particular was Sgt. Walter Low, Co. G, 378th, Smoky Junction, Tenn., the first 95th GI to receive the Distinguished Service Cross. The action which produced the award was a short, daring and life-saving combination of guts and bluff. Two unmapped pillboxes near Fort St. Julien popped up surprisingly in the path of Co. G's advance. While his platoon pressed forward, Low and two others pulled out of the formation to investigate the pillboxes.

When equally surprising machine gun fire blocked the platoon's front over an open field, the pillboxes completed a squeeze play by pumping lead to the rear of the platoon. The pillboxes had to be liquidated or the platoon was in for a chop-up.



Fort Driant in the early stages of their attacks. The first week of offensive combat ended Nov. 14.

The division launched its main effort at 1000 Nov. 15 when the 377th Inf. jumped off from the slag pile to inaugurate the drive down the west bank of the Moselle to the very gates of Metz. The road was straight, flanked by broad, open fields. Artillery and mortar fire raked the advance route, but the 2nd and 3rd Bns. continued their drive to the south.

By nightfall, the 3rd holed up in La Maxe. The 2nd slugged it out in the outskirts of Woippy, only three miles from Metz. Tough to crack, Woippy finally was cleared before dark, and the 2nd surged forward along the road to Metz.

Meanwhile, the 3rd was having its headaches near Fort Gambetta. A request for that "extra ten percent" was passed along the line Nov. 17. No urging was needed. With Metz in sight, the division felt sharp. Elements of the 377th poured into Sansonnet, a Metz suburb, that night. Early next morning, the 2nd and 3rd Bns., with tank support, pounded onward as swank homes and apartment buildings replaced fields and farms. When Co. G crossed the bridge over the Hafen Canal at 1000, the city of Metz was entered. Elements of both battalions had reached the island by noon and were mopping up the enemy.

Crossing into the central part of the city in assault boats manned by Co. A, 320th Engrs. followed. The 377th launched the battle of the snipers. Metz bubbled over with these sharpshooters.

THE HIDDEN BALL PLAY

Works IN WAR

CAPTURE of Metz was a rich achievement. The city successfully had weathered every assault since 1944. But the 95th had a plan, and grim-faced Joes made it work. Punching along "88 Boulevard," the division smacked up against the bristling forts ringing the city. Still, the ring was broken, and this is the way it was accomplished.

The 378th got off to a flying start with one of the most daringly conceived and brilliantly executed trick plays of the entire offensive. Col. Samuel L. Metcalfe, Regimental Commander, Pearsall, Tex., dreamed it up.

Fronting the 378th's zone was a series of fortifications including Fort Amanvillers, the three Canrobert forts and Fort de Feve. East of this line spread the extensive Lorraine fortifications. Taking such an area by an anticipated head-on drive would have been suicide. Col. Metcalfe's plan was to sweep around the northern tip of the fortifications and approach from the rear, leaving behind a small task force to deceive the enemy into thinking the entire regiment still fronted the forts.

The job of providing the phoney front was assigned to Task Force St. Jacques (Capt. William M. St. Jacques, Service CO, San Antonio, Tex.), composed of three rifle



The 378th jumped off for the third day's operation at 0800, and the 1st Bn. had assaulted, captured and occupied the three Canrobert Forts the first five hours. A regimental patrol sent out to scout Fort Lorraine reported the once-mighty bastion had been deserted. That night Forts Kellerman and La Salle were found deserted, and troops moved in. Other elements of the battalion stormed into a portion of Fort Plappeville, were pushed out by defending Germans, then slugged their way back into that part of the fort above ground.

By this time, the 378th's 3rd Bn. had forced its way to the west bank of the Moselle. One platoon of Co. K was crossing a bridge into Metz when Germans touched off demolition charges. Casualties were heavy.

Next day, the battalion crossed to the city in boats operated by Co. B, 320th Engrs., and joined the 377th in ferreting out the snipers. First Bn. held Forts Plappeville and St. Quentin and the intervening area. The third arm of the main effort was powered by the 379th Inf., which also had drawn a battering-ram assignment against the forts flanking the road to Metz. At the very outset of the division jump-off, the 379th ran into stiff and bitter enemy resistance. The 1st and 3rd Bns. chipped away at one of the greatest and most impregnable of all Metz forts — Jeanne d'Arc, guardian of the western approach.

Chipping was the word for it. The heaviest demolition charge produced a lot of concrete dust and not much else. With various forts in the Jeanne d'Arc system linked by tunnels, the Germans employed a fire-




95th MEANS

"Bravest OF THE BRAVE"

As the Metz campaign drew to a close, with the city rapidly being drained of stragglers and snipers, the 379th continued cleaning up the area east of Forts Driant, Jeanne d'Arc, St. Quentin and Plappeville. By Nov. 21, the fall of Metz was something to write home about. The 95th Recon. Troop had made contact with elements of the 5th Div., which had driven up from the south to complete the squeeze play on the fortress city.

Only two small pockets of resistance remained, and these were being mopped up by the 377th. Garrisons in the four big forts across the river were completely cut off. The task of maintaining a death watch on these diehards was transferred to units of the 5th Div.

The frosting on the Metz cake was the capture of Generalleutnant Heinrich Kittel, CO of the 462nd Volksgrenadier Div. and of the Metz fortress. He was captured by Co. K, 377th, which had fought its way up to the southern part of the Ile Chambiere. When taken, Kittel was a patient in the hospital, being treated for a leg wound.



Resistance in the city ended officially.
The 95th Div. troops had reason to be proud.
They gained historic honors.

totaled 11,205, including an estimated 1577 killed, 3546 wounded and 6082 definitely captured.

With the successful reduction of Metz the 95th marked another milestone. Landing in England Aug. 17, the division trained for almost a month, then crossed the Channel and began a four-week bivouac in the Normandy apple orchards.

Many of the division's troops "Red Balled" supplies to the front, while the remainder marked time in the hedgerows. The 95th's first combat nod finally came Oct. 20 when it defended the Moselle bridgehead.

METZ and Saarlautern were battle successes. That's the way it was all along for the men of the 95th. But everything that happened had a reason, and this reason is esprit de corps. Here's the way one 95th Joe felt about his first Christmas in combat. He was writing his wife:

This is our first Christmas away from home. I say home, because we all feel now that anywhere in the States is home. The propaganda broadcasts have been making fun of our not being home for Christmas. But that's fair enough. If we weren't over here fighting we might be doing it back there.

A lot of us have kids back home, or hope to have later on, and those kids are going to know about the 95th and the part it played in cleaning up this mess. They'll know what the 95th has done for them and be just as proud of the outfit as I am. And that's tops.



The Team



Name _____

Date Enlisted _____

Assigned to 95th _____

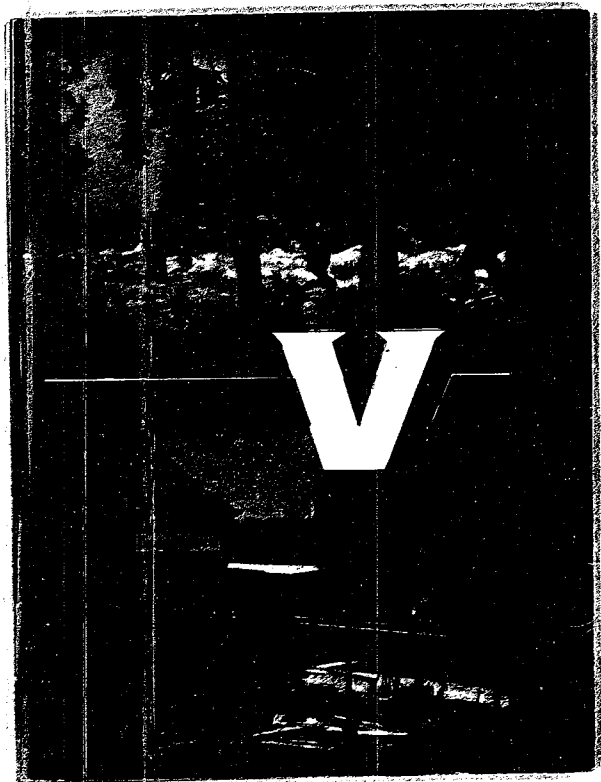
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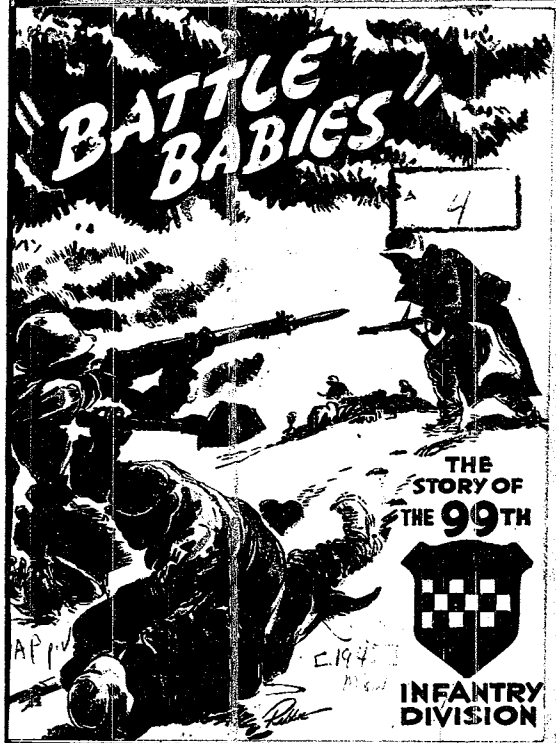
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Photos: U.S. Signal Corps





BATTLE BABIES

4

THE
STORY OF
THE 99TH



INFANTRY
DIVISION

1945

Name _____

Date Entered _____

Assigned to 99th _____

Training _____

Battle Actions _____

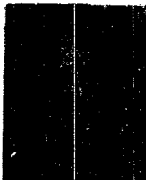
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This is one of a series of G. I. Stories... Service in the European Theater of Operations... Major General Walter E. Lauer... division, led his cooperation...

United States Army, European Theater of Operations



THIS booklet recounts briefly the highlights of the 99th Infantry Division in combat. Our division has established an enviable record as a fighting team and has taught the German to fear the wearer of the "Checkerboard" All of us—officers and men of the 99th Division—can be proud of our record. To be a member of the 99th Division is an honor. Towards our comrades who have been left on the fields of battle, we feel most gratefully humble. Their sacrifice shall be our ever constant inspiration to do our job—Now, Right, and with Steadfast Determination.

Walter E. Lauer

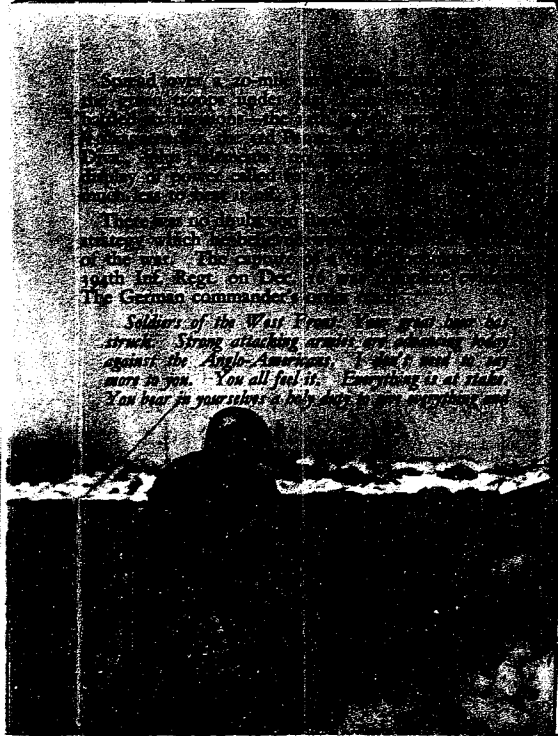
Major General, Commanding

THE STORY OF THE 99th Infantry DIVISION

LIEGE by Christmas, Brussels by New Year's" was Field Marshal Gerd von Rundstedt's promise to his soldiers. But the operation backfired. Battle Babies—the men of the 99th Infantry Division—know why.

For two days, Dec. 16 and 17, 1944, doughs of the 99th stood alone at a hot corner of the Battle of the Bulge—in front of Elsenborn, at Krinkelt, Wirtzfeld, Bullingen—while the Wehrmacht's best troops lowered the boom against their thinly-held line.

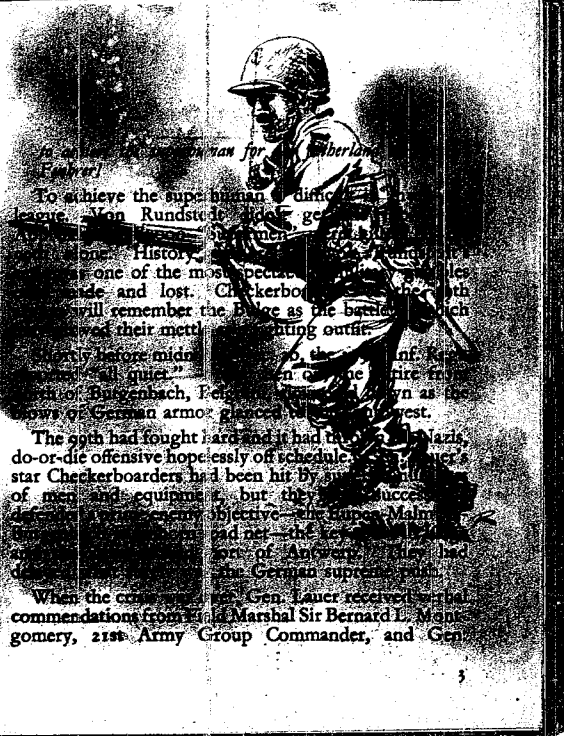
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BZAP p.v.



Several weeks ago...
of the war...
The German commander...

There was no...
of the war...
The German commander...

Soldiers of the West Front: You great have been struck. Strong attacking armies are pushing today against the Anglo-Americans. I shall send to you more so you. You all feel it. Everything is at stake. You hear in your silos a holy duty to your brothers and



*In the... man for...
(February)*

To achieve the superhuman...
league. Von Rundstedt...
The German commander...

History...
as one of the most...
side and lost. Checkerboard...
will remember the...
showed their mettle...
fighting outfit.

Shortly before midday...
"All quiet..."
of Butgenbach, Peig...
shows of German armor glaced...

The 99th had fought hard and it had...
do-or-die offensive hopelessly off schedule...
star Checkerboarders had been hit by...
of men and equipment, but they...
defeat... objective...
and net...
sort of Antwerp...
the German supreme...

When the... Gen. Lauer received verbal
commendations from Field Marshal Sir Bernard L. Montgomery, 21st Army Group Commander, and Gen.

1. OK.
2. *Wish was, 1945 - Campaign in Western Europe*
3. *Summit*

1282

Courtney Hodges, First Army Commander, on the vigorous and effective stand contributed by the 99th. From Maj. Gen. Leonard T. Gerow, then V Corps Commander, came the following commendation:

I wish to express to you and the members of your command my appreciation and commendation for the fine job you did in preventing the enemy from carrying out his plans to break through the V Corps sector and push on to the Meuse River. Not only did your command assist in effectively frustrating that particular part of the plan, but it also inflicted such heavy losses on the enemy that he was unable to carry out other contemplated missions in other sectors of the Allied front.

Gen. von Manteuffel, commander of the 5th Panzer Army, stated in the address to his troops prior to the attack that "our ground mission must be continuous; otherwise we will not achieve our goal." Due in part to the 99th Infantry Division, this ground mission has not been continuous, and he will not achieve his goal...

THE 99th Inf. Div. was activated Nov. 16, 1942, at Camp Van Dorn, Miss., and when raw recruits arrived in early December, the picture they viewed was far from rosy. Camp Van Dorn, hastily built as the Army mushroomed in every direction, was a tar paper shanty town sprawled across the red mud of southern Mississippi. Men of the division, most of whom came from northern states, not only faced basic training, but one of the most miserable winters in years. Both service clubs burned down by Christmas; there was only one



small theater for 20,000 men. Any town of more than 2000 population was 50 miles distant; besides, there were no busses. Then men had to help dig ditches to drain the camp, build walks, paint signs and ready the camp for training, which began Jan. 4, 1943.

The early spring produced more than green grass and blue skies. Men of the 99th began to look like soldiers, to feel the bond that springs from the Checkerboard shoulder patch. Originally planned as a Pennsylvania outfit, the 99th had taken its checkerboard insignia from the city of Pittsburgh's coat of arms.

Meanwhile, the division underwent the various growing pains of an outfit destined for combat. Prior to its departure for Louisiana Maneuvers in the fall of 1943, Gen. Lauer assumed command.

After giving a good account of itself during maneuvers, the 99th moved to Camp Maxey, six miles north of Paris, Tex., and within weekend range of Dallas. Here, Checkerboarders spent nearly a year in putting on the final polish. Brig. Gen. Hugh T. Mayberry,

Peekskill, N.Y., who organized and served as first commandant of the Camp Hood Tank Destroyer School, joined the 99th as assistant division commander in February, 1944.

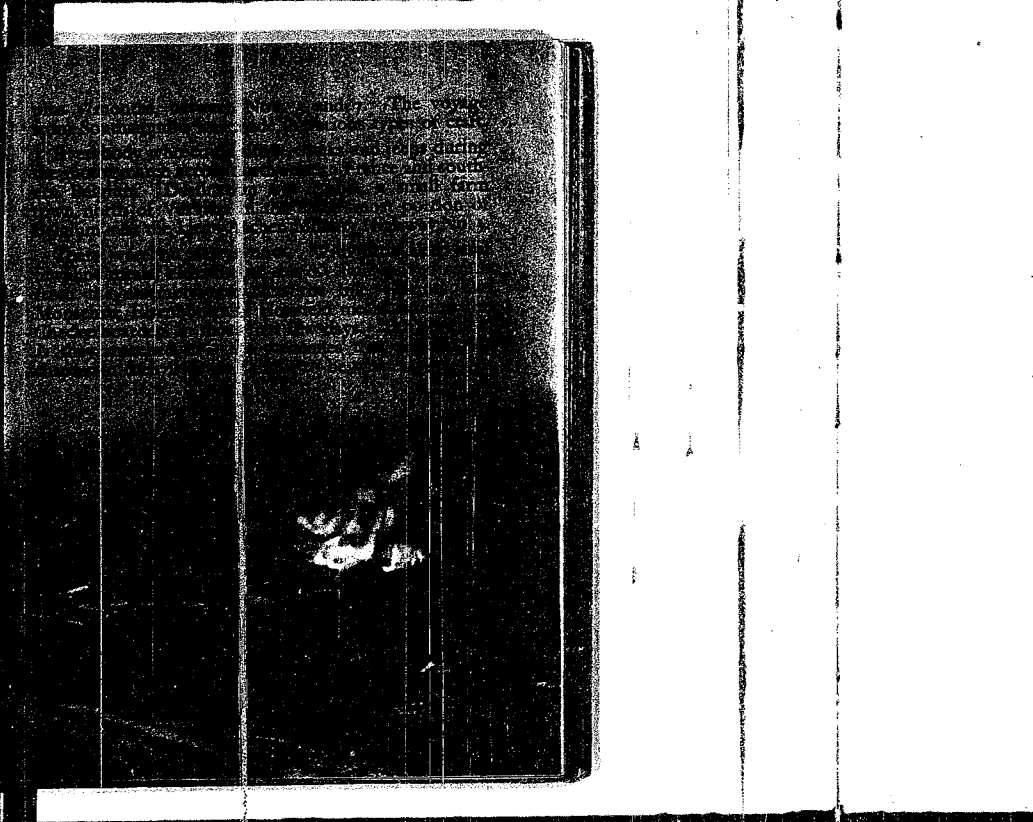
The following month division strength was boosted by the arrival of more than 3000 men released by the Army Specialized Training Program. These men trained as a provisional regiment until absorbed by the 99th three months later in time to take part in the hasty box-building program that began in August.

There was sea spray in the Texas dust and the division entrained for Camp Miles Standish near Boston the second week in September. After two weeks of final preparations, Checkerboarders boarded ships including the Army transport, *George W. Goethals*; the ex-freighter, *Explorer*; and the one-time luxury liner, *Argentina*, and sailed for England, Sept. 29.

Arriving at a number of English ports, the division assembled at Dorsetshire near the city of Dorchester where three weeks were spent in hikes and calisthenics while the job of final staging with its myriad supply problems and last-minute checks was carried on.

Forty-eight hour passes, most of them to London but some to points as far as Scotland, were the rule rather than the exception. There were company and battalion parties at which English girls enjoyed the fresh doughnuts and hot chocolate.

The Checkerboard Division saw war's ravages the first time at Le Havre, France, where it landed on D



99 DAYS WITH THE

Fighting 99th

As part of V Corps, the 99th was alerted for the attack Dec. 12, 1944, and doughs moved out at 0830 the following morning. In deep snow, 1st and 2nd Bns., 395th, and 2nd and 3rd Bns., 393rd, swung northeast to seize objectives in the outer belt of the Siegfried Line. These new positions were strengthened immediately despite intense enemy mortar and artillery fire. It was give and take the next two days as the Germans' stubborn pillbox defenses slowed the progress.

It was a long way from the hot training grounds of the deep south to the misty, snow-hung Ardennes Forest, smack up against Hitler's vaunted West Wall. And it had taken some time, in November and early December, for 99th doughs to become accustomed to the freezing cold of the foxholes and the unmerciful whine of German artillery.

There had been little action in this sector for some time and it was a good spot for a new division to get used to burp guns, snipers and the sounds of different shells.

But, as an active front goes, there was little fighting. Occasionally, a pillbox was cleaned out and frequent

patrols probed deep into the Siegfried Line. This was a quiet, strange sort of warfare.

DEC. 16, 1944: All hell broke loose!

With lightning speed and savage fury, von Rundstedt's forces rolled forward on the heels of a pulverizing artillery barrage. Using tanks and infantry in battalion spearheads, the fanatic Wehrmacht hurled its full force against the entire arc of the 99th Division. Outposts and front-line companies reeled under the blow. The final effort of the Nazi war machine was under way.

Striking in the same place where in 1940 the French and British forces had been driven to defeat, the Germans knew every road and hillock of the countryside before them.

Von Rundstedt's plan was simple: strike a thinly-held line of untried divisions with an overpowering force. The 99th Division, on the highway to Eupen, panicked and would drop in strength. Panzers would smash through the line with paratroopers, and strike before the 99th could shift their forces.



The initial weight of the assault fell on the 193rd Inf., holding the center, and the 194th, maintaining the right of the division. The blow was parried but the Germans came on in waves, each successive thrust was beaten off with greater difficulty. As platoons, companies and battalions were broken to pieces, many of the survivors were killed.

When the 193rd Inf. was broken, the 194th and Co. B, 193rd Inf., were the only units left. The 194th was broken and the 193rd Inf. was broken. The 193rd Inf. was broken and the 194th was broken.

The 193rd Inf. was broken and the 194th was broken. The 193rd Inf. was broken and the 194th was broken. The 193rd Inf. was broken and the 194th was broken.

The 193rd Inf. was broken and the 194th was broken. The 193rd Inf. was broken and the 194th was broken. The 193rd Inf. was broken and the 194th was broken.

Still, the Germans advanced all along the line.



up German vehicles and forcing the panzers into bypassing the town temporarily.

S/Sgt. Elmer E. Kenner, Sanger, Calif., 393rd Unit Personnel Section Clerk, was so busy firing at Max V that he was left behind when the remainder of his section, alternately loading service records and firing at Germans, pulled out. Kenner also teamed up with two doughs and the trio, blasting away with a howitzer, knocked out three tanks before rejoining a division unit.

While German infantry and armor roared ahead to the Ebenroth-Eupen road where they were to join forces with their paratroopers, Nazis cut off and surrounded the 1st Bn. of both the 393rd and 394th Inf. Regts. The 324th Regt. Bn. was split, severely punished, and most of the artillery pieces were destroyed.

Green Troops BUILD STONE WALL

But what was happening didn't make sense to the Germans. They slugged this green division unmercifully, yet it still jabbed back. Cut off and surrounded in part, these newcomers to battle were fighting like veterans. The going was bitter, but the division began regaining ground. By Sunday night, Dec. 17, Germans were using every trick in the book to make their last-stand offensive click. English-speaking enemy donned U.S. uniforms, rode in captured vehicles. Division doughs couldn't be sure who was in the next foxhole.

At the extreme northern tip of the line, 3rd Bn., 395th, gave such an account of itself between Saturday and Monday that it was awarded the Distinguished Unit Badge. The citation reads:

During the German offensive in the Ardennes, the Third Battalion, 395th Infantry, was assigned the mission of holding the Monschau-Eupen-Liege Road. For four successive days the battalion held this sector against combined German tank and infantry attacks, launched with fanatical determination and supported by heavy artillery. No reserves were available... and the situation was desperate. On at least six different occasions the battalion was forced to place artillery concentrations

dangerously close to its own positions in order to repulse penetrations and restore its lines...

The enemy artillery was so intense that communications were generally cut. The men carried out missions without orders when their positions were penetrated or

They killed German soldiers and captured them from

With

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throughout the day...

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planned...

1/Sgt. Sax...

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the superior numbers of the enemy forces... Many times the men rose out of their foxholes to meet the enemy in fierce hand-to-hand combat... By its tenacious stand, First Battalion prevented the enemy from penetrating the right flank of an adjacent division, and permitted other friendly forces to reinforce the sector...

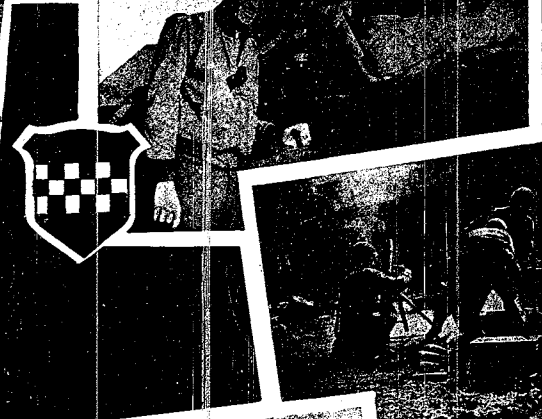
WHEN the panzers hit Krinkelt, the 393rd's communications were cut off. Lt. Col. Thomas E. Griffin, Brooklyn, regimental executive officer (now 395th CO), drove his C & R to a high terrain point as shells fell on all sides and relayed messages with his radio until an enemy tank drove him away.

The 99th QM Co. entered the battle at Krinkelt when it sent a convoy of trucks into the town to evacuate the wounded. At Eisenborn, the company suddenly found itself in a hot spot during an air raid. While some members of the unit issued clothing over truck tailgates, others manned the ring-mounted machine guns on the front of the 6-x-6s and poured a steady stream of lead into German planes.

Fresh infantry from rest camps and A/T outfits arrived Sunday evening, Dec. 17. Artillery reinforcements pulled in to back up the division's 370th, 371st, 372nd and 924th FA Bns. Time was running out for the Germans as panzers were shoved from Krinkelt and Bullingen.

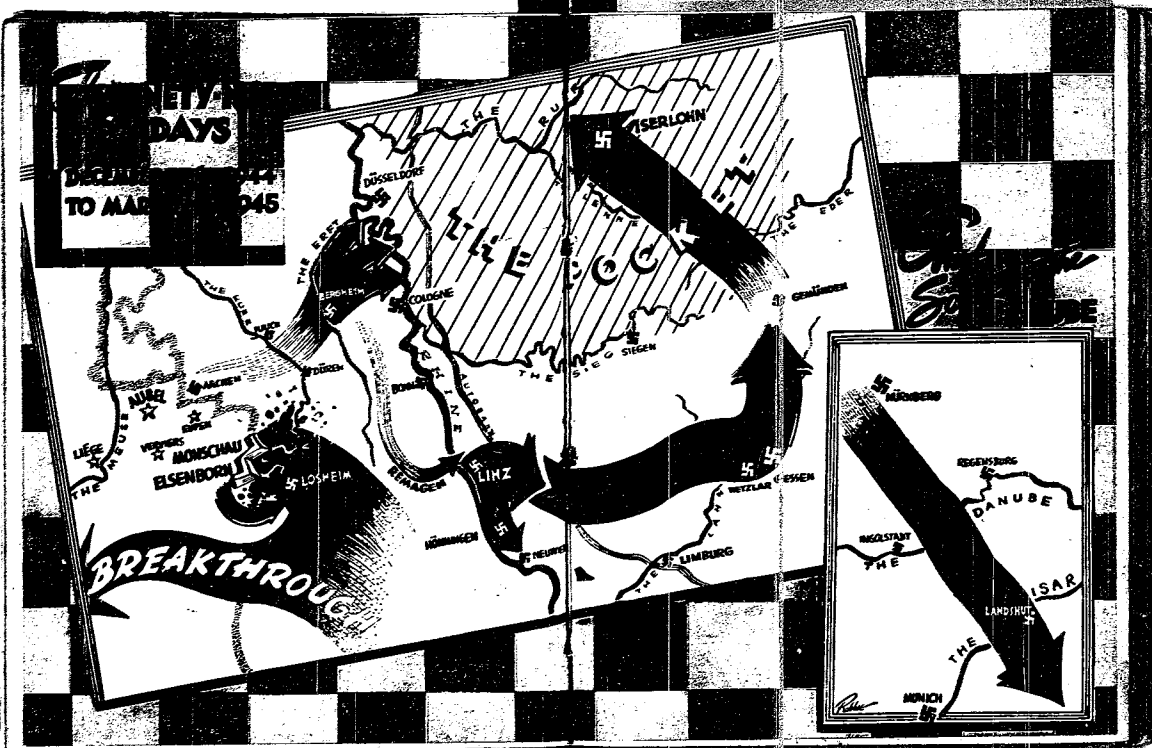
The 99th drew back to form a defense line east of Eisenborn the next few days as the enemy kept up his

Gen. Lauer,
Col. Warren



Ludendorff Bridge, East End





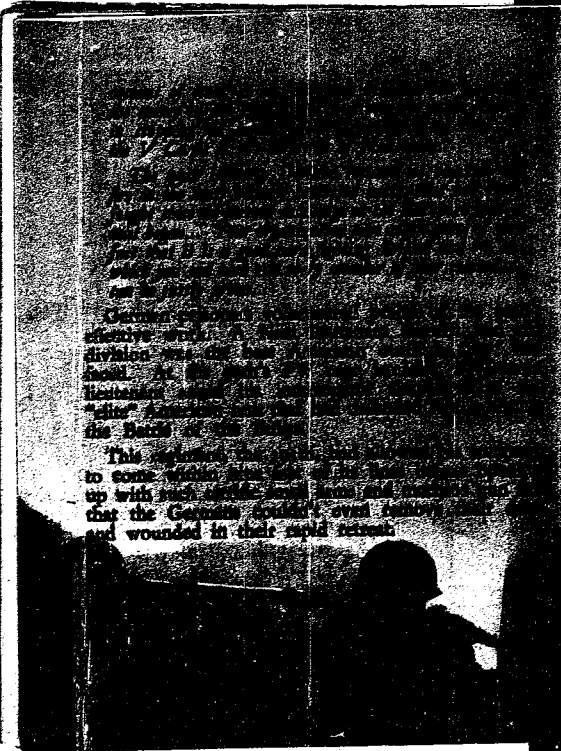


terrific artillery spree. But the new line held fast and every German infantry attack was repulsed. All around the Elsenborn corner, Nazis could count the cost of a futile effort.

More than 4000 enemy were dead; some 60 tanks and self-propelled guns knocked out. Checker-board doughs, even when their lines were pierced, had kept on slugging, died on their guns, had neither given way nor given up. After five days and nights of hell, the Germans, tired of beating their heads against the 99th's stone wall, turned south.

Two months later, when the division transferred to VII Corps, Maj. Gen. C. R. Huebner, V Corps Commander wrote Gen. Lauer:

The 99th Infantry Division arrived in this theater without previous combat experience early in November, 1944. It...was committed to the attack on Dec. 12... Early on the morning of Dec. 16, the German Sixth Panzer Army launched its now historic counter-offensive which struck your command in the direction of Losheim and Honsfeld. This armored spearhead cut across the rear of your division zone with full momentum. During the next several days, notwithstanding extremely heavy losses in men and equipment, the 99th Infantry Division re-disposed itself and...succeeded in establishing a line east of Elsenborn. Despite numerous hostile attempts to break through its lines, the 99th Infantry Division continued to hold this position until it was able to pass to the offensive. On Dec. 18, the 3rd Battalion of the 395th Infantry gave a magnificent



The 99th DRIVES ON TO FATHERLAND

AFTER the fury of the first week of the breakthrough, men of the 99th hugged their snow-filled foxholes in the open land before Elsenborn, repulsing weakening German thrusts until the division switched to the offensive in late January. Col. Robert B. Warren, Windom, Minn., joined the division as chief of staff.

Limited patrolling, then more and more aggressive forays into the enemy-held woods beyond Elsenborn revealed a thinning Nazi line and signs of withdrawal. The Bulge was becoming a complete bust. Constantly hammered by artillery and bombings, the Bulge was flattened out until it ran parallel to the line so valiantly held by the 99th in front of Elsenborn.

Reinforced by new men from training centers in the States, the 99th received the order to advance at 0300, Jan. 30. In a concerted attack with divisions on either flank, Checkerboarders moved out through hip-deep snow for the Munschau Forest. Their mission: to recover the ground they had so bitterly contested the month previous.

So fast were Germans pulling out of some sectors that a Co. M, 394th, machine gun squad under Sgt.



... through the deep snow and fog...
fire without ever spotting the enemy. The 39th's
squad carried a gun, tripod and 300 lb. kit weighing a
total of 160 pounds but didn't fire a shot.

It wasn't all that easy. The 39th, moving along
a draw towards Krinkel and then swinging north into
the woods, was caught and pinned down by rear
guard action of retreating Germans. Only through
sheer guts, advancing through murderous small arms
fire, did the regiment reach the edge of the woods
and clean out the Nazis.

In early February, 1945, the division wheeled across
the country through the bitterly-remembered towns
of Wirtzfeld, Roherath, Bullingen, Krinkel. CPs
were set up again. Then, Checkerboarders ripped
anew into the Siegfried Line, past Losheim and Hollarath
and through the first belt of pillboxes to points



in advance of their past drives. Battle Babies probed
inner defenses when, after three months of continuous
action, the 99th was relieved by the 69th Inf. Div.,
Feb. 13, 1945.

By the last week in February, all three regiments had
arrived at Aubel, which the division previously used
as its assembly point before going into combat in
November. It was a country of long, soft ridges,
sloping pastures and wide valleys. The sun was
shining and the grass in the apple orchards already
green when the soldiers moved in to rest.

During the 10 days the 99th stayed in the area, it
engaged in mild doses of training, principally for the
benefit of the reinforcements, and in rehabilitation of
equipment. Showers, haircuts, movies and food—
pics baked by Belgian farm wives, and eggs "liberated"

Checkerboarders

SPAN THE RHINE

SINCE the fall of Aachen, there had been no impressive gains on the Western Front. Soldiers under Gen. Hodges sensed that First Army was winding up for a Sunday punch, but there was no assurance that it would smash open the West Wall or that Germany would not defend every inch of ground, as Goebbels had promised, to the last man.

There still was little indication of a walkaway when the jump across the Roer River was made. The spearheading 3rd Armad. Div. threw a bridge across the Esft Canal near Berghelm, whose ancient gates stand astride the road to Cologne. Then the 395th took over the job of enlarging the bridgehead. When it had finished clearing the town and de-Krauting the woods, up went the sign: "You are now entering Berghelm, courtesy of the 395th Infantry Regiment."

Meanwhile, the 393rd and 394th bridged the Esft further downstream, all set to battle their way to the Rhine where it curves northwest from Cologne to Dusseldorf. Goebbels' "last man" also was on the run for the Rhine, and he had a pretty good headstart.

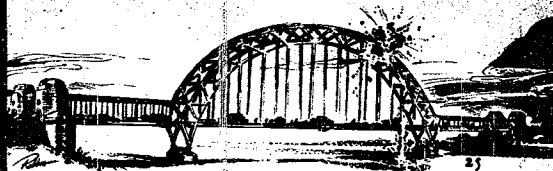
The 393rd, on the division left flank, swung in a 20-mile arc toward Dusseldorf, spearheaded by Task

It wasn't easy pickings. The 394th, in the center, was slowed up in the woods below Gohr while the 395th put up a stiff scrap before taking Delrath. Artillery changed the Germans' mind about defending the town and the regiments rolled through the ruins.

It was on the Rhine that the big guns of Lt. Col. John R. Brindley's 370th FA Bn., with 1st Lt. Percy J. Pace directing fire, caught two German ferries and a houseboat, sinking the craft for the division's biggest "naval" victory.

Checkerboarders were the first infantry division in First Army to reach the Rhine. They moved so fast that when a phone rang at a coal briquet factory at Neurath with the home office at Dusseldorf calling to find out where the Americans were, a lineman from the 99th Div. Sig. Co. offered first hand information. Beer still was on tap where division headquarters set up its mess at a *gasthaus*. The Battle Babies approached so fast that Germans had time to plant only a dozen mines between the Erie Canal and the Rhine.

The night was wet, miserable as doughs climbed on trucks and headed southeast. As they reached



the hills above Remagen, they could sense history was being made nearby, that an ordeal was ahead.

THE crossing of the Ludendorff Bridge was a nightmare. Even those who hiked or rode across this spidery structure with its squat brownish towers and its cables in operation, under-tow...



Robert

As tired Band 84er trudged up the hills, could well recall the parades and formations on the east bank of the majestic Rhine. It had been a harrowing, frightening experience.

In the week that followed, the 1st Army's part in expanding the bridgehead from a precarious grip to a broad, firm grip on eastern Germany. The 1st Army drove south beyond the Rhine, James K. Woodhouse's 1st Army crossed the River over the bridge, and in the process, in advancing two miles, they had traveled miles uphill, another feat.

The 1st Army was in the line at midnight, March 1, 1945, and after Brig. Gen. ... unleashed a 200mm range ... cliffs and waded the ... but heavy shelling as they moved toward the ... oblique ... more ... there ... re ... the ... package ...



For 99 days, the 99th Division had learned much. It was a green outfit when the last iron-willed thrust of the Wehrmacht caught it smartly on the chin in Belgium. But even after von Rundstedt's panzers were blasted, the world still wondered when the big crackup would come—the fatal blow to Nazi might and morale.

It was the Rhine crossing that broke the German back; in this important action the 99th took effective part. On March 14, 1945—99 days older and wiser—the Battle Babies were seasoned fighting men who saw before them the demoralized, shriveled forces of their enemy running away.

Disappointed because it wasn't included in the drive to Berlin, the division suddenly faced west and was assigned the important job of helping to liquidate the

Ruhr pocket. Spearheaded by the 7th Armd. Div., the regiments roared across the province of Hesse-Nassau, through Wetzlar and Giessen.

Between 25,000 and 150,000 Germans were cut off in the Ruhr pocket. No one bothered to count the number of steep-wooded hills and valleys the Check-erboarders would have to travel to sew them up. Soldiers prayed with Lt. Col. Henry B. Koon, Columbia, S.C., Division Chaplain, at services in Krosdorf.

The 99th's sector in the Ruhr drive followed the twisting Eder River towards its source in the Rothaargebirge (Red Hair Mountains), and wound down the north slope along the Lerne River to the Ruhr. When time permitted, using grenades instead of Royal Coachmen, fish lovers caught trout for breakfast.

It was steady day and night fighting through the mountains; rugged terrain added to the tough going. Because Germans chose to do most of their fighting in towns and on every hillside, Doughs had to head straight up fir-clad hills and across crooked ridges. Air and artillery put the "convincer" on such villages as Oberhundem, Altendorf and Bracht before infantry went in to mop up.

The division now set its sights northwest on Iserlohn, largest Ruhr city in the 99th's path. When 7th Armd. right-hooked the middle of Field Marshal Model's Army Group B, the Battle Babies moved on as fast as they could march.

By April 13, PW counts doubled; the Nazi cave-

... was under way. More than 1200 PWs were taken that day followed by a 2375 count on Saturday, 9043 more Sunday and a staggering total of 23,884 on Monday. Overwhelming loads of Krauts, many driving their own vehicles, including horse-drawn carts, converged on the PW field at Sundwig, outside Iserlohn.

In four days, the division had corraled and processed 36,453 Germans. Monday's catch included three lieutenant generals, eight major generals and a land-locked rear admiral. The famed 130th Panzer Lehr Div., credited with the finest soldiers, equipment and highest morale of any unit in the pocket, surrendered intact to the 393rd. The roundup also included the stand AA Div. (Luftwaffe), the 338th Volksgrenadier Div. and the 3rd Panzer Grenadier Div., an old enemy from the breakthrough days.

Iserlohn gave up at noon, April 16, when a battery of 128mm "Jagdtiger" self-propelled guns surrendered to Lt. Col. Robert L. Kriz and Bn. CO, 394th. Unlike other last-ditch artillery units, the "Jagdtigers" still had plenty of ammunition.

At Herford, the 393rd and 394th were joined by the 395th and 396th. The 397th and 398th were also nearby.

food for a week. In a building sheltering the sickest Red troops, Lt. Col. K. T. Miller, Detroit, Division Surgeon, found them three to a bed while two German soldiers shared a room. Col. Miller immediately corrected the situation much to the dismay of the Nazis.

As the Battle of the Ruhr ended, before the division could collect all its prisoners, the 99th was shifted to the farmlands of Bavaria to smother more German resistance. Checkerboarders now came under Gen. George S. Patton's Third Army, leaving Gen. Hodges, under whom the division had trained and maneuvered in Louisiana in 1943, held the shoulder of the Belgian Bulge in 1944 and crossed the Rhine in 1945.

The 99th entered the line again April 21 near Schwabach, with the Austrian border and Salzburg as its objectives. With the 86th Inf. Div. on its right and the 14th Armd. Div. on its left, the 99th was the veteran division in III Corps.

Now came the fast drive across such barriers as the Altmuhl River, where the 99th forced a crossing against stiff resistance. Third Bn., 395th, waded the neck-deep river while 2nd Bn., 394th, held the enemy's attention on the opposite bank. Doughs forced another breakthrough and a fast drive across the Ludwig Canal down to the Danube.

As the division neared the Danube, the end of World War II in Europe was near. Far to the north, Red troops had joined hands with the Americans;

There was being recorded. To the south lay Munich, and Austria, Beckenrieden, the heart and home of Austrian Bohemia. Time means nothing to the military, but even of the 1940s, some certain time was marked as the "Supremacy."

Right and drive. Day and night. No rest for the German. No one in the path. Keep going fast. The boys were exhausted. Keep them the way. The boys were tired. Flown to the Danube, across the Danube. Landing was common, but not without a fight. Mountains, neither the PAV came down. On to the last line. Keep pushing forward. across the line. Clean up the area and on to the last and the Austrian border.

Then it came. "Halt in place!"
In some to come men who were the Checkered patch will recall May 7, 1945, the day Nazi Germany surrendered unconditionally, as the climax to the most European struggle of World War II. They can recall their last days in the war. The war was over the 8th.

The Team









HERE is a brief story of the 82nd "All-American" Airborne Division, which can but highlight your accomplishments. Every day, in training and combat, each of you has contributed your part in making this division what it is today. Our comrades who have died or who have been wounded and are no longer with us have contributed in a full measure individually their share to the creation of the present "All-American" Division. To you who have joined us recently, this is your heritage—this incomparable courage, irrepressible fighting spirit and combat skill that have carried us through successful combat in every major battle in the European Theater, frequently with tremendous odds against us, always to decisive victory.



James M. Lewis

Major General, Commanding.

Good landings and good luck.

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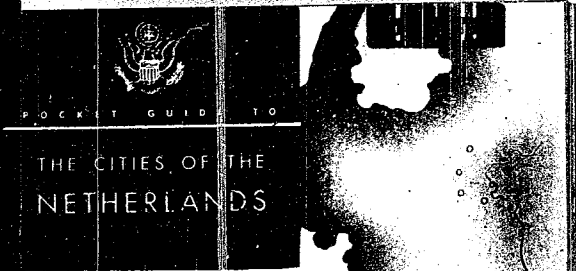
Date Enlisted _____

Assigned to 82nd _____

Battle Actions _____

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PASSED BY CENSOR FOR MAILING HOME



THE STORY OF THE 82nd AIRBORNE DIVISION

SEPT. 17, 1944: It was a sunny Sunday afternoon when 82nd Airborne Division paratroopers tumbled from droning transports above the Nijmegen area. Troopers, and glidermen who followed, were veterans of Sicily, Italy, Normandy. This was the fourth combat jump for some; the second glider flight for others—a record that still stands.

Landing more than 50 miles behind enemy lines, All-Americans were to blast a corridor through which the British Second Army could split Holland from the Albert Canal to Zuider Zee. The plan was designed to trap thousands of Germans troops to the west and blaze a path to the Fatherland.

The mission was in quadruplicate: to capture the Grave Bridge over the Maas River; to gain control of

47 DE 36

the huge "Gateway to Holland," Nijmegen Bridge, eight air miles northeast; to seize at least one span over the Maas-Waal Canal between Nijmegen and Grave; to take the highest ground in all Holland, at Berg En Dahl.

Official reports termed ground opposition to the 82nd's landing as "negligible." Such was hardly true as Pvt. Edwin C. Raub, Camp Lee, Va., 505th Parachute Inf., descended. With bullets ripping through his canopy, Raub slipped his chute to land near an AA gun. Without removing his harness, he killed one German, captured the crew, disabled the gun.

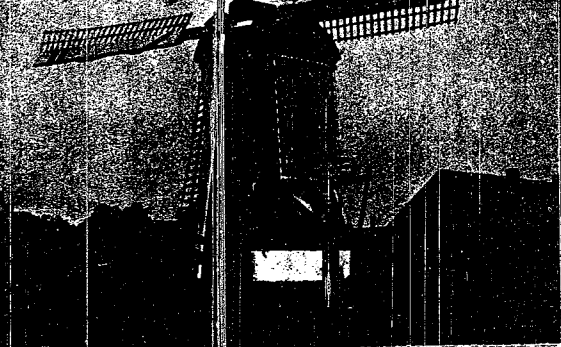
Surprised Germans fled but were quick to rally. Fierce battles raged before "Mission Accomplished" was written into the records. Such was the Battle of Nijmegen which Columbia Broadcasting System Correspondent Bill Downs described as "...a single, isolated battle that ranks in magnificence and courage with Guam, Tarawa, Omaha Beach... a story that should be told to the blowing of bugles and the beating of drums for the men whose bravery made the capture of this crossing over the Waal River possible."

While the 504th Parachute Inf. made a daring, daylight crossing of the swift Waal in the face of direct machine gun and 40mm fire to take the north end of the bridge, a 505th battalion, aided by British tanks, swept through German defenses to capture the southern approach. Simultaneously, the 508th Parachute Inf. shouldered a Nazi counter-attack to the west, while the remainder of the 505th crushed another counter-thrust at Mook, seven miles south.

...men like Sgt. Leonard A. Funk, Wilkinsburg, Pa., who kept gliders aloft in a stormy night... then turned its guns... Men crossed in half... from the bridge... and reached Nijmegen... took Groesbeek and protected the south flank of the extended 82nd boundary.

All three regiments combined efforts to capture crossings over the Maas-Waal Canal Sept. 18. Except for the Nijmegen bridges, the 82nd's mission virtually was accomplished when contact was made with the British Guards Arm'd Div. the next day. The Dutch Underground rendered invaluable assistance.

Division artillery glider elements and Special Troops glided in the second day. Some landing zones still were under enemy fire. It was men like Sgt. Leonard A. Funk, Wilkinsburg, Pa., who kept gliders aloft in a stormy night.





...German soldiers...
Germans overran the 504th's drop zone
the glider field.

Moving to the front of his company, the sergeant helped rally his men in a drive across 800 yards of open ground. Spotting four somm guns, Funk, with two others, attacked and destroyed each gun and crew. With glider landings imminent, he led a group to put three more AA guns out of action, killing more than 15 Germans.

NIJMEGEN Bridge was taken intact Sept. 20. Describing the assault, Downs reported:

"American Airborne infantry and British tanks beleaguered the streets of Nijmegen only 300 yards from the bridge that night, but they couldn't get it... A daring plan was drawn up. Wednesday morning, the infantry (504th) made its way to the industrial outskirts along the river bank...British tanks protected troopers in street fighting, acted as artillery when the crossings were made...

"Twenty-six assault boats were in the water. Two hundred and sixty men would make the first assault. Waiting for them on the other bank were 400 to 600 Germans...the shelling continued. A smoke screen was

laid, but it wasn't very effective because of the wind... Men slumped in their seats...of those 260 men, half were wounded or killed...only 13 of 26 boats came back... Others didn't wait for boats. Some stripped off equipment, took a bandolier of ammunition and swam the river, rifles on their backs.

"There was bitter bayonet fighting and Americans died, but more Germans died. That's only part of the story...British tanks and American Airborne Infantry (and Bn. 504th) began their frontal assault on the southern end of the bridge at the same time as the river crossings started... Americans went through the houses on the north side of the street.

...on end of the bridge has a large circular island. In this island were four self-propelled guns. There was nothing to do but rush the guns. So they went up four abreast and all roared into the island. American Airborne troops and British tanks were on the south end of the bridge. Only tanks were on the north end. A dozen fanatical Germans were on the island. They were sniping... The Germans abandoned the island. Those who were on the south end of the bridge were on the south end of the bridge.

Bitter fighting continued. The German Sixth Parachute Div. launched a coordinated attack toward Mook from the south and Berg En Dahl from the west. A full regiment drove a wedge into the two-mile front held by the remainder of the 101st. Positions were restored, however, within 24 hours.

Nazis also smacked the 101st after it had plunged into the flat lowlands of Germany at Wyler and Beek. The fierce assault swept within a short distance of Berg En Dahl, but a counter-attack threw the enemy from the hills and Beek was regained.

Pvt. John R. Towle, Tyrone, Pa., posthumously won the Congressional Medal of Honor when the enemy attacked the 104th's toehold north of the Waal with infantry and tanks Sept. 21. A bazookaman, Towle left his foxhole, crossed open ground under heavy fire and beat off tanks with rocket fire. He killed nine Germans with one round and was attacking a half-track when killed by a mortar shell. His action helped smother the German attack which not only threatened the bridgehead, but also thwarted relief of British paratroopers at Arnhem.

Delayed a week by bad weather, the 11th Airborne Division landed Sept. 21 and immediately widened the corridor by ousting German forces from the area. The enemy made only a token effort to retake the bridgehead, and the 101st's position was restored.

Siemowicz exchanged his captured Nazi for a missing one. Making the exchange by his wounded companion, Siemowicz returned under fire to his lines.

Division Commander James M. Gavin was promoted to major general in October. "Slim Jim," as his men called him, now got another nickname—"The Two-Star Platoon Leader." First out of his plane on four combat jumps, the General specialized in close contact with his men. One of his aides, Capt. Hugo Olson, Cambridge, Minn., was wounded on two occasions while accompanying Gen. Gavin.

Following the 82nd's action in Holland, Lt. Gen. Sir Miles C. Dempsey, British Second Army Commander, paid this tribute to Gen. Gavin:

"I'm proud to meet the Commanding General of the greatest division in the world today."

BATTLE standards of the 82nd Inf. Div. had been sleeping in their cases nearly 24 years when the new war brought the division to life March 25, 1942, at Camp Claiborne, La.

Out of moth balls came the red, white and blue All-American patch, a shoulder patch adopted in 1917 when men of the 82nd were gathered from every section of the country.

All-Americans began making battle history June 25, 1918, in the Lorraine sector. Remaining in that area until mid-September, the 82nd fought in the St. Mihiel operation and was a bulwark in the Meuse-Argonne offensive. From Oct. 10 to 31, the division made steady gains astride the Aire River to the region east of St. Juvin, where a sergeant named Alvin York killed 20 Germans with 20 shots and snared 132 prisoners at Hill 223.

The old 82nd spent a longer consecutive period under fire than any other American division in World War I. It had many heroes besides Sgt. York. One was a thin major called "Skinny," who later became a lieutenant general and headed a brilliant stand at Corregidor. His name is Gen. Jonathan M. Wainwright.

The new All-Americans were eager, hard-working. Such rapid progress was made under Maj. Gen. (now Lt. Gen.) Omar N. Bradley and Brig. Gen. (now Maj. Gen.) Matthew B. Ridgway that the division was selected for a vital role in the new American Airborne forces.

Aug. 15, 1942, the outfit was split into two airborne divisions—the 82nd and the 101st. Gen. Ridgway retained command of the 82nd, which lost the 327th Inf.

Following movement to Ft. Bragg, N.C., for intensive Airborne training, the division underwent additional reorganization in Feb. 1943. The future Division Commander, Gen. Gurn, then a colonel, brought his 503rd Parachute Inf. from Ft. Benning to replace the 316th Glider Inf. The 316th Parachute Co. Bn. appeared on the morning report as the only unit prepared for overseas.

The 82nd landed at Casablanca, May 10, 1943. Sicily was two months away. The period was spent training in the dust-covered Orjide-Mannine area amid a pouring of flies, mosquitoes and a monotonous diet. Parades were held for Gen. Eisenhower, Lt. Gen. Mark Clark, Lt. Gen. George S. Patton, Jr. and for the governor-general of Spanish Morocco. Short-barreled 105mm howitzers were transported in gliders for the first time. Movement to Kairouan brought the training to an end.



SOLDIER'S GUIDE TO SICILY



OPERATIONS PAY EXTRA DIVIDENDS

JUNE 9, 1943: the 505th Regt. Combat Team, reinforced by 1st Bn., 504th, tumbled out over Sicily at midnight. Mission was to block roads, prevent enemy troop movement from the north and east to the Gela area where the 1st Inf. Div. was to land. The remainder of the All-Americans would be held in reserve, prepared to land by parachute and glider if needed.

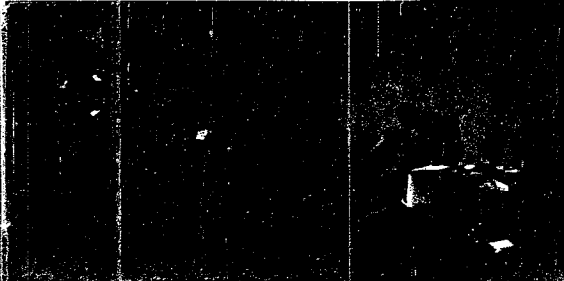
Under best conditions, the job was tough, but doubly so that night. Tricky winds played hob with aerial navigation. Parachutists were scattered along a 50-mile

stretch. After landing and for the next few days, Airborne troopers fought slashing guerilla action, ferreted out and destroyed German and Italian forces. Some battled alongside British on Sicily's east coast. They harassed and confused elements of five enemy divisions, including part of the notorious Hermann Goering Panzer Div. A small number of the 505th ambushed and annihilated a relief column Germans had sent to Gela.

Led by Lt. Col. Arthur Gorham, Wichita, Kan., who was killed in the fighting, part of 1st Bn., 505th, accomplished most of the regimental mission. Farther north, Lt. Col. Charles W. Kosans, Ardsley-on-Hudson, N.Y., was captured after he and a handful of his 3rd Bn., 504th troopers, put up heroic resistance near Niscemi. Capt. Edwin L. Sayre, Breckenridge, Tex., led a small group against a fortified farm house where 60 Italians waited with 10 machine guns. Six grenades tossed by S/Sgt. Oscar L. Queen, Houston, settled the controversy.

Capture of Comiso, Noto and Ragusa were extra dividends paid by Airborne operations. Fighting as they went, troopers traveled by foot, mule, bicycle, truck and Italian tankette to assemble after landing.

Led by Gen. Gavin, 500 men, three 75mm parachute howitzers and two anti-tank guns, the last borrowed from the 45th Inf. Div., ran a large enemy force off Viazza Ridge. The customary German counter-attack swept within 50 feet of the general's CP before it broke in the face of artillery fire and raw courage—courage like that of Pfc Lewis Baldwin. The Ohioan went forth to certain death in a captured tankette to reconnoiter Mark VI tank operations.



... N.D., who, with his gun crew, moved to the forward slope and while under heavy machine gun fire in plain view of the enemy, served his gun in a superior manner by laying fire directly into the enemy positions."

The remainder of the 504th awaited the take-off signal from Gen. Ridgway, who landed with the amphibious force on D-Day. The green light wasn't flashed until the next day because Germans occupied the landing area.

As the low-flying 504th approached the Sicilian coast, it flew into a wall of fire from friendly naval and ground forces. Twenty-three planes were shot down, six with troopers aboard; others were damaged. The scattered regiment required several days to reassemble. Brig. Gen. Charles L. Keerans, Ass't Division Commander, who made the flight to observe the drop, failed to return.

Glider flights of Division Special Troops and the 325th Inf. were cancelled after the 504th's misfortune, but

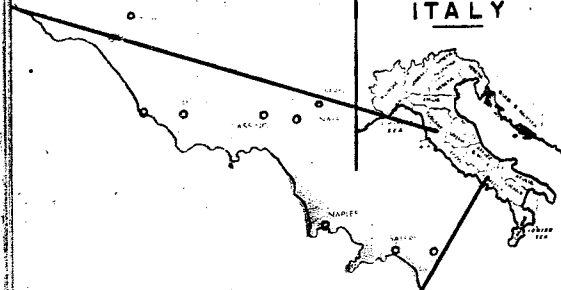


... leaders in the 504th were shot down in the landing area. The 504th was downed by friendly fire.

Moving by borrowed tracks with the 20th RCT, 9th Inf. Div., attached, the 2nd Arm. Div. moved in the vicinity next day. The push was on through the vineyard-studded fields of western Sicily. The division moved 145 miles in seven days, captured more than 20,000 prisoners. The entire western half of the island was under Allied control by July 24.

Charting through Fibera and Sciacca, the division then veered north and captured Mesa, Tuninello Pass and San Margherita. The 2nd Arm. Div. alined across the All-American's front on its dash to Palermo as the 82nd turned northwest to capture the big port of Trapani. Castellammare and Capo San Vito were taken next day. The surrender of the Egadi Island group on July 29 concluded the 2nd's Sicilian campaign. The 207th, 202nd and 208th Italian Coastal Divs. were wiped out.

SOLDIER'S GUIDE
TO
ITALY



"DEVILS IN BAGGY PANTS"

SEPT. 13, 1943: Parachutes blossomed over the Salerno beachhead. They belonged to the 504th RCT which was answering Gen. Mark Clark's urgent request for reinforcements.

No sooner did the first troopers land than Col. Tucker was asking VI Corps, "What next?" The colonel's only question to the outlined plan was, "When do we start?"

After training nearly a month, the 82nd had been ready to push off once before. The division had its sights set on dropping near Rome and seizing the Eternal City. But with troopers ready to board planes and others at

sea, headed for the Tiber River area, the lines buzzed: "Hold everything!" Germans had taken over the landing area. The operation was postponed.

Now came the McCoy. The 504th set out by foot that night—set out toward the rugged hills of Altavilla and Albanella to the battle destined to whip back the German counter-attack and secure the beachhead toehold. The 505th RCT dropped the following night, joined in the Altavilla battle and protected Fifth Army's right flank.

Ability of Swiss-born Pfc Peter R. Schneider, New York City, 504th, to speak German paid dividends at Altavilla. Spotting an enemy machine gun squad and an infantry platoon, Schneider crawled to meet them, shouting, "Move that machine gun to the right!" They did and were wiped out. When the German commander came up to see what had happened, Schneider dropped him too.

The 509th Parachute Inf. Bn., attached to the 82nd, landed the same night as the 505th, far back of enemy lines at Avellino to harass communication lines. The seaborne 325th Glider Inf. came up to reinforce the 504th and 505th, dropping off one company to grab the island of Ischia in Naples Bay. The regiment then moved up



to the Maiori-Chiunzi Pass area, joining the Rangers and the 319th Glider FA.

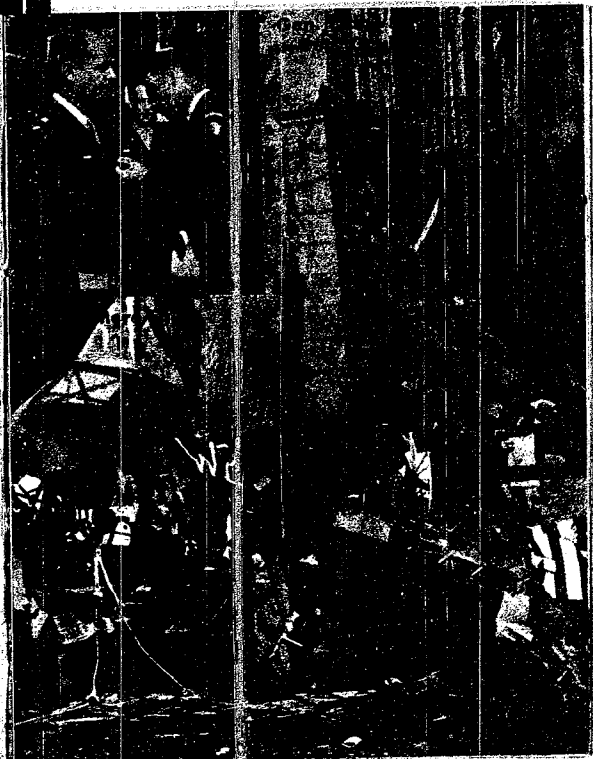
Typical heroism was exhibited by Capt. Robert L. Dickerson, Henderson, Ky., Co. E, 325th Glider Inf., when he "successfully defended a salient 800 yards into enemy lines against a bold and aggressive foe through eight hours of continuous attack. Although... deprived of artillery support, Capt. Dickerson remained in his CP in a position declared untenable by the troops he relieved."

Division Headquarters and Special Troops moved to the beachhead by plane and boat. With the 504th and 505th, they arrived at the Maiori-Chiunzi Pass area by truck and LCI.

Germans withdrew the same night as British X Corps, including the 82nd and Rangers, attacked over Sorrento Ridge. The Allies plunged ahead, pouring onto the Naples plain in late September.

Attached to the British 23rd Armd. Brig., the 505th participated in the capture of Naples. Oct. 1, Maj. Edward Kraus' 3rd Bn. raised the American flag over the city. The 504th, with the British X Corps, skirted the base of Mt. Vesuvius, by-passed Naples, returned later to join the division.

While the 505th, again attached to British troops for a few days, swept north and cleared enemy troops as far as the Volturno, All-Americans began policing "Bella Napoli." A time bomb wrecked part of the post office building across the street from Division Headquarters; another destroyed the 307th A/B Engr. and 407th A/B QM Co. buildings, causing casualties.





All Americans All Over



FRANCE

NORTH AFRICA



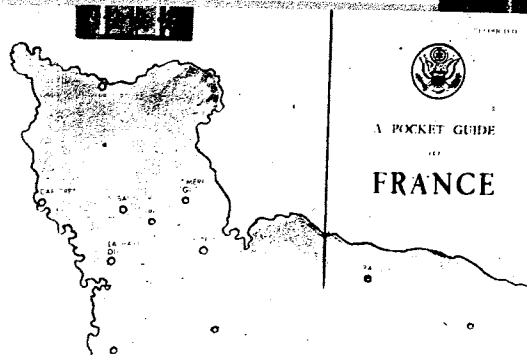
Late October, the 504th went into action again. This regimental combat team, which had lost four field officers since entering Italy, was to remain in almost constant battle till March, 1944. It fought in the hills near Isernia, where supplies had to be hand-carried or mule-packed; assaulted mountain positions in the Venafro sector, then landed in the first wave at Anzio.

ANZIO was a steel-ribbed beachhead where daylight movement produced instant enemy artillery fire and darkness brought constant patrolling. Second Lt. (then S/Sgt.) Bernard E. Karnap, Portsmouth, Ohio, one night led a patrol which killed 16 Germans, wounding many others.

A new nickname for paratroopers, "Devils in Baggy Pants," came out of Anzio when a German officer wrote in his diary, "Enemy patrols in baggy pants are 100 meters from my OP. We don't know who they are or from where they come. Seems like black devils (troopers blackened their faces for patrol missions) are all around."

Meanwhile, the remainder of the division sailed for the U.K., spending two months in Ireland after landing at Belfast Dec. 9. The 82nd moved to the Leicester and Nottingham areas mid-February. The 2nd A/B Inf. Brig., including the 507th and 508th Inf. Regts., was attached. The 504th RCT rejoined it in May but was to rest, not participate in the Normandy invasion.

For the All-Americans, the U.K. was like coming into a lighted room from the darkness. Although it was a well-earned breather, Airborne training soon was to be resumed. The main event was coming up!



PAGING THE MAIN EVENT

JUNE 5, 1944: Stars blinked overhead as grim-faced paratroopers, equipped to the hilt, moved quietly to transports. Props spun, the roar crescendoing as the operation the world awaited—the invasion of Europe—became a reality.

Fog blanketed the peninsula, the line of flight and drop zones. Then, hours before the huge bomber armada was to saturate Normandy, the Navy was to shell the coast and doughs were to wade ashore, All-Americans floated earthward to the heart of German defenses.

Parachutists bumped into hedgerows from Cherbourg to the deep mainland. Some dropped into the Merderet River. Gliderborne anti-tank six-pound guns and considerable equipment were lost as widely scattered gliders were wrecked or came under fire. The 103th landed in good order; the 107th and 108th were widely dispersed.

Startled Germans swung into action. The pencil lines of tracer bullets increased as the air train droned on endlessly. Burning planes lighted the countryside. Aguin, All-Americans fought to assemble.

This was the pay-off of hectic, rushed planning. Work of months fluttered into wastebaskets when Gen. Ridgway spoke to unit commanders on D minus 11. Germans had moved division, the 91st, to the Sand's proposed landing area.

The mission had to be moved eastward, nearer the beach-landing forces, to elbow the 91st and other enemy from the beachhead. The plan called for Gen. Gault's



...the ... of the ... time ...

Some Division Headquarters and Special Troops personnel would ... More ... The ...

Third ... under ... was ... that had ... Waterborne ...

Despite ... Lt. Col. Ben Vandervoort, Co. ... and helped ...

...Pittsfield, Me., organized part of the 107th and moved south, capturing Cher du Pont.

The 107th was assembled, although Col. George V. Miller, Jr., Kansas City, Mo., was missing and moved south to protect the Cher du Pont bridge. Anchored in the middle of an island, the bridge was alive with German machine guns and artillery.

Some eight miles away, the waterborne assault was underway.

To the 92nd, the span over the Marston became "Kellam's Bridge." Maj. Fred Kellam, Jennings, La., 1st Bn., 107th, his executive, Maj. Jim McGinity, and the two next senior officers were killed in the defense of the bridge. Lt. Col. Herbert Batchelor, Minneapolis, Minn., a 107th battalion commander and former CO of the 107th, also was killed. Desperate Germans failed to get troops across the river.

Two bazooka teams, which destroyed five tanks, were awarded Distinguished Service Crosses.



... Corps ...



stand at the bridge. Team members were S/Sgt. (then Pfc) John Bolderson, West Plains, Mo.; Pfc Lenold Peterson, Viking, Minn.; Pvt. Marcus Hein, Jr., Buffalo, N.Y.; Pvt. Gordon C. Fryne, Van Nuys, Calif.

Gen. Ridgway, who jumped with the 505th, set up his CP in a ditch beside a hedgerow. Gen. Gavin's headquarters was a railroad embankment. Ste. Mere Eglise was under attack from the north and south. Troopers fought tanks with grenades.

That night, Col. (then Lt. Col.) Robert Wiececke wrote in his G-3 report: "Short 60 percent Infantry, 90 percent Artillery. Combat efficiency: Excellent."

It was a rough night for the All-Americans. The enemy crept within a quarter-mile of the division CP, and intermittent 88 and sniper fire bounced off the hedgerow "roof." Germans were desperate to smash Air-

borne troops and gain the beachhead. Every man not actually in the line turned all but one clip of ammunition over to those who were.

When the 325th and Special Troops landed, many gliders overturned. However, Col. Harry E. Lewis, Sarasota, Fla., had nearly 80 percent of his regiment organized within two hours and on the march to Chef du Pont. Another German attack was beaten off at Kellam's Bridge. Enemy tanks nearly punched through to Ste. Mere Eglise.

Word trickled through that the 4th Inf. Div. was about to make contact. Gen. Ridgway's first message requested medical supplies and ambulances. Late June 7, the Corps Commander arrived. A tank company rolled up.

The same night, 400 troopers of the 508th were across the river under heavy attack; half a battalion was east of Amfreville. Garbled radio messages signed, "CO, 507," filtered in. Col. Millett and several hundred men were west of the town.

With the 505th and a 325th battalion already swinging north to capture Station and Le Ham, and to battle the German 243rd Div., nearly five miles northwest, a daring plan was drawn. First Bn., 325th, sloshed along a flooded railroad embankment the next night to carry it out.

Crossing the river, the battalion made contact with Lt. Col. Charles Timmes' unit east of Amfreville. Bitter fighting stymied the plan for this force and Col. Millett's to meet. The Millett group was lost, only a few escaping.

Kellam's Bridge was the scene of fierce fighting again



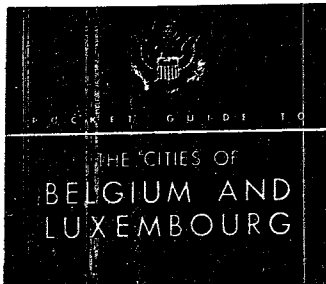
Germans split their forces. Next day, All-Americans crossed the river, took St. Sauveur le Vicomte and paved the way for the 9th Div. to complete cutting the peninsula. The 82nd front now stretched approximately 25 miles.

The 325th, with a 508th battalion attached, cleared the Vindefontaine area. Within a few days, the entire division was south of the Douve. In a driving rain, All-Americans surged forward July 3 as part of the overall VIII Corps assault. Hill 131, commanding terrain in the entire area, fell that morning. Before dark, La Poterie Ridge, was captured. Corps orders kept the 82nd from entering La Haye du Puits.

WITHDRAWN into Army reserve, All-Americans returned to England July 14. The official division history read: "...33 days of action without relief, without replacements... every mission accomplished... no ground gained ever relinquished." One company came out of the line with only 16 men. Most division units received the Presidential Citation for their work.

Gen. Ridgway and some of his staff left to take command of XVIII Corps (Airborne). The first Allied Airborne Army with Lt. Gen. Lewis H. Brereton in command now came into being. Corps and three American Airborne divisions were commanded by former 82nd Div. generals.

The 507th Parachute Inf. was relieved of attachment to the 82nd in England. Gen. Gavin took command of the division Aug. 27, 1944.

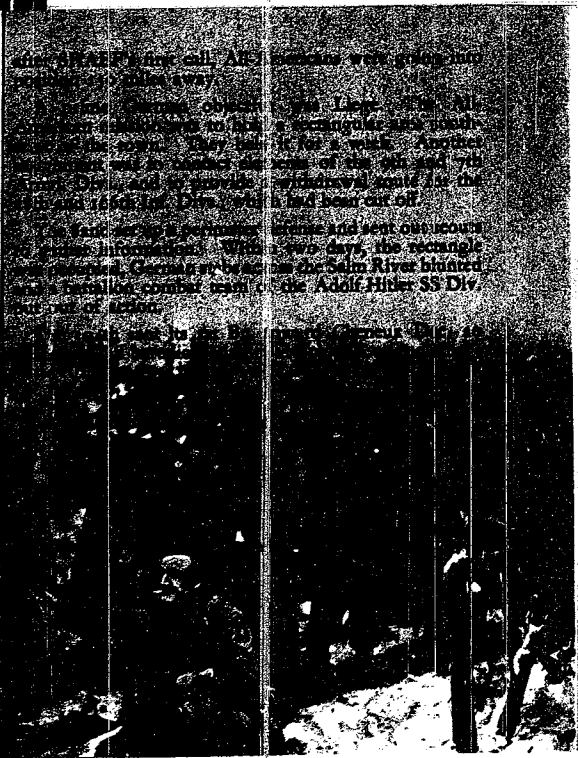


VICTORY THE ALL-AMERICAN WAY

DEC. 17, 1944: The telephone jangled at Gen. Gavin's headquarters. SHAEF was calling. Von Rundstedt was on the march. Could the division move out within 24 hours, if necessary? The division could!

Two hours later, the telephone rang again. SHAEF again. Trucks were on the way. The division would move to Bastogne at 0900 the next day. The 101st A/B Div. would follow.

The next 12 hours were organized confusion. Supplies and equipment were packed. Little new equipment had been drawn because "show down" inspections were underway. Thousands of items had to be drawn from warehouses 50 miles away. Movements had to be integrated. It was a period of triumphant cooperation, within the division and with Com Z. Less than 23 hours



acks, self-propelled artillery and tanks. All-Americans battled this formidable force with rifles, grenades, bazookas and knives. The 82nd organized a "cannon company" with captured equipment after gaining a clear-cut victory.

During the fierce battle, S/Sgt. William P. (Knobby)

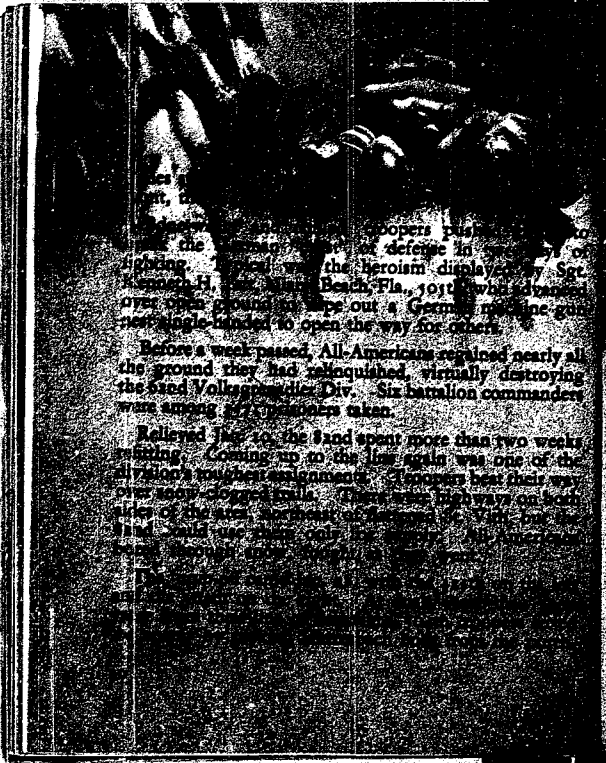
...ally responsible for
...ould pull his grenade
...his left arm, and his
...Walsh crawled be
...addy
...had him pull the pin. With the grenade
...the sergeant raced to the flak wagon and droppe
...gnade into the cockpit, wiping out the crew.

... he shouted
... flak wagon
Walsh carried

... Germans continued to peel away at the contact and southern boundaries of the rectangle. Falling with each thrust, they would recoil only a few feet. Each attack increased in intensity. With All-Americans holding the L'Ambleve River line, the 10th Inf. Div. spun a web around the entire SS regiment. The Hitler unit was trapped.

Contact with the surrounded American units was made Dec. 21 and their withdrawal through the All-Americans was completed three days later. The 82nd now shifted westward with the Germans until its lines were tight. Dec. 23, Germans took the crossroad south of Manhay. Higher headquarters ordered the division to shorten its front, to withdraw to a line running generally from Trois Ponts to Manhay. Even though the wreck of the 1st SS had eliminated the north boundary, All-Americans still had a 10-mile front.

The 82nd withdrew that night, contacting 800 survivors of the SS regiment and wiping them out completely. Von Rundsted's drive was petering out. The



...ces
...nt, the
...oppers pushed
... the German line of defense in a series of
fighting. It was the heroism displayed by Sgt.
Kenneth H. ... Beach, Fla., 101st Airborne Division
over open ground to wipe out a German machine gun
nest single-handed to open the way for others.

Before a week passed, All-Americans regained nearly all the ground they had relinquished, virtually destroying the famed Volksgrenadier Div. Six battalion commanders were among 375 prisoners taken.

Relieved Dec. 10, the 3rd spent more than two weeks resting. Coming up to the line again was one of the division's toughest assignments. Troopers beat their way over snow-clogged trails. There were highways on both sides of the area, northeast of Metz, St. Vith, but the 3rd could use them only as guides. All-American troops were being sent through the area to the front.

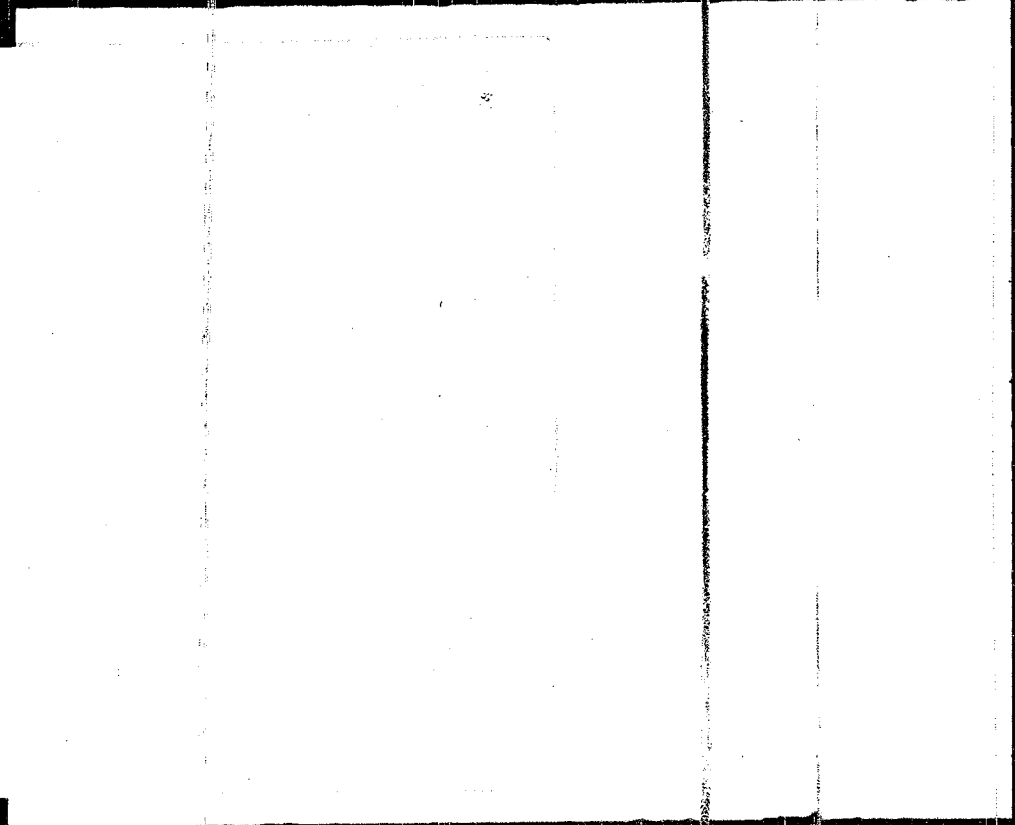
A German officer showed the muzzle of his machine pistol in Fank's ribs, demanding surrender. The sergeant's sub-machine gun was slung barrel up, on his shoulder. Taking a backward step and a 1000-to-1 chance, Fank shouted, "Surrender, hell!" catching his



Next afternoon, the 3rd took Holzheim, 4000 yards northwest of Hammelburg. Like the 101st, the 3rd suffered no casualties while killing nearly 70 Germans and taking 150 prisoners.

Then occurred an incident only possible in snow warfare. Eighty prisoners had been collected in the western part of Holzheim when four English-speaking "paratroopers" approached and forced guards by their "snow quit" attire. The "paratroopers" had armed the prisoners with abandoned weapons and were plotting a counter-attack when 1st Sgt. Fank, of Holland fame, stepped into the picture.

A German officer showed the muzzle of his machine pistol in Fank's ribs, demanding surrender. The sergeant's sub-machine gun was slung barrel up, on his shoulder. Taking a backward step and a 1000-to-1 chance, Fank shouted, "Surrender, hell!" catching his





101ST AIRBORNE DIVISION



THIS book is dedicated to the Airborne soldiers who have made the history recorded in its pages. The success of the 101st Airborne Division is not the success of a few outstanding units or leaders. The toll of battle has changed the roster too often to suggest that any

particular combination is necessary. Success has been won by the anonymous thousands of officers and men who have passed through the Division since D-Day in Normandy, all imbued with a common spirit of resolution and zest for battle. These men knew but one formula for victory, the will to close with the enemy and destroy him.

It is a responsibility to belong to the 101st Airborne Division with its record of achievement. The past matters only as a promise of future accomplishment. We who today wear the Eagle on our shoulders must assure the Division a future worthy of the men of Normandy, Holland and Bastogne.

Major General
Major General, Commanding

They kept it in Normandy by initiating the Allied assault on Hitler's Fortress Europe, June 6, 1944; by storming and capturing Carentan--initial proof of the division's strength in coordinated ground action.

They kept it in Holland by liberating the first Dutch city, Eindhoven, and blazing a path of liberation 20 miles northward in a campaign that kept them fighting 73 days without relief.

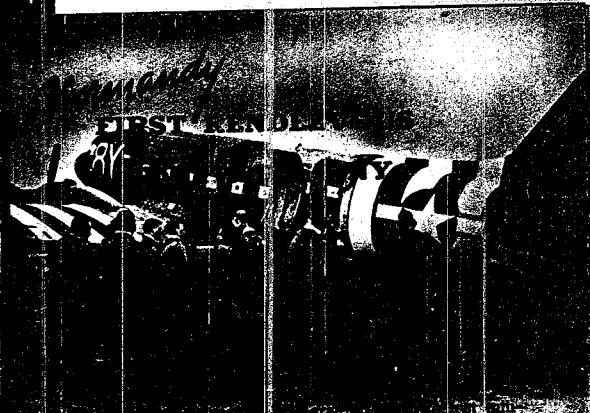
They kept it at Bastogne where, against overwhelming odds they held tenaciously to doom von Rundstedt's December counter-offensive to failure.

Success of the division has been the result of a happy combination of brave men commanded by bold leaders. Mutual confidence of the 101st is exemplified by the remark of an Eagle soldier during the siege of Bastogne: "They've got us surrounded — the poor bastards!"

A British Corps Commander near the end of the Holland campaign told Screaming Eagle soldiers: "I have commanded four Corps during my army career, but the 101st Airborne Division is the toughest outfit I have ever had under my command."

Maj. Gen. Anthony C. McAuliffe (then Brig. Gen.) was the Division's Division Officer for their first major battle at Bastogne. "Who the hell are you?" he asked my command sergeant major. "I'm a sergeant," I told him. "I don't take a law."

"The words pay," he said. "I'm a sergeant, sergeant."



The invasion of Europe for which this war had begun—born in hedge-row-lined fields, in apple orchards and in the country lanes of Normandy where paratroopers and glider fighters of Maj. Gen. Maxwell D. Taylor's Eagle Division had dropped behind German troops manning beach defenses.

As daylight mellowed into dusk June 5, Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower circulated among 101st troops at England's departure fields to wish them Godspeed, good luck.

Cocky fighters, armed to the hilt and assigned the mission of striking the first blow at Hitler's Fortress Europa, wise-cracked as they boarded C-47s. Less than four hours later in Normandy, these Airborne soldiers wrote the first pages of their glorious story with blood and courage.

in French soil. A last German patrol was met with German dead stacked in roadside ditches on the march to St. Come du Mont, with a blinding bayonet dash across the swampy approaches to Carentan.

From 0015 in the darkness of June 6, 1944, when Capt. Frank L. Lillyman, Skaneateles, N.Y., leader of the Pathfinder group, became the first Allied soldier to touch French soil, and for 33 successive days 101st A/B carried the attack to the enemy. This was the beginning of the Airborne trail leading through Carentan in Normandy, to Eindhoven in Holland and into Bastogne, Belgium.

Gen. Taylor's sky-fighters had been assigned three missions: secure causeways leading from Utah Beach for assault troops to storm ashore from landing barges at dawn; destroy bridges across roads leading into the key road and rail communication center, Carentan; protect the south flank of VII Corps.

Fighting its way through hedge-lined fields, the division

took every objective. When the "Battle of the Beaches" was won, many 101st units were awarded the Presidential Citation.

Congratulating the division on its work, Lt. Gen. Omar N. Bradley told Eagle soldiers: "You have destroyed the myth of German invincibility."

FLAK and fog—nemeses of cloud-hopping troops. German ack-ack and the weather joined forces to disperse the sky fleet of troop carrier planes ferrying paratroopers over the Nazi-held coastline. Methodical assembly by units was out of the question. Commanders gathered roving bands of well-briefed, battle-hungry Airborne soldiers, regardless of unit, then marched on division objectives.

An odd assortment of men was culled from thorn-thick hedges and ditches along roads to storm Pouppeville. Division Commander, Chief of Staff, clerks, MPs, artillerymen, signalmen, a sprinkling of infantry parachutists—all combined to form a task force against this village that blocked the entrance of a causeway leading from Utah Beach. So abundant were staff officers that Gen. Taylor remarked, "Never were so few led by so many."

It was near Pouppeville in early morning darkness that a passing German patrol caught Maj. Larry Legere, Fitchburg, Mass., and thinking him a French native, asked him what he was doing out so late. "I come from visiting my cousin," the major replied in French while he pulled the pin on a grenade and let fly.

Pouppeville fell to this small band. Similar displays of adaptability and initiative by other groups nullified enemy opposition at similar key points, and causeways were secured for beach assault troops. Early in the day, the 4th Inf. Div. marched up causeways without opposition. The first obstacle to the invasion had been overcome.

At dawn of the second day, the 506th Parachute Inf. Regt. commanded by Col. Robert F. Sink, Lexington, N.C., advanced southward. Germans stubbornly defended previously fortified Vierville. The town was taken after severe fighting, and the enemy grudgingly fell back to St. Come du Mont.

Angoville au Plain fell to the division by noon, and sky-fighters smashed through hedges and over roads to the outskirts of St. Come du Mont. Resisting savagely, Germans blunted the thrust. The 2nd and 3rd Bns., 501st Parachute Inf.; 1st Bn., 401st Glider and a battery of the 81st AA A/T Bn. moved in to form a second striking force.

The Eagle was ready. Ahead lay St. Come du Mont, defended by well dug-in German parachutists. Here, 101st A/B soldiers were committed in the first large-scale attack launched by the division in the invasion campaign.



Twice his track. Next unit was to be... the... for the fighting skill of the... with the Big...

By 2000 June 7, all organized resistance ceased at St. Come du Mont. Carentan loomed next on the list of vital Allied objectives. Its seizure would provide the link necessary to coordinate the assault forces on Utah and Omaha Beaches. If Germans retained the town, Allied power would be divided during the campaign's most crucial phase. Carentan had to be taken. The Screaming Eagles were assigned the job.

But the path leading to it wasn't easy. Later described

as "Purple Heart Lane," the route covered canals, swamp lands and the Douve River, all guarded by Germans.

The 327th Glider Inf., commanded by Col. Joseph Harper, College Park, Ga., pushed off to cross the Douve at 0100, June 8. Corps engineers brought up assault boats by concealed routes. Under cover of heavy artillery, the regiment crossed the river, seized the small village of Brewards, secured a supply route to support the attack on Carentan from the east.

The 328th A/B Engr. Bn., laying aside weapons of destruction for tools of construction, set up a temporary footbridge across the river on 502nd Parachute Inf.'s front north of Carentan. One battalion attempted to cross by infiltration but was discovered. The crossing temporarily was abandoned.

Later, 3rd Bn., commanded by Lt. Col. Robert G. Cole, San Antonio, Tex., followed by 1st Bn. led by Lt. Col. Patrick F. Cassidy, Seattle, succeeded in crossing the four consecutive bridges which span Carentan waterways, established a precarious bridgehead north of the city.

PINNED down, Col. Cole's paratroopers flattened into the marshy swamp for cover. After unceasing enemy fire prevented any move for more than an hour, Col. Cole weighed two plans—a withdrawal or a bayonet attack.

He ordered: "Strip for bayonet attack. Let's get out of this damn swamp!" Word was whispered from man to man in the marshy bed—"The Old Man wants it done with steel." There, on the last approach to Carentan occurred the first bayonet attack of World War II.

With bull-like charges through the soggy marsh, paratroopers rushed forward to close with the Kraut defenders.

Picking up a fallen man's rifle and bayonet, Col. Cole led the battalion over the bullet-swept ground. Locked in



For the first time in the war, the capture of Carentan was a result of the second day of the Holland invasion.

It was with this spirit that the division, attacking Carentan from three directions, achieved its objectives. Resistance ceased within the city June 11. A defensive position was immediately organized.

Later near Cherbourg, Gen. Taylor stood high atop a captured pillbox and told his battle-hardened veterans, "You hit the ground running toward the enemy. You have proved the German soldier is no superman. You have beaten him on his own ground, and you can beat him on any ground." Field Marshal (then Gen.) Sir Bernard Law Montgomery pinned the British Distinguished Service Order on Gen. Taylor's jacket.

The Eagle Division was ordered to its base in England, closing the first chapter in its combat record.

Holland
**SECOND D-DAY FOR
SCREAMING EAGLES**

WHERE next? This was the
kind of every Eagle troop
1944, tremendous Allied advances
and the fluid state of German
the likelihood of another Air

Twice the division was alerted and moved to departure airdromes to await the battle signal. Twice the division trudged to marshalling fields only to return to base camps. Swift-moving armor eliminated the necessity for both operations.

But the third operation wasn't a dry run. Its second combat mission—Holland!

As part of the newly-formed First Allied A/B Army, Eagle soldiers were sent skyward toward German defenses in the land of wooden shoes and windmills. Again it was a sky dash over the English Channel, over flak towers, and down behind German lines.

The mission was to secure bridges and the main highway winding through the heart of Holland from Eindhoven to Arnhem to facilitate the advance of Gen. Sir Miles C. Dempsey's Second British Army over the flooded dike-controlled land.

SEPT. 17 was the date for the 101st's second Airborne D-Day. The greatest Airborne fleet ever massed for an operation roared from U.K., spanned Channel waters. While the first planes spewed forth parachutists and gliders crashlanded on lowlands, planes and gliders transporting the division still were taking off from Britain airfields.

Flak met the invaders enroute, but the huge armada droned steadily on. Troop, Carrier formations held firm despite fire. Pilots of burning planes struggled with controls as they flew to designated Drop Zones, disgorged their valuable cargoes of fighting men, then plummeted earthward. Pilot heroism was commonplace, proved inspirational to Eagle sky fighters dropping well behind enemy lines.

Surprise was complete. There was little initial opposition from the Germans. Eagle veterans assembled quickly, then marched on their objectives.

Division missions called for the capture of Eindhoven and the seizure of bridges over canals and rivers at Vechel, St. Odenrode and Zon. To attain these objectives the division had to seize and hold a portion of the main highway extending over a 28 mile area. Commanders realized units would be strung out on both sides of the main arterial highway from Vechel to Eindhoven, that security in depth would be sacrificed.

Dropping near Vechel, the 501st Parachute Inf. Regt. commanded by Col. Howard R. Johnson, Washington, D. C. later killed in the campaign, pressed forward. Two hours later, Vechel was taken and bridges over the Willems Vaart Canal and the Aa River seized intact.

A sharp skirmish marked the speedy liberation of St. Odenrode by the 502nd Parachute Inf. under Col. John H. Michaelle, Lancaster, Pa. Co. H moved to take the highway bridge leading from Best. This small force was successful in its mission but driven back when German armor attacked. The attack was repulsed three days later and the route through Best was cleared.



The bridge was destroyed on the 19th and 20th days after one of the most bitter battles of the Netherlands campaign. The Airborne attack, supported by British armor, resulted in the destruction of fifteen tanks and the capture of 1056 Germans. More than 300 enemy dead littered the battlefield.

AFTER landing, Col. Sink's 508th troopers moved toward Zon on the road to Eindhoven. Approaching Eagle soldiers saw Germans blow the bridge over the Wilhelmina Canal. Several men swam the Canal in the face of heavy German fire, established a bridgehead on the south bank. This action enabled the remainder of the regiment to cross.

Troopers whipped back the Germans as they drove towards Eindhoven five miles to the south. A flanking movement

...and led to the capture of Vechel
the highway cut, long caravans of trucks
the narrow road leading from Eindhoven to Arnhem
All available division elements were rushed to the vicinity of
Vechel where they were formed into a task force under Gen.
McAuliffe.

Enemy penetrations were deep. German tanks and infantry
moved within 500 yards of the vital bridges. Vicious
fighting followed, but the Eagle defense held firm. The
enemy was forced to withdraw toward Erp, and the highway
was reopened.

Next day, a fresh German thrust cut the supply line between
Vechel and St. Odenrode. Eagle soldiers combined with
British tanks to smash German defenses and again reopen
the road. Thereafter the thunderous roar of armor and
supply trucks rolling up the highway continued uninterrupted.

Meanwhile, Gen. Taylor shuttled troops up and down
both sides of the British Second Army's supply route to repulse
German forces determined to sever Gen. Dempsey's lifeline.

Airborne troops, glidermen and paratroopers plugged
gaps in the line with courage and M-1 rifles.

During the campaign in the canal-divided lowlands, hard-
hitting Eagle paratroopers and glidermen again met a reor-
ganized Normandy foe, the German 8th Parachute Regt.
This crack German unit fared no better than before, sustaining
heavy casualties which forced its early removal from the
101st sector.

Following this behind-the-enemy-lines "Airborne phase,"
the 101st moved to an area which soon became known to
troops as the "Island." This strip of land was located between
the Nederrijn and Waal Rivers with Arnhem to the north,
Nijmegen to the south.

ARRIVAL of the Screaming Eagle on the Island marked
the beginning of the end for Germany's 333rd Volks-
grenadier Div. Taking over a quiet sector of the Island, the
101st prepared defensive positions.

Within 24 hours Germans struck from the west, slamming
their 957th Regt. hard against the Airborne wall. Told it
was opposing a handful of isolated Allied paratroopers,
hungry and without adequate weapons, the Nazi regiment
attacked, confidently and swiftly.

The assault was absorbed by the depth of the 101st defense.
The enemy was stunned at the savage reception accorded
him by the "handful of Allied paratroopers, hungry and without
adequate weapons." Doggedly, the Germans drove—into
destruction. Soon, the 957th Regt. ceased to exist as a
fighting tactical unit.

But the savage warfare wasn't over. Germans reorganized
battered elements and the 958th Regt. arrived the next day to

join its faltering fellow regiment. German artillery and armor supported a fresh attack. By nightfall, the Eagle battalion occupying Opheusden, focal point of the German effort for three days of fanatical fighting, withdrew to a defensive line east of the town.

Opheusden changed hands several times. Either attacking or withdrawing, skillful Eagle sky-fighters inflicted tremendous losses on the 363rd Div., now completely assembled with the 959th Inf. Regt., 363rd Arty. Regt. and its engineer and fusilier battalions in the fold. Airborne soldiers eventually captured the town, blasted retreating and thoroughly beaten Germans completely out of the Airborne sector.

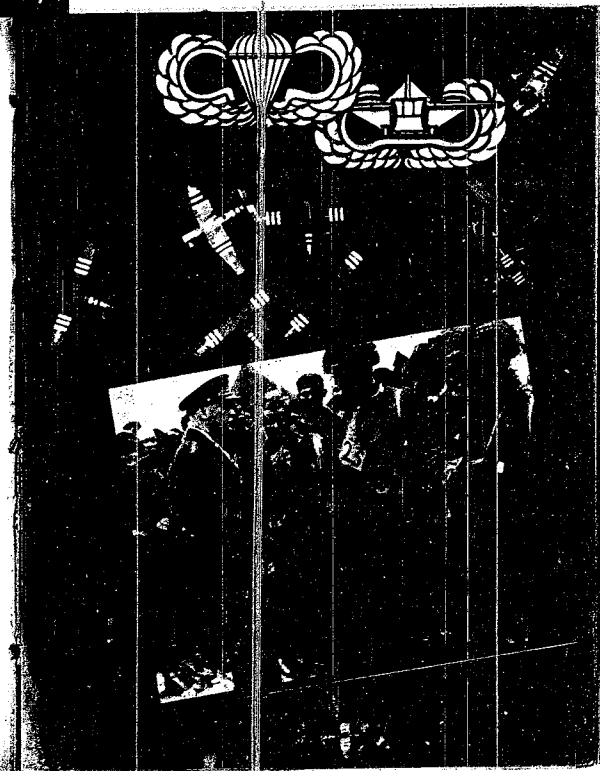
Order of Battle records of enemy killed, wounded and captured provide mute testimony to the destruction of the German division. In its reorganized Volksgrenadier status, the once-proud 363rd Inf. Div. lasted exactly 10 days in the claws of the Screaming Eagles.

FROM then on, activity in Holland was limited to patrols. Highlighting the action was the work of an intelligence section patrol of the 501st Parachute Inf., led by Capt. Hugo S. Sims, Orangeburg, N.C., Regimental S-2.

The patrol crossed the Rhine in a rubber boat at night, and following a number of narrow escapes, reached an observation point on the Arnhem-Utrecht highway, eight miles behind enemy lines. After relaying information back to the division by radio, the patrol captured a number of German prisoners who gave additional data on units, emplacements and movement in the area.

Moving out next day, the six-man team nabbed a German truckload of SS troops, including a battalion commander. When the truck bogged down, patrol and PWs, now numbering 31, walked to the river, then crossed over to the American-held bank.

Early in November, the division was relieved in Holland







and once again returned to a base camp, this time in France. Screaming Eagles paused for a breather. But it was brief because Eagle troops are not accustomed to resting. Since their activation they have been continually training, maneuvering—and now fighting.

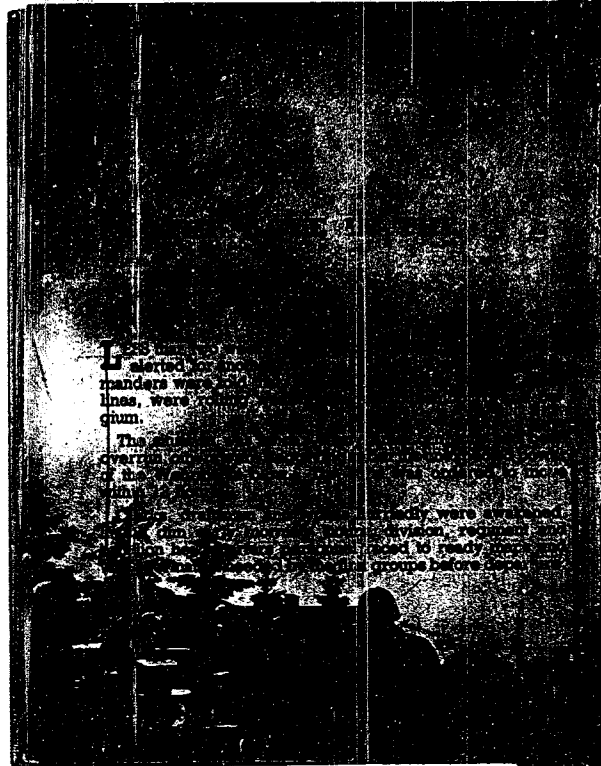
THE 101st A/B Div. was activated Aug. 16, 1942, at Camp Claiborne, La. The 82nd Inf. Div. had been split to form the nucleus for the Army's first two Airborne divisions, the 101st and 82nd. The division trained at Fort Bragg, N.C., participated in Tennessee maneuvers. Overseas movement began Sept. 5, 1943. After arrival in England, Eagle troops continued ground and Airborne training in preparation for its combat missions.

Maj. Gen. William Carey Lee, "Father of Airborne Troops," was the first Commanding General of the Screaming Eagles. After guiding the division through the difficult training period, a heart ailment a few months prior to the Normandy D-Day prevented him from realizing his ambition to lead the unit into combat.

Maj. Gen. Maxwell D. Taylor, Chief of Staff, then Artillery Commander of the 82nd A/B Div. with which he fought the Mediterranean campaign in 1943, succeeded Gen. Lee. Brig. Gen. Don F. Pratt was Asst. Division Commander until June 6, 1944, when he was killed while leading the glider echelon into Normandy.

Brig. Gen. Gerald J. Higgins, current Asst. Division Commander, at 34, is the youngest ground force general in the Army. Gen. Higgins, who entered West Point from the ranks, has been the Asst. Chief of Staff G-3 and Chief of Staff in the division.

Col. William N. Gilmore, Ft. Knox, Ky., succeeded Gen. McAuliffe as Division Artillery commander when the latter took over the 103rd Inf. Div.



Gen. Taylor was in Washington on urgent War Department business. Gen. McAuliffe was in command.

Fighting men awoke at dawn. In some cases it was "Be ready to leave in four hours!" Others had more time.

It was incredible yet true. The well-deserved rest of the 101st was short. Men were needed. All fighting equipment had been turned in, so Division supply room doors now swung open. "Take what you need and be sure you have enough. No forms to sign—no red tape—help yourself!" Every man quickly found equipment to transform him from a "resting" soldier back to a veteran ready for combat.

German objectives were Liege, Namur, across the Meuse to Antwerp. The plan which sent speeding Panzer columns westward along Belgium's highways called for capture of Bastogne, vital hub of a communication network of seven highways, three railroads. Seizure of Bastogne was imperative to insure development of the German attack. Without the city, Germans could hardly hope to succeed.

The 101st rolled to Bastogne in huge carrier trucks. Re-routing sometimes was necessary, but by 2100 a considerable number of men already had arrived at temporary Division Headquarters near the town.

As they made their "jump" from the carrier trucks, an Airborne man told a driver: "Wait outside. We'll finish this thing off in a hurry and be right back." With that spirit, Screaming Eagles entered Bastogne at dawn the following morning.

MOVING into the city, Airborne troopers met isolated groups of soldiers, passed long vehicular columns, all retreating westward from the breakthrough area. Civilians, pointing ahead of the Eagle soldiers, warned, "Germans are coming that way!" The Airborne answer was, "We know it—we're the welcoming committee."




town east of Bastogne and nearby German units. Their first organized resistance took a bad beating.

During these first confused hours the Medical Company and attached surgical teams were captured west of Bastogne by German armor. Loss of these units was a severe blow to the division.

By noon of the following day, 38 hours after the alert, the division established its headquarters in Bastogne and units set up a circular defense of the town.

For 24 hours swift-moving German armor and infantry slammed against Bastogne defenses from the east. Each time they were repulsed with heavy losses. Nazis suffered additional grief everywhere they contacted Airborne units.

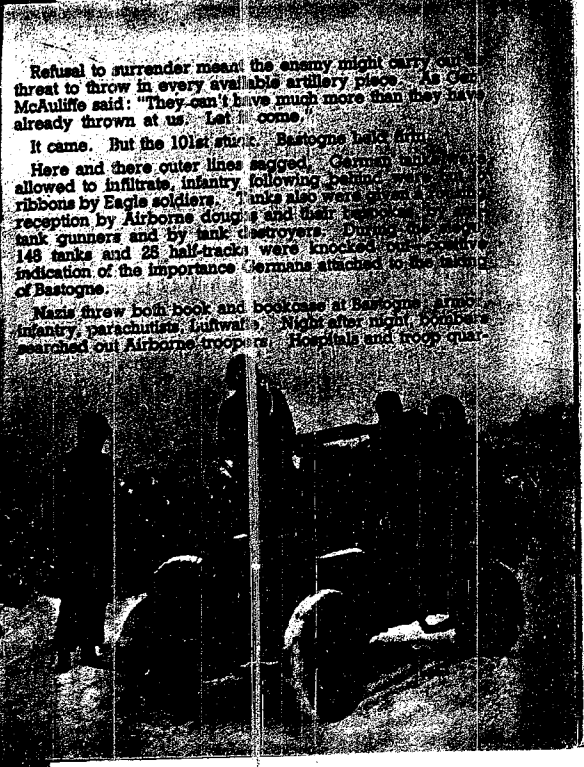
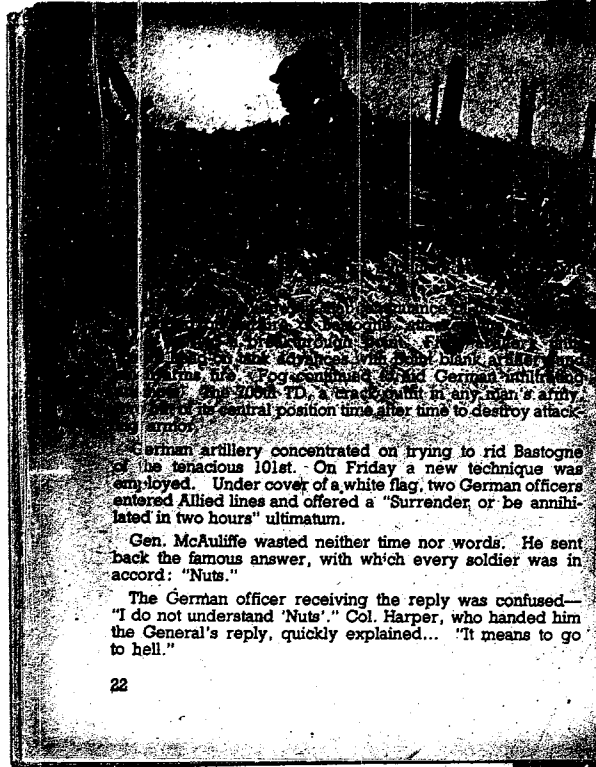
German commanders maneuvered, deciding on a double envelopment from north and south. They had had enough of attacking from the east.



the immediate lines, the 502nd occupied Necegnon to the north while the 502nd occupied Necegnon to the south. CC R of the 9th and CC B of the 10th Armd. Div., attached to the 101st, repulsed all enemy attempts to break through. Although foggy weather and poor visibility helped them, Germans still were unable to crack the vital road junction town of Bastogne.

EARLY Wednesday, German panzer, infantry and parachute divisions swelled around Bastogne like a tidal wave, slashed the last remaining road leading into the city, completely surrounded the 101st. That day when Corps called by radio telephone to ask the Eagle situation, Lt. Col. H. W. O. Kinnard, Division G-3, replied: "Visualize the hole in the doughnut. That's us."

Everyone was excited about the American hole in the doughnut—everyone except the 101st. Its fighting men were



Refusal to surrender meant the enemy might carry out a threat to throw in every available artillery piece. As Gen. McAuliffe said: "They can't have much more than they have already thrown at us. Let it come."

It came. But the 101st stuck. Bastogne held firm. Here and there outer lines sagged. German tanks were allowed to infiltrate, infantry following behind, and the ribbons by Eagle soldiers. Tanks also were given a warm reception by Airborne doughs and their bazookas, and tank gunners and by tank destroyers. During the week 148 tanks and 28 half-tracks were knocked out, a strong indication of the importance Germans attached to the taking of Bastogne.

Nazis threw both book and bookcase at Bastogne. Artillery, infantry, paratroopers, Luftwaffe. Night after night bombers searched out Airborne troops. Hospitals and troop quar-

...the 200th TD, a tank outfit in any man's army, in a central position time after time to destroy attack...

German artillery concentrated on trying to rid Bastogne of the tenacious 101st. On Friday a new technique was employed. Under cover of a white flag, two German officers entered Allied lines and offered a "Surrender, or be annihilated in two hours" ultimatum.

Gen. McAuliffe wasted neither time nor words. He sent back the famous answer, with which every soldier was in accord: "Nuts."

The German officer receiving the reply was confused—"I do not understand 'Nuts'." Col. Harper, who handed him the General's reply, quickly explained... "It means to go to hell."

ters were hit. Low-flying dive bombers and heavy artillery were unpleasant and damaging but not unbearable. The 101st stayed on.

Complete encirclement of Bastogne placed the division squarely behind the eight-ball for supplies. Airborne artillery long had been accustomed to giving more than it took. Shells now had to be rationed. Artillery waited "to see the whites of plenty of eyes" before letting go.

Food became scarce. Screaming Eagles sought clear skies—flying weather not only for air re-supply, but for planes to keep the Luftwaffe down.

Evacuation of wounded became a pressing problem. But they had to wait—there was no way out of the doughnut. Reports circulated daily that the 4th Armd. Div. was on its way to open a road.

Mutual confidence characterized the vicious battle preceding the junction of the 4th and the 101st. Airborne troopers hoped that armor would crack open a path for movement of supplies and evacuation of wounded; the 4th knew that sky-fighters would still be there, killing Germans.

It was cold—freezing cold. Blankets were draped about the wounded. Somewhere, somehow, medicine was found to ease their pain. Hospitals were jammed, floors covered with casualties.

Then, the weather began to clear.

The 101st A/B troopers, re-supply is nothing new. It was done on all previous operations. Never before was it so appreciated as on Saturday, Dec. 23, when the first group of C-47s, fuselages jam-packed with supplies, dipped low and roared in.

Supply bundles floating to the ground were the prettiest sight Eagle soldiers had seen in many days. As planes



dropped overhead, soldiers scrambled from the men below to track each plane. They searched the fields a few hundred yards from the perimeter in the race to reach the bundles.

Every man knew that the arrival of these first planes had broken the German back. Now 101st troopers could go on, supplied by their comrades of the Airborne Troop Carrier forces of the First Allied Airborne Army.

Germans attacked again in force the day before Christmas. But it was different now. Throughout the day, hundreds of P-47s roared overhead. In fours and fives, fighter-planes sought out enemy tank and infantry positions. They left burning vehicles and equipment about the perimeter.



Christmas Eve, 1944, airmen sent the following message to the fighting men of the 101st:

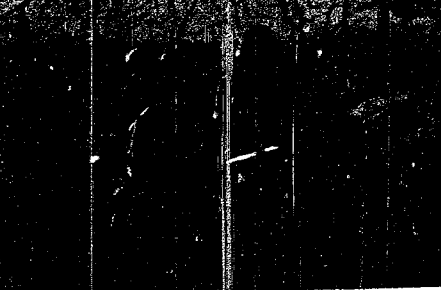
What's merry about all this, you ask? We're fighting—it's cold—we aren't home. All true, but what has the proud Eagle Division accomplished with its worthy comrades of the 10th Armored Division, the 708th Tank Destroyer Battalion and all the rest? Just this: we have stopped cold everything that has been thrown at us from the north, east, southwest. We have identifications from four German Panzer Divisions, two German Infantry Divisions and one German Parachute Division. These units, spearhead-

ing the last desperate German lunge, were headed straight west for key points when the Eagle Division was hurriedly ordered to stem the advance. How effectively this was done will be written in history, not alone in our division's glorious history but in world history. The Germans actually did surround us, their radios blared our doom. Their Commander demanded our surrender in the following impudent arrogance:

"The fortune of war is changing. This time the U.S.A. forces near Bastogne have been encircled by strong German armored units. More German armored units have crossed the River Ourthe near Orthenyville, have taken Marche and reached St. Hubert by passing through Homores-Sibrat-Tillet. Libramont is in German hands.

"There is only one possibility to save the encircled U.S.A. troops from total annihilation: that is the honorable surrender of the encircled town. In order to think it over, a term of two hours will be granted beginning with the presentation of this note.

"This proposal should be accepted: one German Artillery Corps and one Heavy A.A. Battalion are ready to withdraw to the U.S.A. troops and near Bastogne.



The order for firing will be given immediately after this two hour's term.

"All the serious civilian losses caused by this artillery fire would not correspond with the well-known American humanity."

The German Commander received the following reply:

NUTS!

Allied Troops are counter-attacking in force. We continue to hold Bastogne. By holding Bastogne we assure the success of the Allied Armies. We know that our Division Commander, General Taylor, will say: "Well done."



SHHELLS continued to pour into the town on Christmas Eve. Early Christmas Day, German heavy guns fired their major shells. Tanks and infantry fought bitterly in the area of the 502nd and 327th to make it anything but a merry Christmas. After hours of bitter fighting, the enemy was driven off or wiped out. Eagle lines still held.

Close fighter-bomber support helped to erase a large number of German tanks as pyres marked the trail of diving planes. Christmas night, additional attempts were made to bomb Division Headquarters. Constant shelling and bombings reduced the town to rubble.

The rumble of tank fire heralded the approach of the 4th Armored Div. At 1715, Dec. 28, first elements of the division contacted outposts of the 101st.

Minutes later, the gallant Bastogne wounded were evacuated in a long convoy of trucks and ambulances. The 101st maintained contact with the enemy and held firm the same territory it had taken on arriving in the area. Gen. Taylor, having flown back to the battle zone from Washington, resumed command with Gen. McAuliffe's assurance that the 101st was ready for offensive action.

One of many congratulatory messages arriving at headquarters read:

All ranks First Canadian Army have watched with admiration the magnificent manner in which their friends of the 101st U. S. Airborne Division have fought it out with the enemy around Bastogne. Our high regards and congratulations.

Yours truly,
Gen. from Maj. Gen. Troy H. Middleton, commanding Corps.

...that the 101st



I feel that I would be remiss to do so without further words of the same nature.

I desire to take the means of expressing my personal appreciation for the superior manner in which the division conducted itself in the action at Bastogne. Without the will and determination of the 101st Airborne Division to stop the superior forces of the German Army thrown against it, there would be a chapter written in history different from the one which will appear...

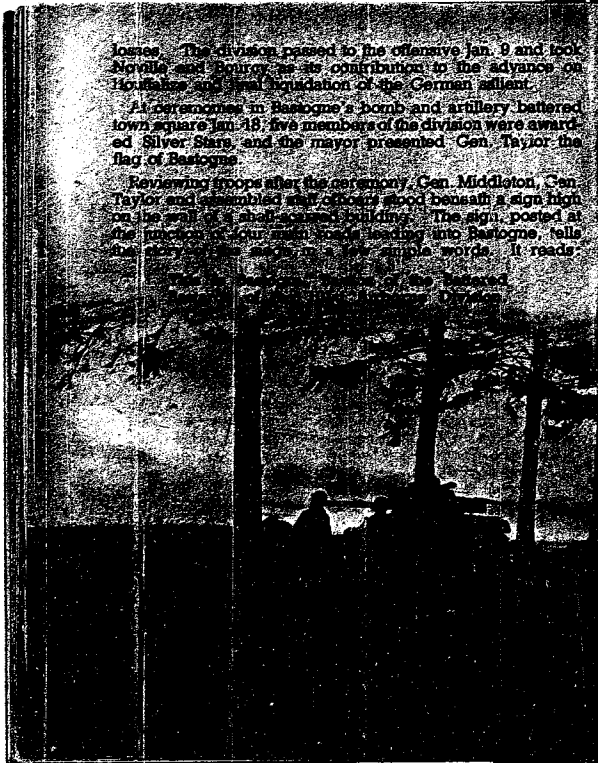
For 22 additional days, Screaming Eagles held Bastogne as Third Army troops fought their way abreast of the "doughnut." Germans made their last and greatest effort to break the defenses in an all-out attack against the sectors of the 502nd and 327th. These regiments, formed into a task force under Brig. Gen. G. J. Higgins, beat off the assault, inflicting heavy

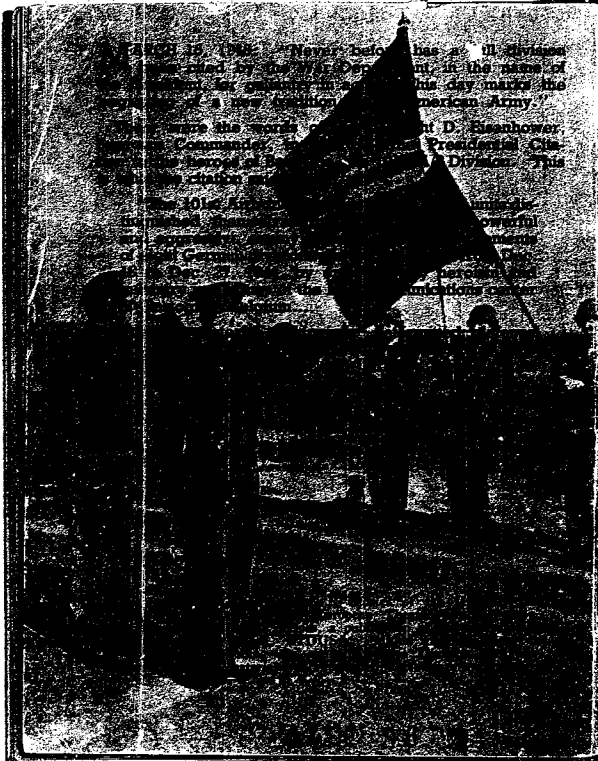
losses. The division passed to the offensive Jan. 9 and took Noville and Bourcy as its contribution to the advance on Houbaize and final liquidation of the German salient.

At ceremonies in Bastogne's bomb and artillery battered town square Jan. 18, five members of the division were awarded Silver Stars, and the mayor presented Gen. Taylor the flag of Bastogne.

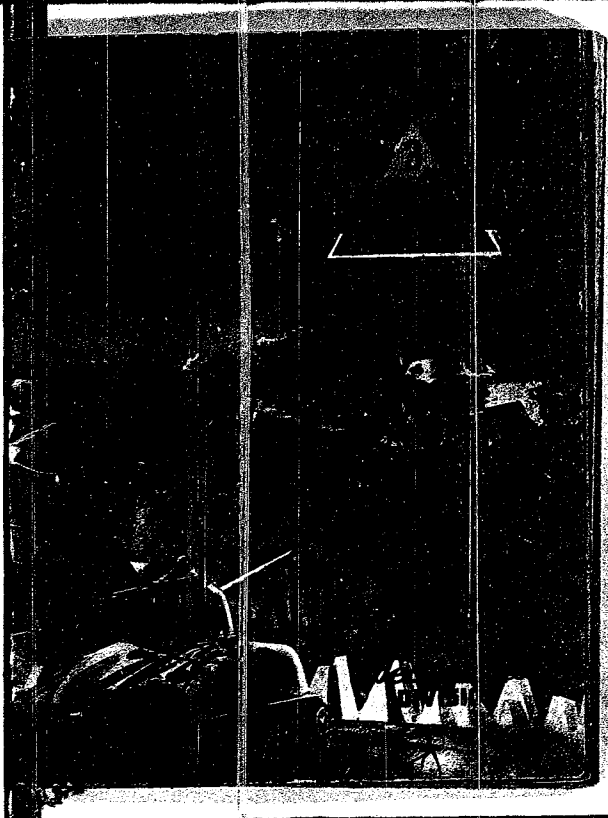
Reviewing troops after the ceremony, Gen. Middleton, Gen. Taylor and assembled staff officers stood beneath a sign high on the wall of a shell-damaged building. The sign, posted at the junction of four main streets leading into Bastogne, tells the story of the siege in the simple words: "It reads:

The... of the...
...





APRIL 15, 1948. Never before has a division
been cited by the War Department in the name of
the United States Army. This day marks the
beginning of a new tradition in the American Army.
The citation reads: "The 101st Airborne Division, under
the command of General Matthew B. Ridgway, distinguished
itself in the Battle of the Bulge, and for its
bravery and gallantry in the Battle of the Bulge."
The citation is a testament to the courage and
bravery of the 101st Airborne Division. This
division has a long and distinguished history, and
its actions during the Battle of the Bulge are a
testament to its courage and gallantry.





Name _____
Date enlisted _____
Attached to 3rd Armd _____
Battle Actions _____

Citations _____

Passed by Censor For Mailing Home.

Division unit to cross German border
Task force under Lt. Col. William Lovelady,
of Soddy, Tenn., east of Eupen, at 1451
hours, September 12, 1944.

To take a German town in this war,
Reelgen, occupied by elements of the
83rd Armored Reconnaissance Bn., on
September 13, 1944.

Breach of the Siegfried Line By Task
Force "X," commanded by Lt. Col. Leonard
L. Doan, of Combat Command "A," in the
vicinity of Scheidmühle, Germany, on
September 13, 1944.

To shoot down an enemy plane from
German soil By the 486th Automatic
Anti-Aircraft (AW) Bn., on September 18,
1944.

To fire an artillery shell at German soil
By the 991st Field Artillery Bn. (155 mm.
SP gun) on September 10, 1944.

American division to completely pierce
the Siegfried Line Combat Command
"A," on September 15, 1944.

to cross Germany in force since 1945
The United States Army

SEPTEMBER 12, 1944. A thinning blanket of ground mist lay over the long hills of Aachen Province, border-line country between Belgium and Germany.

There was a clatter of tracks and motors in the air that day, a clamor of guns. Through the yellow, acrid dust tanks and mobile artillery of the cutting edge of First Army power, Maj. Gen. J. Lawton Collins' VII Corps battering ram, the 3rd Armored "Spearhead" Division, crashed into and subsequently through the Siegfried Line.

For the "Spearhead" Division it was the end of a phase. The first signs of autumn were beginning to show; nights were becoming cold, too frequent rain turned secondary roads into impossible mire. Men and machines were weary. It had been a long campaign for the armor.

FIRST SINCE NAPOLEON

Although they were first to invade the "sacred soil" of Germany in winter 1944-45, the 3rd Armored Division was the first to take a major battle since the days of Napoleon.

Armd. Div. had finished on nerve alone. They needed a rest and their vehicles screamed for maintenance.

The division had entered the arena of war unfried. In less than two months of powerful all-out attack, it had hurled back the blitzkrieg to the land of its origin. The bitter, dusty road from Normandy to the Siegfried Line was cluttered with the flame-gutted wrecks of a once proud German army. The supermen of Hitler's Third Reich fought well, but the Spearhead pounded them into the very ground they had stolen. Five German general officers and 20,000 men were captured and the 3rd Armd. Div. drove from the Selhe to the Siegfried Line in 18 days!

No wonder it earned the name of "Spearhead"!

WEARING OFF THE GREEN

ALTHOUGH the 3rd Armd. Div. had undergone training in almost every type of climate, nowhere had it been in terrain resembling the hedgerow country of Normandy.

Its initial action was in that hedge-bound jungle before St. Lo, a country not ideal for armored operations. Although the armor would be

To Brig. Gen. Doyle O. Hickey's Combat Command "A" was given the assignment of clearing the pocket held largely by the Fusilier Bn., 353rd Inf. Div. To accomplish this mission, the Combat Command was given the 32nd Armd. Regt., the 36th Armd. Inf. Regt., the 54th Armd. F.A. Bn., supporting engineers, medics and maintenance elements.

Three task forces were formed—"X" under Col. (now Brig. Gen.) Truman E. Boudinot, "Y" commanded by Col. Craeme C. Parks, and "Z" commanded by Lt. Col. Walter Abney. In this and subsequent actions, two task forces mounted the attack and a third, in this case that of Lt. Col. Abney, remained principally in reserve. Later, when the division began to shake down to a more perfectly coordinated fighting machine, multiple spearheads of task forces were used in the assault.

Although the division was green in that first engagement, no man faltered or failed to advance toward the objective. The attack jumped off at 0900 on June 29, and by 1130, Task Force Boudinot reached LaForge-Bois de Brietal where it was ordered to remain. Enemy resistance stiff; the terrain rough; the

sard and the right flank of the force, was held up by difficult terrain and frantic enemy resistance.

On the following day both task forces pressed on, stabilized the line and turned it over to the 29th Inf. Div. The Villiers Fossard bulge was dented, but the 3rd Armd. Div. suffered relatively heavy casualties.

KRAUTS ARE TOUCH

Lt. Col. Nathaniel O. Whitlaw wrote of the action: "We seemed to be stunned by the ferocity of the German small arms and mortar fire, but we collected our wits and advanced in the face of this fire just as we thought that we would do, and showed little self-concern during the remainder of the battle. We pushed on to our objective like veterans. I am sure that these men will give great accounts of themselves in future battles."

Bocage country fighting was bitter; each hedge had to be breached before armor could pass. Because it was impossible to requisition enough versatile tank-dozer, 3rd Armd. Div. engineers designed their own. The Maintenance Bn. constructed a "mine" arrangement which could be fitted on light or medium tanks. Battle experience and Yankee ingenuity began to weld the division into a crack fighting unit.

Although the 3rd had been attached to the XIX Corps during the initial action and was soon to revert, Combat Com-

mand Hickey was ordered to an area north of the famous Forêt de Cerisy, prepared to counter any penetration on the V Corps front. It was never committed, and on July 7, the 3rd reverted to the XIX Corps, which ordered it to move across the Vire River at Airel to occupy a bridgehead secured by the 30th Inf. Div., then to advance southward toward St. Gilles. That night troops of Combat Command "B" (Brig. Gen. John J. Bohn) raced across the Airel bridge under a hell of German artillery fire. Division MP's, disregarding the vicious barrage, clung to their posts directing traffic over the hastily reconstructed bridge.

FANNING OUT ACROSS THE VIRE

Fanning out across the Vire, Combat Command Bohn was attached to the 30th Inf. Div. Combat Command Hickey received the mission of protecting the corps right flank, and was to attack in the direction of Les Landes and La Perrey. At midnight of the 8th, the combat command was attached to the 9th Inf. Div. The cooperation with this division was happily continued throughout much of the campaign in the west.

In the area of St. Jean de Days, Combat Command Hickey battled a defensive action against paratroopers and other units of the Wehrmacht.

On July 15, Col. Truman E. Boudinot assumed command of Combat Command "B." Lt. Col. L. L. Doan became CO of the 32nd Armd. Regt.

To the men of Combat Command Boudinot, a hill called Haute Vents always will remain a bitter memory. Col. Clarence Roysdon, commander of the 33rd Armd. Regt., ordered to take the high ground, delegated the mission to Lt. Col. Roswell H. King. Because of heavy losses in the previous action, he was able to muster only two light and six medium tanks.

THEN THE RADIO QUIT

Col. King's radio was shot out and his Infantrymen were unable to maintain the rapid advance. Nevertheless, he proceeded to Hill 91, or Haute Vents, and returned to his lines for infantry support the next morning. Under heavy enemy shelling Combat Command "B" held out for three days until finally contacted by advance elements of the 30th Inf. Div. But Col. Roysdon and his small band held Haute Vents, where they defeated the abortive attempt of the 130th Panzer Lehr Div.'s powerful drive toward Isigny to cut off Allied forces on the new beachhead.

The Lehr Div. in spite of its reputedly magnificent equipment took a terrible beating in the Haute Vents, Pont Hebert, and Belle Lande sectors.

The division was beginning to creak: the greenness was beginning to wear off.

WE'RE COMING THROUGH!

ON July 16, both Combat Commands reverted to division control and moved into assembly areas west of St. Jean de Days. The stage was set under the direction of the VII Corps. Maintenance crews worked furiously. Supplies and troops railed in from the floating docks below Isigny. Reconnaissance airplanes buzzed overhead. The Kraut was nervous: he had reason to be!

The great armored breakthrough from Normandy into France was the first true showing of American ground power in battle. In the morning hours of July 26, wave after wave of Fortresses and Liberators made the initial assault.

There were probably more planes in the air at one time than ever before in the history of air-ground operations. They came endlessly over the horizon, dropped their bombs, wheeled

away. It seemed

impossible for any

guess the extent of the proposed breakthrough, but orders were given and teams moved out, multiple columns of armor leading.

In the initial stages of the breakthrough west of St. Lo, Combat Command Boudinot spearheaded the attack of the famed 1st Inf. Div. at Marigny, then made a right turn and drove for the high ground around Montuchon, northeast of Coutances and behind enemy lines. After taking its initial objective, it clattered to within sight of Coutances. While tankers of the command decided to go forward and seize the city, an order was received to turn back and aid the 1st Inf. Div. to reduce a strongpoint.

When the Combat Command had turned west at Marigny, "B" Battery of the 391st Armd. F.A. Bn. was firing support. The 4th Cav. Sq. was having trouble with the enemy a few hundred yards away. Command of the battery was turned over to a single non-com, and all available personnel was used as infantry against the Germans. Five of the battery's six guns were used for support while the sixth was fired point-blank at the hemmed-in Germans.

Activity encountered by units normally in rear areas is described in the annals of the 486th AA Bn., an attached unit: "From 0030 to 0105 hours the area around the division CP was heavily attacked by enemy aircraft. Flares were dropped directly over the CP and bombs fell throughout the area. No

damage or casualties. During this night the battery commander, Capt. Phillip Shaw, with four or five enlisted men destroyed an enemy tank, several half-trucks, volkswagens, and numerous ammunition and gasoline trucks, killed two enemy soldiers and captured nine. One of the enemy, attacked by an American soldier wielding a hatchet, shouted 'Hell Hitler' and shot himself to death."

in the meantime, Combat Command Hickey had been given the mission of taking Cerisy la Salle, Montpinchon, and the high ground to the east and southeast of Coutances.

Because the enemy had expected such an attack, Combat Command Hickey encountered more opposition than had Boudinot, but with the help of other armored columns to the east and west forced German armor below Roncey. At this point the 2nd Arm'd. Div. cut the escape gap at St. Denis le Cost while the air forces pummeled the road-bound Nazi vehicles.

From an operational standpoint, it was a combat command "show." This was illustrated by the action of Combat Command Hickey, which, on July 29, was ordered to turn south and seize a crossing of the Seine River at Gavray. Lt. Col. L. L. Doan led his troops across the stream on foot under fire to secure a bridgehead. So fast was the advance that, at breach, the speeding Combat Command caught German troops



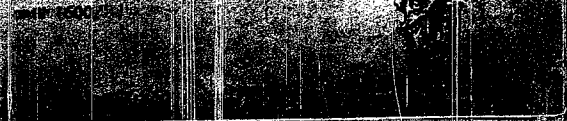
Boudinot, attached to the 4th Inf. Div. attacked on Aug. 1 to take the high ground east of Villedieu les Poeles. It received strong opposition and was ordered to cross the See River, move south and east to hold a crossroad at Le Mesnil Adelee. The objective was reached on Aug. 4 after encounters with the 116th Panzer Div., the 363rd Inf. Div. and other forces.

On the 6th, weary of combat and in need of rest, maintenance and rehabilitation, Combat Command Boudinot was ordered to a rest area. Dirty men prepared to wash their bodies and clothing.

Baths never were taken.

On the 7th, the Combat Command was attached to the 30th Div. to repel the German breakthrough attempt to Avranches. Heavy fighting took place around Le Mesnil Adelee and Le Mesnil Tove. The Command was shelled, bombed and attacked by infantry and tanks for five consecutive days.

Official report for Aug. 9 described this fury: "At 1145 Task Force 1 (Col. Roysdon) was bracketed... expected enemy fire began falling around noon... Lt. Col. King's command half-track exploded. Attempt was made to move Col. Roysdon's CP. A shell struck the half-track, wounding an officer and cutting through the sides of the vehicle so that it looked like a sieve... There was a true burst, then a round landed by the front sprocket. Col. Roysdon and his staff were underneath the tank. No one was injured. Heavy shelling continued until 1500."



Meanwhile, Combat Command Hickey had cut even deeper into German positions and had received its full share of the attack toward Avranches. On Aug. 1, Lt. Col. L. L. Doan's task force was ordered to advance and to seize the high ground in the vicinity of Belle Fontaine, northwest of Mortain. Task Force "Z," commanded by Lt. Col. John Daniels of the 1st Inf. Div., was to advance via Reffueville to seize the high ground near Romagny, to the southwest. The command was given the 3rd Bn., 18th Inf. for further support.

During the night of Aug. 2, the advance was held up by a road block, but at dawn Juvigny le Tertre was taken after a severe fight.

Further advance was made on Aug. 5 when Task Force "X" under Col. Doan set out for Le Teilleul. A smaller force was sent to hold Barenton and did not rejoin the command until Aug. 12-13, being for the most part attached to the 2nd Armd. Div.

On Aug. 6, Task Force Doan set out for Ambriens le Grand on the Mayenne River, arriving at 0830 hours. Considerable fighting was necessary but the bridge was seized quickly, and the 1st Inf. Div. pushed across to establish a bridgehead on the east side of the Varenne River. The following day, Col. Walter Richardson's task force moved to positions around St. Mars sur Dolme. Except for an outposting operation

at Corbon, this maneuver practically completed the German attack.

The Division

THE 3rd rested and licked its wounds. Maj. Gen. Maurice Rose (then Brig. Gen.) had assumed command, and now he reviewed the elements which were to go with him into further battle. What he saw was impressive.

The 3rd Armd. Div. had been activated on April 15, 1941, at Camp Beauregard, La., with a cadre from the 2nd Armd. Div. The first division commander was Brig. Gen. (later Maj. Gen.) Alvan C. Gillem, Jr. Camp Polk, La., was the semi-permanent home of the division from June, 1941 to July, 1942. Then it was the first armored division to move to the Desert Training Center. At the Center, the division was commanded by Maj. Gen. Walton H. Walker, now commander of the XX Corps. Brig. Gen. (later Maj. Gen.) Leroy H. Watson, assumed command of the division on Aug. 22, 1942.

It was also in the southern California desert that the division first operated under the VII Corps. Its association there paid off in smoothed paths, momentum, and in later victory on the Western Front.

In October, 1942, the division moved to Camp Pickett, Va.—ostensibly for overseas departure. However, despite conflicting rumors, the 3rd moved to Indiantown Gap Military Reservation, Pa., in January, 1943, for further and more extensive training. In the latter part of August, the division moved to a staging area at Camp Kilmer, N. J., and embarked for Europe on Sept. 5, 1943. While in England the division used many of the better known ranges, both artillery and tank. It maneuvered widely on Salisbury Plain, and played host to such personages as Lt. Gen. Jacob Devers, Lt. Gen. Omar N. Bradley and, on Jan. 17, Gen. Sir Bernard Montgomery, who announced that he would command American troops in the early stages of the invasion. The division also entertained the Duke of Gloucester, brother of His Majesty, King George VI.

Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower, Gen. Montgomery, Air Chief Marshal Tedder and others visited the division, accompanied by approximately 60 newspapermen and cameramen, to watch pre-invasion exercises.

Gen. Bradley paid the division another visit in May, speaking to all officers and men. Shortly thereafter, troops moved out of barracks and hutments into the field.

On D plus 18, after more than three years rigid training, the division landed in Normandy on Omaha Beach and immediately moved to Les Obeaux, below Isigny, where it coiled in readiness for the fight.

Now the men of the 3rd Armored Division were quiet soldiers, weathered and squint-eyed. They had been introduced to war.

They had plunged into action green but confident. They had tasted the bitterness of death, and fear, and near defeat.

Yet these men who were once, in the words of Col. Whitlaw, "stunned by the ferocity" of German defense, came back slugging; to snatch a full measure of victory from the hesitant brink of disaster.

They had gone to war with the good natured confidence of American sportsmen, and had learned to play for keeps—to hate the enemy. These men had arrived in the arena of war, hard and ready. By that token they had survived.

Now the tankers and tank destroyers, the artillerymen and infantrymen of the 3rd Armd. Div. had something more to back up the promise of their arms: they were schooled in the subtleties of war.

SPEARHEAD IS A TEAM!

NOW it was their turn to crack the whip. The division was no longer a collection of separate elements: the "Spearhead" was a team!

Proof was soon forthcoming. The British Army, driving south from Caen, and the US First, smashing east, had trapped a sizeable part of Field Marshal von Kluge's Seventh Army in the Falaise-Argentan pocket. 3rd Armd. was ordered to close the escape gap.

On Aug. 13, Combat Command Hickey moved out in two columns leading the division attack. The axis of advance was Mayenne—Pré en Pail—Carrouges—Ranes—Fromental.

With Task Force Doan on the south, and Task Force Richardson to the north, Combat Command Hickey moved through Couptrain and Javron, clearing these towns of the 728th German Inf. Regt. The command halted its first day's drive with more than fifty miles of ground covered!

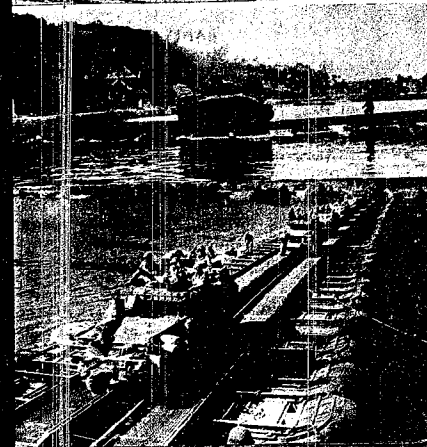
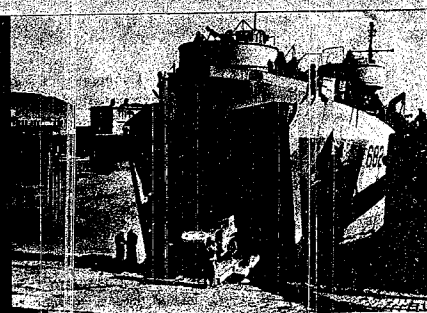
The 3rd Armd. Div. had become a perfectly oiled striking machine. In comparison with this day's action the German blitzkrieg of 1941 looked like a midget auto race in slow motion!

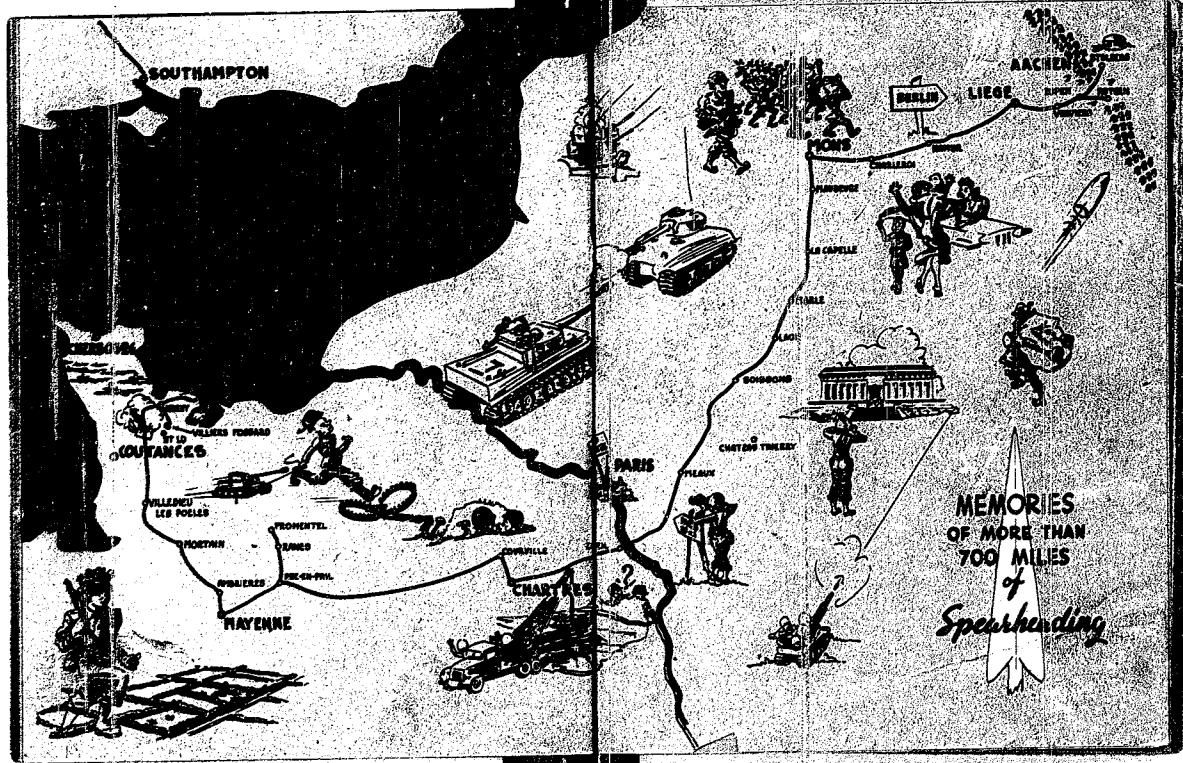
RANES — FROMENTAL

Heavy fighting broke out beyond Pré en Pail. Carrouges, in the late afternoon of Aug. 14, was a picture of war at its grim height. German vehicles by the score testified to the effectiveness of the Spearhead.

Along the Carrouges-Ranes road, armor of both sides had suffered. Panther-tank and Sherman alike were left on that bitter boulevard, wrecked and burning. Stench of death and flames filled the air. French houses burned sullenly and aircraft dropped flares above the column.

That night, Task Force Richardson reached the outskirts of Ranes. There was a minimum of shell fire. Men of the command little suspected that dawn would bring some of the most vicious fighting they had yet experienced.





SOUTHAMPTON

PARIS

LIEGE

AACHEN

COUTANCES

PARIS

CHARTRES

MEMORIES
OF MORE THAN
700 MILES
of
Spearheading

RAYENNE

YVEAUX

CHATEAU THIERRY

BOISSONNE



STOMME

LA CAPELLE

PAROISSE

CHATELAIN

ROUEN

REIMS

VILLENEUVE
LES POISLES

TRONHETEL
SEANES

MOETAIN

AMBALIERES
FRANCO-PHIL

CHATELAIN

VERDUN

VILLERS FOREBARD





On the left flank, Task Force Doan, coiling at Joue du Bois, engaged dismounted German troops throughout the night and in the morning moved up to seize Ranès.

The balance of Combat Command Hickey with a battalion from the 60th Inf. Regt., engaged in mopping up activities. Counter-attacks of the 1st and 9th SS Panzer Divs. were repulsed with severe losses to the enemy.

The advance northward was resumed. AT guns and artillery impeded progress. The German soldier at Ranès-Fromental was the best that Hitler could put into the field. He fought well, but we fought better.

SPEARHEAD PUNCHES VON KLUGE

The Spearhead Division ground forward and took Fromental on Aug. 17, lost it the same day, smashed back in a third burst of fury. That day, an estimated 1200 enemy vehicles passed across the front of the division, receiving deadly artillery fire and direct attack from the air. The Battle of the Argentan-Épinal gap was nearly over, but it had not yet entirely spent its fury. Many military observers agreed that this action was the true "Battle for France." After Field Marshal von Kluge's elite elements were crushed to bits here, the Wehrmacht never again attempted to slug it out with allied forces in this country.

Individual performances were faultless. Tank commanders drew straws—the winner leading the attack.

Fighting was often at 70 to 100 yards. One TD neutralized two Panther tanks at the negligible range of 25 yards. Two shots pierced the thick frontal armor of the dreaded Mark Vs. The TD commander himself was killed when he dismounted from his vehicle to aid the enemy wounded.

Tank Destroyers of the 703rd TD Bn. proved extremely valuable on road block positions where they helped smash German armored counterattacks.

On the afternoon of Aug. 18, the Spearhead Division, represented by tanker Sgt. Donald Ekdahl of the 33rd Armd. Regt. met advance elements of British armor on the road near Putanges. The trap at last was closed.

For the 3rd Armd. Div., however, the heaviest fighting was over. A great armored division had found itself in battle. Weary and combat-battered, the 3rd might still proudly recall that it had blitzed through enemy lines at exceptional speed, that it had slugged gun to gun with the finest elements of a German army—and that after it was all over, the German army in question no longer existed.

The division moved overland to the vicinity of Courville and Chateaufort, between Dreux and Chartres and on Aug. 24 rolled again, this time to Corbeil and Meaux. Preparations were made for the Seine crossing.

THE march through northern France was a nightmare without benefit of sleep. The entire pursuit of disorganized remnants of a Nazi army was a test to determine which had more stamina—men or machines. Spearhead men, trained to care for their machines first, served the iron monsters with the deference due to pagan gods.

In the headlong dash, supply trains accomplished marvels of movement. Often these "rear echelon" troops were forced to fight a path through enemy-held territory to deliver their important cargoes of gas, ammo and rations. At one time, the trucks were hauling gas 200 miles overland.

The 143rd Armd. Sig. Co. strung 1200 miles of wire by the closing of the Argentan-Falaise gap alone! In the sweep across France an average of 1000 radio and personal dispatches per day were handled. The mileage of the signal men was eight and ten times the total distance covered by the division.

division was inspired by the thought that it was the spearhead of the First United States Army, and the phrase: "Call me Spearhead" became popular.

Crossing of the Seine was begun on the evening of Aug. 25 by leading elements of Combat Command Boudinot and was completed before darkness of the following day. One of the bridges had been constructed by XX Corps troops but our 23rd Armd. Eng. Bn. constructed a 540 foot steel trestleway south of Corbeil ready for use at daybreak on the 26th.

CONFIDENCE PACKS POWER

Combat Command Hickey led the advance with Boudinot on the left. After crossing the river, the command moved to Chateau en Brie, in two columns, driving through the 48th German Inf. Div. On the following day, closely pursuing the retreating enemy and overrunning several rearguards, the command passed through Coulommiers and crossed the Marne, halting for the night just north of that historic river.

A detachment was sent to Chateau Thierry, and the controversy as to who was first to enter the town began. The commander of the division's CIC detachment and the platoon detachment commander believe the honor is theirs. They had entered the town about 1500 hours on Aug. 26, and obtained from the Mayor a statement reading, "Second taking of Chateau Thierry by the Americans, all our gratitude."

By midafternoon of the 27th, Combat Command Boudinot had advanced across the Marne and, in an enveloping movement from the west, captured Meaux, furthest point of the German advance in World War I. The 9th Panzer Div., 48th Inf. Div., and security battalions were encountered and routed here.

On Aug. 28, one of the busiest days in the division's history, Combat Command Boudinot plunged on toward Soissons. So rapid was the advance that the enemy front line in many cases became only the width of the road.

Many German units closed in behind each advancing column, but they were doomed to destruction. Result, however, was that every element of the division, including even the trains, became a combat unit. Soissons was taken later that night, suffered a setback by 20 miles, 1000.

Meanwhile all had not been peaceful at the division CP. On Aug. 26, after crossing the Seine, it reached Quincy, but not before withdrawing Germans were encountered.

The following day the CP caught up with a German supply column at Brié Comte Robert, took part in a fight, and moved to Mangy le Hongre. At dawn the CP awoke to the familiar rattle of German machine gun fire. An enemy convoy attempting to drive through the area was destroyed.

HOW TO CATCH A TRAIN

The shooting-up of three trains in the vicinity of Braisne and Soissons on Aug. 28 was a division highlight. By coincidence both combat commands participated. "B" Battery of the 486th AA Bn., attached to the 67th F. A. Bn., fired on the engine of one 42-car train at Braisne, stopped it after putting a 37mm shell through the engine boiler and raxing the cars with .50 caliber machine-gun fire.

Elements of the 32nd Armd. Regt. of Combat Command Hickey stopped another train at Braisne at about 2000 hours, and engaged Mark VI Tiger tanks loaded on flat cars.

Task Force I (Lovelady) of Combat Command Boudinot took part in a third episode, destroyed a freight train just west of Soissons.

Villiers Cottrets, which Combat Command Boudinot had passed, was reoccupied by the Germans on Aug. 29, impeding the division advance and resulting in the heaviest action on the corps front that day. By nightfall, however, the CP was located outside Soissons. A German ammunition dump estimated at 4000 truckloads, was taken at Villiers Cottrets.

On Aug. 29, the crossings of the Aisne River were secured. Both Combat Commands advanced to take high ground to the northeast of the river, Boudinot-liberated Laon as well. Chief enemy resistance on the 30th was reported in the vicinity of Montcornet and Rozoy, with the 4th Cav. Gp. active in reconnoitering these areas.

NEW DIRECTION: EAST TO NORTH!

Given the mission of taking Sedan and Charleville on Aug. 31, the Combat Commands moved out, Hickey on the right, Boudinot on the left, division reserves in the center. At 1315 hours word came from the CG of the VII Corps. The direction of the advance had been completely changed, from due east to north!

"You could hear the brakes squeal when we radio'd the order to halt!" one staff officer said. Some of the elements already had driven 30 miles prior to the command.

most spectacular ever performed by the division. At the time the change in direction of attack was given, two of the six columns already had engaged the enemy. The entire change in plan was accomplished by voice and radio without the writing of a word other than entries into journals.

Mons was the new objective. Combat Command Boudinot was to advance to Vervins, Hickey to Sergincourt and Rozy sur Serre. Combat Command Boudinot reached Marie that very day.

A six-pronged drive was launched toward Mons on Sept. 1 with Combat Commands on a broad front, from left to right, Boudinot, Hickey, and a separate command to the right, which centered around the 36th Armd. Inf. Regt.

Combat Command Hickey pushed on to Avesnes while Boudinot pounded through Vervins, passed LaCapelle, and by nightfall was due west of Avesnes. Several river crossings were made during the day, and air support had been called to bomb a number of enemy columns. Elements of the 36th Infantry's Combat Command had been delayed, but late in the day reached Hirson.

In the early hours of Sept. 2, the first flying bombs passed over the heads of division troops. They were not the last.

On the afternoon of Sept. 2 the first elements of the 3rd Armd. Div. crossed the Belgian border. Maubeuge had been passed earlier in the day and, when the commander of the

task force had been asked, via radio, whether the enemy was there, he replied that there were so many joyous civilians on the streets that there wasn't room for Germans!

THREE GENERALS, 40,000 TROOPS

THE second great battle for Mons was not anticipated by either the Wehrmacht or the American First Army, and yet it probably decided the outcome of future battles more profoundly than had any other action in which this division had engaged. The estimated 40,000 German troops cut off at Mons by this division and further mauled and rounded up by the ensuing 1st Inf. Div. were attempting to retreat to the Siegfried Line. Their organization shattered, and without communication, the vanguard of this huge force ran into road blocks of the 3rd Armd. Div. on Sept. 3. The debacle that followed was complete.

The Spearhead captured nearly 8000 troops at Mons, killed many more. The 1st Inf. Div., supporting the armor, captured 17,000 more. One platoon of the 703rd TD Bn., Co. "A," destroyed 20 enemy armored vehicles in six hours on a single road block!

Three German general officers were captured by the division in this battle! Lt. Gen. Ludiger von Heyking, of the 6th Luftwaffe Field Div., who said that he had been "completely surprised by our forces" because he had been advised that there was a "15 mile escape gap" south of Mons; Maj. Gen.

Hubertus von Aulock, ex-commander of a Kampfgruppe which was supposed to defend Paris; Gen. Karl Walle, once garrison commander of the city of Hamburg.

Prisoners constituted a vexing problem. Maj. Charles Kapes, Provost Marshal, set up a PW enclosure in an old sugar factory close to the fighting area. With prisoners pouring in by the hundreds, and nearly 4000 already confined, Maj. Kapes and a force of 16 division MP's and 27 infantrymen from the 1st Div. waged a pitched battle against attacking German soldiers, not only turning back the attack but capturing 300 more of the befuddled supermen!

ON TO GERMANY!

By noon of Sept. 4 matters had become somewhat stabilized around Mons and the division pushed on to Namur: Combat Command Boudinot on the right, Hickey on the left.

Task Force Mills (Maj. Herbert Mills) of Combat Command Boudinot reached Namur that day. Combat Command Hickey bivouaced that night east of Charleroi, and Combat Command Boudinot, which had allotted 45 minutes for passage through the city, took two hours and 45 minutes. Advance had been delayed by the tumultuous welcome of the citizens.

Next day all elements of the division were in the vicinity of Namur and that night engineers pushed two bridges across the Sambre and Meuse Rivers. The first bridge measured

120 feet long; the second, constructed in seven hours and 20 minutes, was built under the cover of darkness. Combat Command Boudinot's Task Force (King) was detached to aid the 9th Div. at Dinant.

Terrain east of Mons was a far cry from the wide plains of northern France. In Belgium narrow valleys with swift running streams split precipitous wooded hills. Densely populated and highly industrial, the valleys were capable—if properly manned—of easy defense.

Liege was the new objective. By nightfall, Huy, with the Meuse bridges intact, was in our hands and Combat Command Hickey was within quick calling distance at Antheit, and Boudinot's leading elements were already beyond the town. Task Force Hagon encountered stiff resistance from by-passed troops.

It was apparent the Germans were preparing hasty defenses along the river route. Next day Combat Command Boudinot, on the south side of the river, turned to the right and the high ground, and by nightfall Lt. Col. Lavelady's task force was on its objective, the southeast side of Liege. So surprised was the enemy by the flanking move that their guns were pointed the wrong way.

The night of Sept. 7, Gen. Konrad Heinrich, commander of the 89th German Inf. Div., was killed as he attempted to drive through a roadblock near Liege in a sporty convertible cabriolet.

He was the fourth German general for whom the division had accounted.

On the 8th Lt. Col. Hogan's force with supporting infantry cleared Liege of the enemy while the engineers constructed 510 feet of trestle bridge across the river in darkness. Combat Command Hickey meanwhile mopped up on the north side of the river.

Gen. Bock von Wulffingen, a fifth German general, was captured on the 8th.

VERVIERS ENDS LULL

With Verviers the objective, Combat Command Boudinot set out at 1100 hours on the 9th, met organized opposition for the first time in days. Meanwhile Combat Command Hickey crossed to the east of the Meuse, advancing to the high ground north of Dison also against opposition. Our air attacked German columns stretching from Louvaine to Limbourg, and by that night leading elements of the 33rd Armd. Regt. were in Pepinster.

The following day Combat Command Hickey reached Limbourg where it was temporarily stopped. Boudinot found many felled trees beyond Theux but advanced and took Verviers. At Theux was found a German military warehouse

filled with foodstuffs and tobacco, providing 3rd Div. men with cigars. That day the division CP moved to Verviers.

Eupen, falling to Combat Command Boudinot on the 11th, was occupied by the infantry. Combat Command Hickey knifed through Lohrville and Welkenraedt against constant pressure to an objective northwest of Eupen. The 83rd Armd. Rcn. Bn. screened the division's movement, and air cover was provided.

VFOR-VICTORY signs, flowers and "vive l'Amérique" declarations disappeared. Eupen was a sullen, paradoxical town. A few Belgian flags hung from the windows; the white banner of surrender trailed in others. This was border country, a place of conflicting emotions, bitter hatred—and suspense. Last stop in Belgium. The somber-eyed German civilians of Eupen glanced furtively at the triumphant armor of America and wondered whether the vaulted West Wall could possibly halt the avalanche.

Immediately, Gen. Rose ordered reconnaissance to patrol the routes toward the Siegfried Line, to reconnoiter for crossing points and to determine the strength of the enemy.

Recon elements of Combat Command Boudinot set out at 0800 on Sept. 12. Several routes were surveyed, and one finally chosen. The advance was barred by road blocks of imbedded steel rails and gates of heavy cables strung across the road. The obstacles were covered by fire from heavy pillboxes on the flanks.

Excellent coordination between tanks, infantry, engineers and artillery, quickly reduced these strongpoints. While artillery and tanks maintained heavy fire, engineers attached to the task force moved forward to remove the blocks. Tanks rumbled through the gap and at 1451 hours leading elements of Col. Loyelady's task force were on German soil. It was the first invasion of Germany in force since Napoleon. Resistance in Raetgen was light. The 83rd Rcn. Bn. occupied the town, outposted it immediately.

INSIDE HITLER'S REICH

Meanwhile, Combat Command Hickey also had plunged into Germany proper, and on the night of Sept. 12-13 had assembled in the concealment of the Aachen-Eynatten Wald. Patrols reconnoitered the dragon's teeth of the line during the night, and the attack jumped off at 1000 hours under the direct supervision of Col. Doan. Infantry lunged for-

ward through the dragon's teeth, followed by engineers and tanks. Their combined efforts breached the first line and led to a heavy exchange of fire. A number of 3rd Armd. Div. tanks were knocked out and, for a time, the attack faltered. But under the inspired leadership of Col. Doan, the task force rallied and stabilized its gains. Sept. 14 was spent in mopping up the area and in reconnoitering the second line of defenses.

SEINE TO SIEGFRIED—18 DAYS

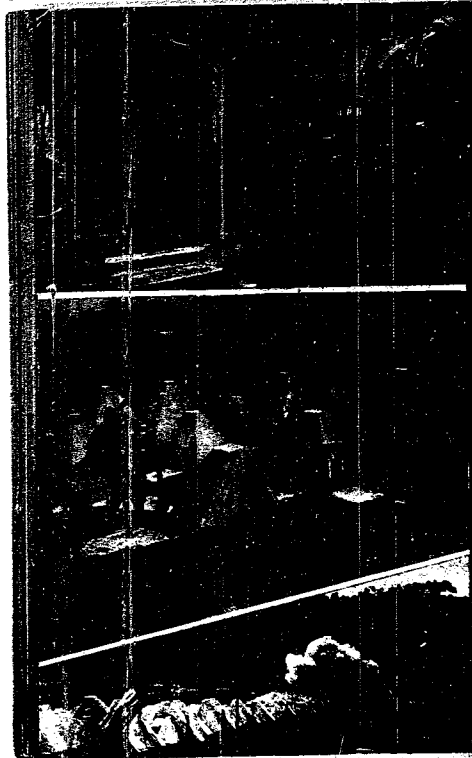
On Sept. 15 the second line of the Siegfried was breached and the town of Busbach cleared. Opposition was extremely heavy. Artillery and mortar fire became intense, but the command moved forward. Fresh enemy troops were encountered for the first time. Fortunately, the rapid advance, plus the destruction of the large German force at Mons, combined to prevent the enemy from properly manning the West Wall.

Combat Command Boudinot also had attacked the outer defenses of the line on Sept. 13 with similar success. Division engineers, invaluable in the breaching of the line said that the Siegfried defenses were not a particularly intricate engineering problem. "With proper covering fire," said Col. L. G. Foster,

The 3rd Arm. Spearhead Div. had wound up one of the most amazing armored force operations in the history of warfare. Eighteen days from the Seine to the Siegfried! And now, in a final, powerful burst of effort the division had smashed completely through that storied West Wall into the confines of greater Germany. With the 1st, the 4th, and the 9th Inf. Divs., all elite units of American power, these men who had first grappled with the enemy only two months before, had now become part of the "First Team of the First Army." They were a power in the world. They were the steel nearest to Germany's heart.

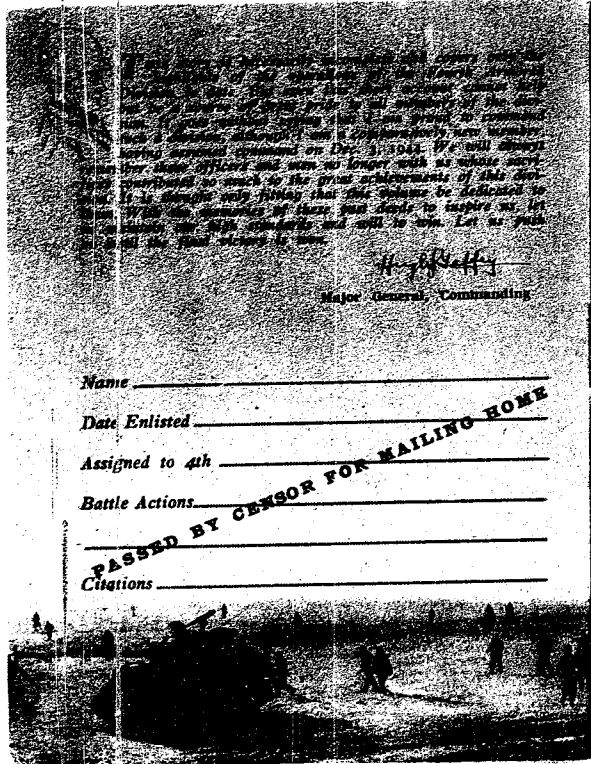
Behind the 3rd lay the long, bitterly-contested trail from Normandy and the never to be forgotten dead of the division. Before the 3rd lay the Third Reich of Adolf Hitler. The Spearhead paused, with its steel point unerringly aimed at Berlin.







1944-1945



The outstanding celerity of your movement and the unremitting, vicious and skillful manner in which you pushed the attack, terminating at the end of four days and nights of incessant battle in the relief of Bastogne, constitute one of the finest chapters in the glorious history of the United States Army. You and the officers and men of your command are hereby commended for a superior performance.

Hugh J. Gaffey

Major General, Commanding

Name _____
Date Enlisted _____
Assigned to 4th _____
Battle Actions _____
Citations _____

PASSED BY CENSOR FOR MAILING HOME

THE STORY OF THE *4th Armored* DIVISION

THE outstanding celerity of your movement and the unremitting, vicious and skillful manner in which you pushed the attack, terminating at the end of four days and nights of incessant battle in the relief of Bastogne, constitute one of the finest chapters in the glorious history of the United States Army. You and the officers and men of your command are hereby commended for a superior performance.

—LT. GEN. GEORGE S. PATTON, JR., COMMANDER, THIRD U.S. ARMY, IN A LETTER TO MAJ. GEN. HUGH J. GAFFEY.

FOUR medium tanks roared up the tree-lined roadway. Machine guns sprayed the snow-custed evergreens. Dark enemy forms ran and fell as red tracers played among them.

A concrete blockhouse ringed by pines loomed ahead of the onrushing tanks. First Lt. Charles Boggess, Jr., Greenville, Ill., commander of the lead tank, spotted the emplacement from the open hatch of his Sherman. Down in the turret, Cpl. Milton Dickerman, Newark,



N. J., traversed the sights of his 75 on the blockhouse, kicked the trigger. The tank bounced from the recoil as the shell crashed into the concrete.

The breach of the 75 slammed shut as Pvt. James G. Murphy, Bryan, Tex., the loader, slapped in another round. Pvt. Hubert Smith, Cartersville, Ga., driver of the tank *Cobra King*, tromped on the throttle, squinted through his dirt-splattered periscope as the medium rolled up to the smoking blockhouse. Bow Gunner Pvt. Harold Hafner, Arlington, Wash., kept the hot barrel of his machine gun trained on the woods.

In the open fields beyond the pines, Lt. Boggess saw red, yellow and blue supply parachutes sprinkle the snow like confetti. He halted his clattering mediums.

"Come here, come on out!" he shouted to khaki-clad figures in foxholes. "This is the 4th Armored!"

No answer. Helmeted heads peered suspiciously over carbine sights. The tanker bellowed again. A lone figure emerged.

"I'm Lt. Webster of the 326th Engineers, 101st Airborne," the paratrooper said. "Glad to see you."

At 1645, Dec. 26, 1944, the 4th Armd. Div. had reached another objective—Bastogne.

Twenty-five minutes later, Maj. Gen. Anthony G. McAuliffe (then Brig. Gen.), commanding the 101st Airborne Div., shook hands with Lt. Col. Creighton W. Abrams, Agawam, Mass., and Capt. William A. Dwight, Grand Rapids, Mich., to celebrate the relief of Bastogne.

Col. Abrams, 37th Tank Bn. commander, and Capt. Dwight of his staff were close behind Lt. Boggess in the tank rush that pierced the last German defenses south of the beleaguered town.

Tanks of the 37th, along with the 33rd Armd. Inf. Bn., were the point of the 4th's spearhead into Bastogne. Behind them rolled ambulances and supply trucks for 101st paratroopers and tankers of the 9th and 10th Armd. Divs. holding the town.

THE relief of Bastogne added another battle to the brilliant campaign record of 4th Armd. In six months of fighting, the division had spearheaded virtually every Third Army offensive. Territory wrested from the Wehrmacht stretched from Normandy's hedgerows to the Reich border at the Sarre.

Fourth Armd. swept south in the Normandy breakthrough, cut off the Brittany peninsula, wheeled east across the heart of France over the Moselle into Lorraine, fought across the Sarre and struggled north in mud through the Maginot line to the German border.

It then made a 120-mile "fire call" run to smash back von Rundstedt's divisions in the Ardennes.

The last stretch to Bastogne was tough, covering the hardest 16 miles the division ever made. From Dec. 22, 1944, until Jan. 9, 1945, the 4th battled elements of nine German divisions and two brigades.

Four days after the division started for Bastogne, its tanks were in the city. Behind hard-fighting tankers lay the wreckage of the 5th German Para Div. Deter-

miped Nazi paratroopers who rode the breakthrough panzers into Luxembourg and Belgium were to hold the south flank of the German wedge below Bastogne.

They were in the path of the 4th Armd. Most of the Para division was demolished. More than 2000 were killed or wounded, another 2000 captured.

THE PATH TO

Bloody BASTOGNE

THE drive to encircle Bastogne began in a feathery snowfall at 0600, Dec. 22. Fourth Armd. tanks and half-tracks that had raced from French Lorraine to Arlon, Belgium, moved out in darkness.



With the 4th rode the attack of Third Army. III Corps was the first Third Army Corps to tear into the German flank from the south. In the van of the Corps was the 4th, on its right the 26th and 80th Inf. Divs.

The clatter of their tracks muffled in the deepening snow, Combat Commands A and B drove north astride the road from Arlon to Bastogne. Brig. Gen. Holmes E. Dager's CC B pushed 10 miles to Buron by midnight.

On the right, CC A, commanded by Brig. Gen. Herbert Earnest, whipped four miles to Martelange.

CC A jumped off from Heinstert, CC B from Habay-la-Vieille. These little villages are difficult to find on a map, but the 4th will remember them and others—all the towns, hills and woods on the road to Bastogne.

Somewhere ahead on that road the enemy waited in snow and fog that cloaked his onrushing panzers. Next day he was found. Skies cleared, frost hardened the ground. Conditions were tailor-made for tanks and planes. Seven fighter-bomber groups, 11 medium-bomber groups and one division of 8th Air Force and elements of the Royal Air Force took to the air in support of Third Army.

Thunderbolts hurled bombs scant yards ahead of Shermans, then returned at antenna level with machine guns crackling. Enemy resistance was thickening. Road blocks, craters, blown bridges barred the way.

In an all-out effort, the 4th's Reserve Command under Col. Wendell Blanchard, Lowell, Mass., entered the fight on the east flank of CC A. That afternoon, Reserve Command's 37th Tank and 53rd Armd. Inf. Bns. attack Bigonville. In a battle raging until late next day, the Luxembourg village was taken.

Paratroopers of one German division held the village and surrounding woods. Armored infantrymen dug them out with bayonets as tankers wrecked and burned buildings. Three hundred and fifty 'chutists were killed, 300 taken prisoner. A Sherman tank, two 40mm anti-aircraft guns, four 81mm mortars, small arms and ammunition, all U.S. equipment used by Nazis, were destroyed.

The 8th Tank Bn., commanded by Lt. Col. Albin F. Irzyk, Salem, Mass., and the 10th Armd. Inf. Bn., under Maj. Harold Cohen, Spartanburg, S.C., smashed into Chaumont Dec. 23. The 35th Tank and 51st Armd. Inf. Bns. fought along the Martelange highway toward Bastogne. The 35th, commanded by Lt. Col. Delk Oden, Hugo, Okla., and the 51st, led by Lt. Col. Dan C. Alanis, Ennis, Tex., took Warnach.

Fourth Armd. slugged toe-to-toe against tank-supported troops next day. Despite heavy casualties, the enemy clung tenaciously. The hillside village of Chaumont, which was to change hands three times before the rubble heaps were taken, was counter-attacked by strong German tank and infantry forces.

More infantry was needed to pry Nazi machine gunners and bazooka teams from the timbered hills and thick-walled villages, so the 1st and 2nd Bns., 318th Regt., 80th Inf. Div., were brought from Luxembourg Dec. 24.



to support CC A and CC B. The 9th Armd. Div.'s CC A was attached to the 4th and moved up on the west.

At 0200 Christmas Day, Reserve Command pulled a quick shift. It marched 30 miles from Bigonville to the division's west flank. By 0700, Reserve Command was at Bercheaux, ready to launch a surprise attack.

P-47s filled the Christmas sky with bombs and bullets. Reserve Command took Vaux-les-Rosieres, Petite Rosieres, Nives and Remoiville. CC B retook Chaumont and drove north of Grandrue. Hallange fell to CC A. The 53rd crowded artillery barrages into Remoiville, flushed out houses with flame-throwers. Fifty Germans were killed, 42 wounded, 427 taken prisoner.

Christmas afternoon, light and medium tanks of the 35th outflanked the Melch woods on the Arlon-Bastogne road and wiped out a company of paratroopers. Hit by tank machine gun bursts, scores of enemy casualties crumpled in the snow.

Fourth Armd. MPs have maintained a perfect record in handling prisoners. None has ever escaped. The record almost was marred that night when a German plane swooped down over housetops as MPs were searching 220 prisoners. During the commotion, prisoners fled into barns and houses.

One German officer and several men charged Pfc Paul J. Carrafiello, Tuckahoe, N.Y. The MP blazed away with a machine gun, dropping the officer just short of the gun and spraying the others. All prisoners were flushed from their hiding places.

The drive gathered speed next day. Reserve Command

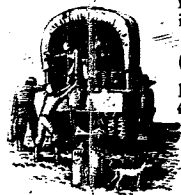
struck again. Infantry and tanks punched Remichampagne while supporting artillery plastered the village and nearby Bois de Cohet.

As armor rolled forward, Thunderbolts swooped into the scrap. P-47s blasted, raked the woods and town 200 yards in front of advancing half-tracks. German guns and crews were blasted before they could fire a shot. By noon, Remichampagne was cleared, and tankers surged northeast to seize high ground near Clochimont. Bastogne was three miles beyond.

As vehicles assembled on the slope south of Clochimont, hundreds of C-47 transports thundered low over tanks. Crammed with cargo they flew slowly, like flocks of fat geese, toward Bastogne. The sky erupted with flak. Anti-aircraft crackled, and white puffs burst overhead.

Tankers watched as transports dropped multi-colored supply chutes over the town. Col. Abrams and Lt. Col. George L. Jaques, Worcester, Mass., of the 53rd, conferred with their officers. Tanks had expended their high explosive 75mm shells, machine gun ammunition was low. But the men, who had seen how badly Bastogne needed supplies, were ready to push on.

"This is it," Col. Abrams said, a cold cigar clenched in the corner of his mouth, "We're going into Bastogne!"



COMPANIES moved into position to assault Assenois, last village before Bastogne. Col. Abrams swept his arm forward as the advance signal, and the

final assault jumped off at 1515 from a crossroads 500 yards south of Clochimont. Flanks secured, companies of the 37th and 53rd rushed Clochimont and approached Assenois. *Cobra King*, shell-scarred command tank of Co. C, led the column of mediums and half-tracks, pounding up the road with all guns firing.

Four American artillery battalions slammed barrages into Assenois and the edge of the woods beyond. The division's 94th, 22nd and 66th Armd. Arty. Bns. dropped in 105mm shells, and a supporting battalion lobbed 155mm howitzers.

Fourth Armd. men know the cheapest way to attack with artillery is to lean into barrages while the enemy keeps his head down. They drove into shell bursts as the ground pitched and houses spilled into the street. They took their casualties—a burned half-track, two killed, four wounded—and charged toward Bastogne.

The first four tanks drew ahead of the column as half-tracks slowed to pick their way through



smoke and debris. Co. C's four mediums rolled along with their machine guns sweeping the wooded ridge. They burst through to the 101st's outer defenses before Germans in the forest could act.

But the gap in the column gave Nazis their chance. Teller mines were hurled onto the road while German bazooka teams closed in. In the dusk, a half-track hit a mine. Capt. Dwight jumped from his turret to help doughs remove the mines. The column darted forward against bazookas, machine pistols, more mines. Four half-tracks exploded and burned. Crews fought on foot. With tank support, they battled all the way to the 101st.

Meanwhile, Co. B, 53rd Armd. Inf., mopped up flaming Assenois with the aid of light tanks from the 37th. Three hundred and eighty prisoners were taken, including battalion and regimental staff officers. More than 100 others were killed. Four 88mm A/T guns and crews were captured before they could fire a shot.

A battery of 105mm howitzers, one 40mm and two 37mm anti-tank guns, five half-tracks and two armored cars were captured or destroyed. This was the payoff of the swift attack through the artillery fire.

But the fight was not over. Trucks and ambulances for the 101st could not move through the heavy enemy fire from woods lining the road.



First Lt. Frank Kutak, Astoria, N.Y., hobbling on a leg stiffened by a bullet graze, led Co. A, 53rd, into the woods at midnight. Patches of moonlight and bursts from machine pistols lighted the area where armored doughs fought for three hours. They attacked without artillery support because Germans were too close to the 101st. Heavy machine guns and 60mm mortars firing in battery provided the only cover.

Next morning, 30 German dead were found in their foxholes. Twelve of the troublesome heavy bazookas and two 75mm guns were captured.

NEW TO WAR, BUT

Battle-Wise

VETERANS

THE road was open. Of the nine roads and two railroads running into Bastogne, this path cracked by the 4th was the only link with the outside. The first of 200 trucks and ambulances poured into Bastogne at 0500, Dec. 27. Hundreds of wounded defenders of Bastogne were evacuated that day.

CC B, battling to the east of the roadway, cleared a swath to the north. The 10th Armd. Inf. also reached Bastogne's perimeter defenses. CC A, with the 35th Inf. Div. on its east flank, hammered against the heavy

resistance that blocked the Arlon-Bastogne highway until Dec. 29. Although Bastogne no longer was besieged, the battle had not ended.

German reaction was swift, furious. Fourth Armd. had made the Bastogne road hub an offensive center. Nazi divisions swarmed to the corridor like wasps to a broken hive.

Dec. 30, the east flank of the corridor rocked from the crushing attack of a panzer division supported by elements of two Volksgrenadier divisions and remnants of the Para division. The enemy drove to Lutrebois, 1200 yards from the main highway.

The weather was murky, but 1st Lt. Robert E. Pearson, Highland Park, Mich., was flying observation in his Cub for the 22nd Armd. FA. Below, tanks were skirting the edge of the woods at Lutrebois. Lt. Pearson swooped down to 75 feet. The tanks looked German. Machine gun and rifle fire flashing past his cockpit confirmed it.

The lieutenant hustled off to warn the 35th. He marked the panzer's position on a map, dropped it to tankers. First Lt. John Kingsley, Dunkirk, N.Y., placed his six mediums in ambush. As the Mark Vs poked into the open with their flanks toward the Shermans, gunners let them have it.

Panthers surged forward in twos and threes past their own burning tanks while Shermans socked them from turret defilade. Eleven German tanks strayed out. All were destroyed without a scratch to Co. B's six mediums.



"If that German tank company commander isn't dead I wish they would make him a battalion commander," the lieutenant said. "I wish they were all that dumb."

Artillery, directed by Lt. Pearson, also worked over the panzers, set two more vehicles afire. Fourth Armd., 35th Inf. Div., and Thunderbolts braving the low ceiling, knocked out 55 tanks that day.

Stopped cold, the Germans clung to the Lutrebois pocket. They kept it for more than a week at terrific cost. The 4th's three artillery battalions poured the heaviest barrage they had ever fired into the small area.

From Dec. 30 to Jan. 6, a total of 24,483 rounds of 105 mm howitzers cascaded into Lutrebois and the woods north and east. The New Year came in with a bang as armored artillerymen greeted it with 7000 shells on Dec. 31. The 66th FA alone fired 3046 rounds.

The corridor held. Impaled on Bastogne, the German offensive sputtered, then died. Von Rundstedt pulled back his 5th and 6th Panzer Armies and his infantry.



At the end of the battle, the 4th Armd. Div. could figure up what it had done to the Wehrmacht in six months of combat. It had taken 19,221 prisoners up to Jan. 7, 1945, killed and wounded as many, destroyed 414 tanks, 1618 vehicles and 225 artillery pieces. Twenty-six German planes had fallen to division's anti-aircraft guns.

Knocking out a Panther, killing or capturing a platoon or battalion had become routine. No one, for example took particular notice of prisoner No. 19,000. No one could say who he was or who captured him.

It was different with prisoner No. 1. Everybody knew about him. He was a tall, bedraggled SS conscript, who slogged through a Normandy marsh July 26, 1944, to surrender to Co. C, 24th Armd. Engr. Bn. He was

received with curiosity by the men, with enthusiasm by intelligence officers.

War still was new to the division. The 4th had been in combat nine days and in France less than three weeks. Tough and confident after three and a half years training, it hit Utah Beach, July 11, 1944. LSTs and LCTs disgorged tanks, half-tracks and peeps off Varreville, near Ste. Mere Eglise.

By July 16, the outfit had assembled in the calvados and apple orchard country near Barneville-sur-Mer on the west side of the Cherbourg peninsula. Tankers, trained as a part of Gen. Patton's Third Army, learned with surprise they had been transferred to First Army.

Third Army was inoperative as well as top secret, so the division went to VIII Corps, First Army. From Corps, division received its first combat orders. By midnight July 17, the 4th was poised to take over the front held by the 4th Inf. Div. north of Raids, south of Carentan.

The 53rd Bn. was first into the line that warm summer night. In the first 30 hours, the battalion and division suffered its first casualties. An estimated 100 Nazi paratroopers and SS troops infiltrated the battalion's left flank. Six armored infantrymen and officers were killed, 25 wounded.



The 10th took over July 19 and pushed forward 100 yards in advance of the line held by the 4th Inf. Div. In battered Meautis, division headquarters got acquainted with 88s during a 15-minute shelling.

The narrow defensive front settled down to a mortar, machine gun and artillery exchange over swamps, hedge-rows and dead cows. Tank and TDs sat back as artillery. The 25th Cav. Recon. Sqdn., Mech., commanded by Lt. Col. Leslie Goodall, Holyoke, Mass., dismounted to fight with armored infantry.

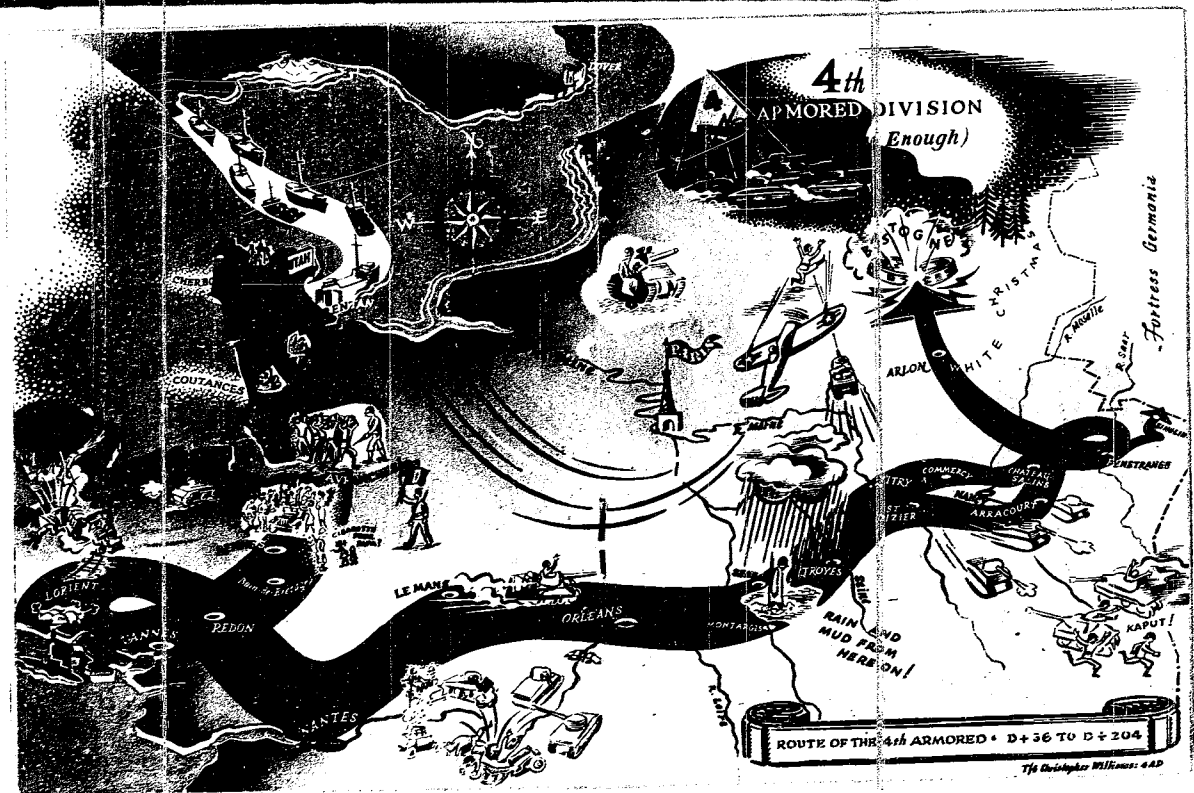
Allied forces crammed in the Normandy beachhead area got ready to hit the line July 26. The Air Corps struck first. Men of the 4th Armd. climbed from foxholes and tank turrets to watch the greatest display of air power ever witnessed up to that time. Bombs from 3000 planes rained down incessantly.

Fourth Armd. held the small sector between the 83rd Inf. Div. on the east and the 90th Inf. Div. to the west. The plan called for the doughs to pinch off the 4th's zone. Then, armor was to spring through.

Eager to hit the road in the offensive, tankers clambered from foxholes into vehicles. Led by Maj. Gen. John S. Wood, the division moved out at 0500, July 28. CC B was the point for the combat command columns. Despite mines and road blocks, tanks lurched through the rubble of Periers and swarmed into Coutances, first city to fall to CC B and the division.

American armor was rolling everywhere. The 2nd and 3rd Armd. Divs. jabbed along on the left while 6th Armd. punched to the right. It was like old home week at Fort Knox.





4th ARMORED DIVISION
(Enough)

ENOUGH

CHRISTMAS

RAIN AND MUD FROM HERE ON!

KAPUT!

Fortress Germania

ROUTE OF THE 4th ARMORED • D+56 TO D+204

The Christopher Milkens: 4AD



Bastogne Gmiate



Bastogne Krauts



"WHO ARE YOU?"
"Georgie's Boys!"

FROM Coutances, the 4th swept southward in three columns, overrunning La Haye Pesnel and approaching Avranches. CC B's headquarters, bivouacked just north of Avranches and 200 yards from the main road, almost was run down during the night by a long German column withdrawing south.

As the enemy attempted to pull out, men like Pvt. William "Red" Whitson, Indianapolis, were waiting for them. A Co. B, 53rd, machine gunner, Whitson had his gun set up at a bend in the road.

A column pulled up to him before he fired. He knocked out 25 vehicles, left 50 Germans sprawling on the road in a tangle of plunging horses. Confused by the deadly fire, more than 500 Germans eventually surrendered to Co. B. The Distinguished Service Cross awarded to Whitson was the first to an enlisted man in the division.

Disorganized and terrified by the 4th's slashing advances, Nazis began wholesale flight. The "rat race" was on.

Racing armored columns littered roads with burning vehicles and German casualties. More than 2000 pris-

oners were taken at Avranches. Co. A, 46th Med. Bn. alone treated 123 German wounded there.

Parts of the Wehrmacht escaped the tankers, cavalry and armored infantry, headed south to surrender to following artillery battalions, or to medics—or anyone—just to get safely out of the way. Column after column of disarmed prisoners, led by their own non-coms, marched back without guards to PW enclosures.

By July 31, all dams and bridges across the Selune River to the southeast as far as Ducey were secured. The division's PW bag numbered more than 3000.

In five days, the 4th had smashed the German 77th, 91st and 243rd Inf. Divs., wiped out the 6th Para Regt. and dealt severe losses to the 5th Para Div. The last-named, rebuilt from scratch, was to confront the 4th again at Bastogne. Elements of the 2nd SS Panzer Div. also took a drubbing.

“WHO are you?” recon men of another armored division shouted as a company of the 4th's M-4s swept along in the swirling dust.

“Georgie's boys!” the tank commanders yelled back.

And they were. On Aug. 1, Gen. Patton's Third Army became operational. VIII Corps and 4th Armd. became part of Third Army as the division roared into Brittany.

With CC A leading, the division plunged 54 miles to Rennes, ancient Breton capitol. Smacking nests of emplaced anti-tank and aircraft guns north of the city, tanks wheeled wide to the west and south. CC A raced

through Bain de Bretagne while CC B struck Redon. Roads and communications from the Rennes nerve center were cut, the enemy thrown into panic. The field-grey hordes withdrew. A combat team including 8th Inf. Div. doughs occupied the city, Aug. 3.

The next slash severed the Brittany peninsula. At 1400, Aug. 3, CC A moved from Bain de Bretagne. Seven hours and 70 miles later, the 4th had routed the enemy's 16th Security Regt. guarding Vannes and had taken the city and the airfield to the northeast.

From this port, tankers glimpsed the ocean. Brest peninsula was cut through. Brittany seethed with thousands of armor-stunned enemy. The division which had outraced infantry support was an armored island in a sea of enemies. Tanks and armored cars shepherded supply columns over long, empty stretches of road.

Remnants of a French paratrooper battalion, which had dropped in Brittany with peeps on D-Day, joined tankers. The FFI enthusiastically offered its support.

Then, both combat commands moved on the U-boat base of Lorient, 30 miles west. After a race for the bridges across the Blavet, tanks contained the big port, Aug. 7. On the way, they wiped out a horse cavalry outfit, the 281st Ost Cav. Bn.

German army and navy forces in the heavily fortified city outnumbered



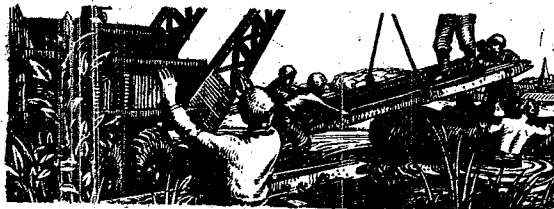
tankers four to one; the 4th tried to bluff them into surrender. Although unsuccessful in this, the 4th did take 4653 prisoners in 12 days and nailed down the escape door. In March, 1945, nine months later, dwindling German troops still held on, hopelessly surrounded.

A MARATHON AT *Sprint* SPEED

TANKS wheeled east. Nantes, on the Loire, was taken Aug. 10 by CC A after an 80-mile march from Lorient. Four days later, CC A had pushed 153 miles to St. Calais, refueled, and six hours later stood before Orleans. By dark, the combat command reached Ormes and captured the airport.

Next morning CC A cracked into Orleans, then turned it over to the 35th Inf. Div.

When 4th Armd. came under XII Corps Aug. 15,



Lorient was left to the 6th Armd. Div. CC B began its longest continuous march. The columns drove east 264 miles in 34 hours before halting at Prunay, south of Vendome.

A small task force, with the mission of destroying bridges, engaged in something like a naval battle along the gentle valley of the Loire River. The column, commanded by Maj. Edward Bautz, Dumont, N. J., was moving on the north bank near Amboise when it spied a German column on the opposite bank. The 4th opened fire with everything from tommyguns to 75s. Germans, trapped between high ground and the river, suffered heavy losses.

Assembled near Orleans, the division resumed its drive east Aug. 21. The same afternoon, CC A sped into the heart of Sens to secure a crossing of the Yonne River. Five railroad trains, 50 carloads of diesel oil and 300 tons of food were seized.

Fourth Armd., as south flank and spearhead of Third Army, now was far east and south of Paris. Tankers had outflanked the French capital and sealed off German forces south of the Loire.

Historic river barriers, moats of France, were falling quickly to armor. CC B captured Courtenay, then moved on Montargis from the east. Evacuation of the city was forced Aug. 23. Without pausing, the division secured a bridgehead across the Seine at Troyes three days later after a savage fight.

Armored vehicles, commanded by Lt. Col. Arthur L. West, Stillwater, Okla., spread in open desert formation

and charged down a three and a half mile slope under heavy fire. An SS brigade and supporting troops totaling 3000 Germans were routed and a Nazi general captured.

Three days later, CC A stormed across the Marne River to capture Vitry le Francois. Chalons-sur-Marne, St. Dizier and Ligny fell. Light tanks racing through torrential rain led an attack into Commercy, captured the bridge across the Meuse and the high ground opposite the river. This country meant more trouble for engineers. The 24th Armd. Engr. Bn. fought, sweated to keep columns rolling.

Fourth Armd. finally stopped—not for blown bridges,



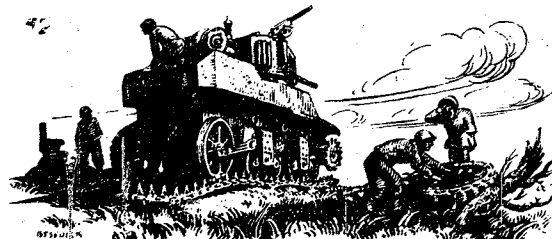
or 88s—but for gasoline. The division had been burning captured fuel and gasoline delivered by transport planes. Maps and shells also had been flown to the outfit. When the overall gasoline supply problem became critical, higher headquarters halted the drive. The division had run a marathon at sprint speed. In the seven weeks since Normandy, the 4th had thrown a 700-mile right hook across the heart of France.



...Germans are frightened by your superior equipment, frightened by your more skillful tactics, and above all frightened by your magnificent courage and will to win. Since the beginning of your historic drive through Orleans to the east, the Fourth Armored Division has met its assigned tasks with the greatest distinction. The manner in which it seized successfully the towns of Sens, Troyes, Vitry le Francois and Commercy and assisted in the capture of Montargis and Chalons-sur-Marne, was conspicuous evidence of its courage, its high state of combat efficiency, and the aggressive spirit of its leaders. In the establishing, defending and enlarging of our bridgehead across the Moselle, all members of the division have conducted themselves in a manner of which they may well be proud...

— MAJ. GEN. MANTON S. EDDY, COMMANDING XII CORPS, IN A LETTER TO MAJ. GEN. JOHN S. WOOD, THEN COMMANDING 4TH ARMD. DIV.

THERE was the cold, swift-running Moselle River with the Wehrmacht waiting in its "winter line" on the east bank. With two tremendous blows, the 4th smashed across it in mid-September of 1944. Mediums of the 8th Tank Bn. rumbled into the Mo-



selle Valley at Bayon, south of Nancy on Sept. 11. CC B was to make a crossing with the 35th Inf. Div.

The bridges were gone as well as the canal paralleling it on the west. First Lt. William C. Marshall, Newark, N.J., didn't wait for treadway spans. He wheeled his medium tank platoon to the canal's edge, fired 75s into the opposite bank to break it down, then threw logs into the mud and trickle. Gunning his tank, Lt. Marshall roared down the 20-foot canal and labored triumphantly through to the other bank. He towed others of his platoon when they bogged down.

Five tanks raced downstream until the river split into three fordable channels. Water surged to the turrets as tanks plunged across the river. Climbing the bank, tankers roared ahead to smash German infantry and guns pressing back the thin bridgehead.

Two days later, CC A passed through the 80th Inf. Div. and crossed the Moselle north of Nancy at Dieulouard. Troop D, 25th Cav. fought a bloody duel with anti-tank guns and infantry to lead the way.

Fourth Armd. was loose again. Two steel columns tore into Lorraine to form a pincers about Nancy. The city fell as Germans fled east.

CC A, then commanded by Col. Clarke, punched through and rampaged behind enemy lines to Aulnois, Lemoncourt, Fresnes, Arracourt and Einville. More than 100 German tanks were destroyed, 1903 prisoners taken, as many killed. Rear echelon of Panzer Grenadier division was caught at Arracourt and wiped out.

CC B, south jaw of the pincers, gouged northeast to Chateau Salins over streams and canals. The 24th Engrs., supported by the 99th Engr. Treadway Bridge Co., floated a 168-foot bridge over the Moselle at Bayon and a 180-foot bridge over the Meurthe at Mont.

Halted by command once more to permit infantry to catch up, the 4th stopped in the Arracourt area to protect the Nancy bridgehead.

In three weeks of furious combat after crossing the Moselle, fast-shooting tankers destroyed 281 German tanks. The mammoth German Mark V tanks were knocked off by the score. The division hurled back two Panzer Brigades and a panzer division all supported by grenadiers bent on ripping apart the bridgehead.

Germans attacked in fog and rain Sept. 19, and extremely bitter fighting occurred the next four days. The first morning, more than 40 German tanks attacked from the southeast toward Moyenvic. Stopped by the 37th, the panzers swung south in groups. They drove into



the right flank of CC A. Co. C's 1st and 2nd platoons of the 704th TD Bn. charged out to meet them.

A crew commanded by Sgt. Henry R. Hartman, Wallingford, Conn., knocked out six tanks with its 76mm gun. The two TD platoons destroyed 15 tanks while losing three TDs. Battered panzers withdrew, only to attack the next day from the south. A task force from the 37th and the 10th blasted them back.

In four days, the 37th destroyed 55 Panthers, lost 14 tanks. Meanwhile, Reserve Command beat off an armored attack on Luneville.

More Panthers crept under cover of fog to the 25th's bivouac near Juvelize Sept. 22. Although hopelessly outgunned, the squadron's light tank company fought the massive Mark Vs. Seven light tanks were hit, but TDs and Shermans smashed the enemy.

On the Xanrey-Moncel line, CC B threw back infantry and tank assaults supported by a heavy artillery preparation. Twenty-one German tanks were destroyed and 300 infantrymen killed as planes, tanks, artillery and armored infantry plastered the Germans.

Tank attacks dwindled, but the 4th continued bagging several Panthers daily. Fighting flared a week later at

Hill 318. Tenth Inf. took the hill with air and artillery support, destroying 23 more tanks. The Moselle bridgehead was secure.

After 87 days of combat, the division was relieved by the 26th Inf. Div. Oct. 12. Four months before, the 4th had gone into battle confident but untried. It emerged a proud veteran with a distinguished record.



BESEDICK

4th Armored HAS A RECORD

THE cold winter rain had been falling for three weeks. Lorraine pastures were bogs, streams were rivers. With duckbill grousers on tank tracks, 4th Armored moved out Nov. 9, in a downpour. Third Army's winter offensive had begun.

Armored warfare was on a "one-tank" front—on the road — as tanks strained and stuck. Columns ground northeast toward Morhange through the sodden wreckage of German villages. The fight now was in Nazi-annexed French Lorraine.

Massed artillery hammered at armor probing German defenses. At Destry, the 8th Tank outflanked and wiped out a nest of 21 anti-tank guns without losing a single tank. Morhange was overrun. Fighting was bitter at Guebling.

A sudden shift to the south and CC B pushed to the Sarre River where the 8th Tank seized Fenetrange Thanksgiving Day. The first crossing of the Sarre was made by Troop C, 25th. Cavalrymen commanded by 1st Lt. John Keenan, Mars Hill, Me., rushed Gosselming with all guns blazing, took the bridge. Although intact, the span was mined and wired for demolition.

Pushing across the Sarre into ever deepening mud,

the 4th contacted Seventh Army troops which had driven to Strasbourg. Germans hastily threw the 130th Panzer Lehr Div. against the 4th, but tankers hurled it back, then lumbered north.

Supported in a narrow zone by as many as 14 battalions of town-flattening artillery, the 4th slogged past Sarre Union to Domfessel and Vollerdingen. In savage tank fighting, the 37th plowed through the Maginot Line to Singling Dec. 8.

Although the division was relieved two days later by 12th Armored Div., two 4th Armored units remained in combat to roll over the German border.

S/Sgt. George Poulus, Gary, Ind., platoon sergeant, Troop D, 25th Cav., took a 15-man patrol up Hill 382 south of Urweiler, Germany, Dec. 16. The same afternoon, Shermans of Co. A, 37th, chased Nazi tanks back in the woods above Rimling.

Maj. Gen. Hugh J. Gaffey, Third Army Chief of Staff, succeeded Gen. Wood as commander of 4th Armored Dec. 3. Gen. Wood, in command of the division since June 18, 1942, had brought it from Pine Camp, N.Y., to the Sarre Valley.

Gen. Gaffrey had commanded 2nd Armored Div. in Africa and Sicily before becoming Gen. Patton's Chief of Staff. It was under him that the 4th answered what tankers always will remember as "the fire call."

The division was in Corps reserve Dec. 18. Tankers heard vague reports of a two-day old German offensive up in Belgium and Luxembourg, gave it little thought. But at 2030, orders were received to march north against

the breakthrough. The combat command jumped off shortly before midnight.

CC B raced northwest through Morhange, crossed the Moselle at Pont-a-Mousson, turned north to Briey and Longwy then into Belgium to Arlon before arriving at an assembly area at Vaux-les-Rosieres. The 151-mile march had been made in 19 hours. CC B came under control of the hard-pressed VIII Corps, First Army. Next day, the 4th assembled near Arlon under III Corps. CC B returned to division without being committed.

FOURTH Armd. spent more than three years getting ready for the battle of France. The division was tempered 39 months in California, in Texas heat, in the cold of the Canadian border, in English plains. It emerged a tough, confident team. Soldiers in tanks were backed by soldiers skilled in keeping tankmen rolling.

The 126th Armd. Ord. Bn., 144th Armd. Sig. Co., 46th Med. Bn.—all were trained to help tanks, infantry, cavalry and artillery at their job. The 704th TD Bn. is a part of the division. The 489th AA Bn., in addition to its bag of 26 German planes, has killed 246 ground troops, destroyed four armored cars, 24 wagons, 15 trucks, two machine gun nests and captured 500 enemy. The 995th Treadway Bridge Co, 1st platoon of the 16th Field Hospital, 3804 QM Trk. Co., and the 444th QM Troop Transport Co., also were integral parts of the team.

Activated April 15, 1941, at Pine Camp, the 4th trained 16 months before reaching the Tennessee maneuvers in the Cumberland Mountains. Mid-November, 1942, the division moved to the vast California Desert Training Center where base camps were established near Freida and Needles.

After six months of rugged desert training, the 4th arrived at Camp Bowie, Tex., June 3, 1943, and maneuvered during a broiling summer until alerted Nov. 11 for overseas duty. Train after train left the Lone Star State from Dec. 11 to 18 to take armored troops into a frigid Massachusetts winter at Camp Myles Standish. The main body of troops sailed from Boston Dec. 29, 1943.

Eleven days later, the division disembarked in Wales and entrained for camps in Wiltshire, England. Soon the staid names of Chippenham, Trowbridge, Devizes and Bath were as familiar as Watertown, Palm Springs, Brownwood or Ft. Worth. In a final polishing, the 4th trained six months on the English downs and in the bitter winter frosts of the Salisbury and Avebury plains.

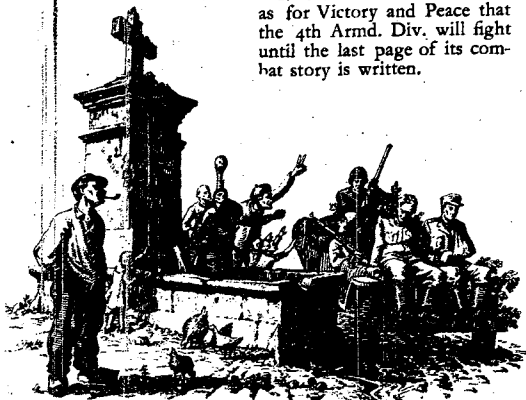
Officers and men have won one Congressional Medal of Honor, 13 Distinguished Service Crosses, 534 Silver Stars, 1955 Bronze Star Medals, 56 Air Medals and one Legion of Merit.

How well they fought is shown by the names given the 4th: "The Rolling 4th," "Flying 4th," "Phantom 4th," "Ghost Division," "Fire Alarm Division." In cool military appraisal, the Germans first called them the "American Elite Fourth Armored Division." Later, Nazi propagandists dubbed them "Roosevelt's Highest Paid Butchers."

The division, however, has never adopted a nickname. The men of the armor feel that "The Fourth Armored" is name enough—praise enough.

Some men of the 4th whose courage made the division great no longer fight beside their comrades.

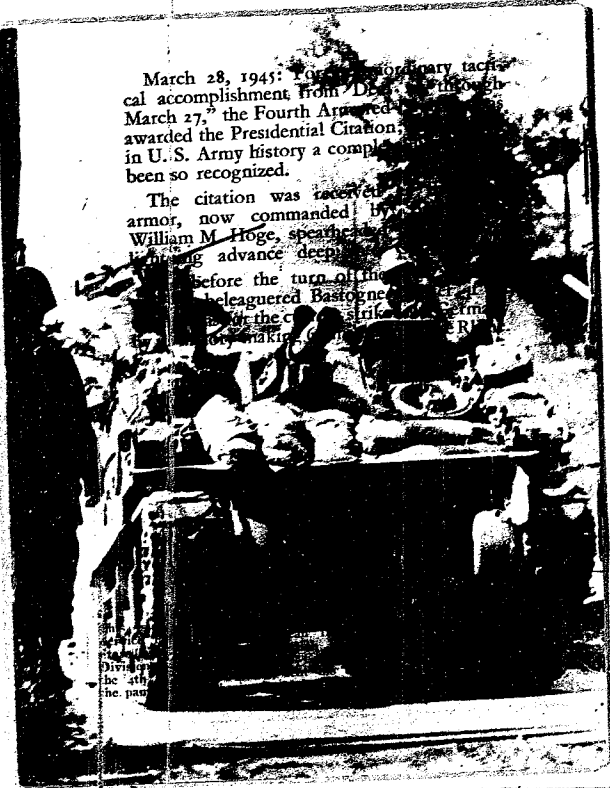
It is for these dead as well as for Victory and Peace that the 4th Armd. Div. will fight until the last page of its combat story is written.



March 28, 1945: For extraordinary tactical accomplishment from December 27 through March 27, the Fourth Armored Division was awarded the Presidential Citation, the highest honor in U. S. Army history a complete division has ever been so recognized.

The citation was received by the division commander, General William M. Hoge, speaking to the division at the time of its advance deep into the German rear.

Before the turn of the tide, the division had broken through the beleaguered Bastogne and had struck the German armor in the rear, making the German armor ineffective.



Division of the 4th Armored Division the part

**THE ROAD
TO GERMANY...**



The Story of the
5th Armored Division

This is one of a series of G.I. Stories of the Ground, Air and Service Forces in the European Theater of Operations, to be issued by the Stars and Stripes, a publication of the Information and Education Division, Special and Information Services, ETQUSA. Major General Lunsford E. Olson, commanding the 5th Armored Division, lent his cooperation to the preparation of the pamphlet, and basic material was supplied to the editors by his staff.

Name PVT HERMAN FREY

Date Enlisted APRIL 3, 1942

Assigned to 5th _____

Training _____

Battle Actions 5 CAMPAIGNS

Citations _____

PASSED BY _____ FOR MAILING HOME



[Stars and Stripes]



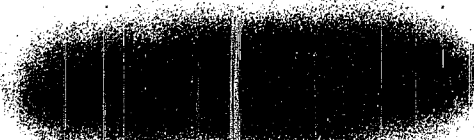
THIS is an unfinished story. The story of "The Road to Germany" can only be followed by the story of "The Road to Berlin."

Obviously this booklet can do little more than highlight the military miracles performed by the men of the 5th Armored Division in their fighting drive to and into Germany. The countless deeds of individual heroism, the many inspiring examples of devotion to duty and the willing, cheerful spirit shown by all of you can never be written.

It is in the hearts of your fighting companions—those men with whom you have shared the triumphs and despairs of this war—that your glory will be remembered forever.

Lunsford E. Olson

Major General, Commanding



"V" FOR FIFTH AND VICTORY

THE half-track was quiet as the message ticked in—"Patrols entered Germany at 1815." The date was Sept. 11, 1944.

Word flashed from Col. John T. Cole's CC B (Combat Command B) to division, to army, to the world. The

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Reich border had been cracked. Initial patrols to cross the Our River into Germany were units from the 81st Tank Bn. and 8th Cavalry Recon. Sqdn.

Other patrols followed to prepare for the grinding armored thrust of Col. Glenn H. Anderson's CC R which was later to drive completely through the German's western defense line. Brig. Gen. Eugene A. Regnier's CC A was in ready reserve.

The Victory Division lays claim to being the first able to send the historic message—Americans were fighting on German soil. The Victory Division had crashed into Germany after an 800-mile fast-fighting drive through France, Belgium, and Luxembourg.

WHEN the 5th Armored plunged into the fight in August 1944 stakes were high. Le Mans was the goal.

A XV Corps field order read: "This advance is to be pursued with the utmost energy inasmuch as on its success may hinge the success of the whole campaign in western France."

Fifth Armored tanks already were rolling swiftly southward through the newly-made gap between Coutances and St. Lo, across the Selune River and down to Vitre—a hundred miles of congested narrow roads and familiar Normandy hedgerows. The approach march began Aug. 2, after the division stripped for action during a hectic week at its assembly area near St. Sauveur le Vicomte.

Lt. Col. Kent Fay's 8th Cavalry Recon. Sqdn. streaked south to reconnoiter routes and search out possible enemy positions. Although resistance was light, the squadron encountered strong delaying action at Cosse le Vivien. After several fierce fights Aug. 6, the enemy withdrew. Next day the highway from Laval to Le Mans was clear.

Thus began the 5th Armored's spectacular 300-mile exploitation behind the German Seventh Army. Thus ended Gen. Gunther Von Kluge's hopes of stopping the Allied onrush.

In the second week of action, 5th Armored's hard-riding tankers and mounted infantrymen encircled and captured Le Mans. Tough German rear guards and scattered units were pushed north to the main body of the German Army fighting a losing battle against British and Canadians below Caen.

As the division pushed through to Argentan and Gace, Canadians from above broke through to Falaise. The now-famous Falaise trap was sprung. Artillery and fighter bombers pulverized the Germans in their wild eastward flight through the narrow gap. Result: one badly squeezed German Army was written off.

within a few days. Higher authorities acclaimed the action as the first large scale exploitation made behind enemy lines by a full armored division.

To men of the Victory Division the thrust to Argentan was 15 days and nights of long marches, of increasingly tough battles. It was refueling on the run, eating on the run, sleeping little. It meant communications almost to the breaking point.

In the first half of the operation, all three combat commands catapulted through Coutances, Gavray, Ducey and Fougeres. At Vitre they swung east toward Le Mans. CC A raced to cut the Paris highway northeast of the city, CC R blocked the roads south. Germans fled as CC B entered Le Mans Aug. 9. The 79th Inf. Div. followed to mop up.

When CC A swung around Le Mans, Lt. Marvin W. Orgill of Co. B, 34th Tank Bn., changed tanks three times rather than stop for ammunition.

At Chemire sur Sarthe, Lt. Col. William Hamburg's task force routed the enemy, captured a warehouse laden with supplies intended for the SS Panzer Div. An 81st Tank Bn. platoon led by S/Sgt. Field Morrow Kling, later commissioned a second lieutenant, left six burning German tanks in Meslay du Maine. Battle was at such close quarters a German tank rammed Kling's M-4 from the rear.

When CC A paused in Savigne l'Évêque, six German personnel carriers and a volkswagen rode headlong into the column. Engineers riddled surprised enemy from half-tracks.

Steel-tipped forces of the 5th Armored now pointed north to Argentan. Two combat commands sped to the Orne River, started bridging that night. Next morning CC A forces crossed near Ballon and CC R at Marolles. Now Sees was the objective.

Resistance stiffened. Both task forces of CC A ran into German tanks, artillery and anti-tank guns north of the river. Lt. Col. Thomas B. Bartel's task force pushed through the Germans at Dangeul. Lt. Col. William H. Burton's task force was heavily engaged at Nonans, its advance guard cut off by three 88s and infantry. Quick, accurate fire from the 47th Armd. FA, the 46th Armd. Inf.'s assault guns and 81mm. mortars ended the threat. When the Burton force reassembled that evening, it struck a German motor pool and destroyed 30 vehicles.

CC A resumed its march on Sees next morning and contacted a large German tank force at St. Remy du Plain. Tank destroyers, the 47th FA and supporting fighter planes smashed away at the enemy armor. Then Co. C of the 46th mopped up. From there the combat command by-passed the Perseigne Forest to cross the Sarthe River. Sees was liberated by mid-morning on Aug. 12.

At Mortree, Lt. Richard J. Monihan of the 46th dashed to rescue a wounded man from a knocked-out tank. While Lt. Monihan stood on the tank pulling him out, a second direct hit threw both to the ground. But the lieutenant carried the tanker 300 yards through machine gun fire to safety, firing his carbine with one hand, kill-



...red 13 more. Lt. Monihan became the first 5th Armored man to be awarded the Distinguished Service Cross.

Co. A, 34th Tank Bn., commanded by Capt. Richard E. Biederman, pushed the point of the column to Argentan and by midnight Aug. 12 was in the outskirts, its artillery shells thundering into the city.

Meanwhile, CC R overpowered stubborn enemy forces to cut a path to the north at CC A's right. At the Orne, artillery and infiltrating enemy threatened Col. Anderson's headquarters. Counterattacks threatened the CC R crossings. All were repulsed. CC B came up to take the river line, CC R headed north for Sees.

With the help of fighter-bombers and artillery, Lt. Col. Howard E. Boyer's task force dispersed German armor at Essai to win its first decisive battle.

CC R by-passed Sees Aug. 12, fought German rear guards to the northeast. CC A was similarly engaged northwest of Sees. Despite heavy anti-tank and artillery resistance and the first minefield encountered, by night-

fall two task forces of CC R blocked main highway junctions south of Le Pin au Haras and Gace.

The lower jaw of the Falaise trap snapped shut Aug. 13. CC A was ordered to establish defensive positions south of Argentan. CC B stood off counterattacks below Gace. Forces of the 85th outposted Courtoimer and Moulins le Marche patrolled northeast to Laigle. CC R blocked the roadnet east of Argentan. The 2nd French Armd. Div. cut the highway from the west.

Lt. Col. Thomas R. Bartel was wounded outside Argentan and Maj. Glenn Foote took over the 34th Tank Bn.

Artillery and planes had a field day breaking the spine of the German Seventh Army as it streamed backward through the trap.

W-SPRING OF NAZI FOR NAZIS

ON to the Seine" became the 5th Armored's battle cry Aug. 15 when the division turned over its Argentan-Gace positions to the 90th Inf. Div. and rolled east. The plan: capitalize again on speed and power of tank-infantry teams to cut off German units still west of the

Seine. The division would strike at Dreux, cross the Eure River and push north to the narrow corridor between the Eure and the Seine.

CC B drew the assignment of capturing Dreux. CC R was to cut off the city from the north and protect the division's exposed flank. CC A was in reserve.

Col. Cole's tanks and infantry, Maj. Tony Giorlando's task forces leading, raced toward Dreux Aug. 16. They came under a hail of fire from dug-in German infantry, supported by anti-tank guns, as they reached wooded approaches to the city. Lt. Sam Isaacs' rifle platoon was thrown back, reorganized, and in the wake of artillery fire from CC B's column again stormed into the woods.

As Task Force Giorlando reorganized, a German medic brought word from the city that the 500 Germans still there were ready to surrender. Col. Cole gave him a half hour to bring back the garrison—that was the last seen of the medic. When the time expired the task force pushed down a main street to find the enemy had retired to a cemetery and was shelling the city. Shells burst among the stone buildings as the first Tricolor fluttered from a church tower.

With Dreux liberated, the Victory Division turned north to batter Seventh Army remnants streaming toward the Seine. Paris lay only 50 miles to the east.

But all hopes of Paris were laid aside as the division pursued its objective—the high ground at Heudebouville near the junction of the Eure and Seine Rivers. CC A and CC B marched abreast up the narrow corridor between the two rivers. CC R and the 85th protected the

Eure flank and the rear. Artillery pounded all possible Seine crossings.

It was as though the division crunched a giant nutcracker on the enemy as he fought to escape the trap and cross the Seine before Paris and all northern France fell to the Allies.

CC R seized the heights west of Anet Aug. 19, bloodily smashed an attacking German infantry battalion supported by artillery, counterattacked at Ivry. The enemy suffered heavy losses there and at Pacy where massed artillery fire shattered a tank concentration.

CC A engineer patrol reconnoitered for Seine crossings on the 20th and next day CC B patrols found Vernon vacated by its German garrison. These and bridgehead forces of the 79th Inf. Div. were among the first Allied troops to reach the Seine. River operations were nothing new to old running mates like the 5th Armored and 79th Inf. They had fought many knotty problems along the Cumberland River during Tennessee maneuvers the year before. They were teamed, too, under XV Corps, for the Normandy operations that first put their Tennessee training to practical use.

HEAVIEST fighting in the Eure-Seine pocket was a battle that CC A started at Douains and La Heuniere Aug. 20 and carried 25 miles north to Heudebouville in five days. TDs, artillery and planes blasted through enemy armor near Douains. La Heuniere was strongly held by German tanks, AT guns and machine guns trained on a sharp turn in the road and the open slope beyond.

Capt. James W. Ray's advance guard by-passed the village and reached St. Vincent des Bois. During the night Germans slipped into the two-mile gap separating Capt. Ray's force and the main body. Lt. Col. Burton was wounded the next morning while leading a strong reconnaissance in an attempt to rejoin the two elements. However, the 46th Armd Inf. Bn. CO refused medical attention and exposed himself again to enemy fire to radio instructions to his forces. Then the advance guard and main body attacked simultaneously from north and south, wiping out all resistance at La Heuniere.

The 46th had four commanders before the day was out. Lt. Col. Scott M. Case, CC A executive officer, who took over when Lt. Col. Burton was evacuated, was wounded at Mercey in the afternoon. Then Maj. Jack B. Day took charge until Lt. Col. Kenneth P. Gilson assumed command that night. When Lt. Col. Burton returned on the 28th, Lt. Col. Gilson was given command of the 15th Armd. Inf.

CC A and CC B combined to smash a strong defensive force in wheat fields north of Champenard Ang. Task Force Day attacked from the village, at the head of CC A. Lt. Col. LeRoy H. Anderson's task force of CC B cut across from the north and moved to the right. Artillery flushed two tanks from the area. P-57s swooped down to destroy them. Tanks of Co. C, 8th Armored Division, in grain shock

with murderous fire and infantrymen of Co. C, 15th, dropped grenades in foxholes and mopped up with rifles and bayonets. Bodies of 200 SS infantrymen were counted later.

The battle raged north as CC A approached Heudebouville. Artillery and planes hammered German tank forces, supply trains, and other columns heading for the Seine. CC A's engineers and "married" B Cos.—tank and infantry companies working together—under Capt. Robert T. Bland on the night of the 23rd drove a strong enemy force off the hill at Fontaine Bellanger, only a mile below the objective.

Three forces closed in on Heudebouville next day. Maj. Giorlando's task force, attached to CC B, attacked from the left, captured Ingremare. Maj. Joseph W. Boxley's tanks and infantry drove in from the south. Capt. Bland's force completed the liberation of Fontaine Bellanger and eased into Heudebouville without opposition at 1830 hours.

The reconnaissance squadron took over in the Heudebouville-Vernon area on the 25th, and CC A and CC B moved to an area near Mantes for intensive maintenance work and rest. For them, it was the first lull in operations.

However, CC R was still in action after crossing the Mauldre River at Beynes, 12 miles west of Versailles. There Col. Anderson assembled his force on the night of Aug. 24 without a loss despite German interdicting fire and at least 100 rounds of armor piercing shells. Next day the command closed in to the south bank



of the Seine to outpost the area between Les Mureaux and Poissy.

The Eure-Seine campaign was at an end. Once again 5th Armored had struck a mighty blow at the enemy. From Mantes down the Seine to Louviers and from there up to the Eure to Dreux lay the charred wreckage of German armor and the grave of many a German soldier.

Success of this campaign was proclaimed by Lt. Gen. George S. Patton, Jr., Third Army Commander, who issued a commendation to XV Corps for securing a bridgehead east of the Seine at Mantes and preventing the Germans' escape between Mantes and Louviers.

Corps Commander Maj. Gen. Wade H. Haislip, in turn, commended the 5th Armored Div. in these words addressed to Gen. Oliver: "I desire personally to thank you and every member of your command for the splendid accomplishment of every task assigned. Your achievement as a first class fighting division is playing a large part in the liquidation of the German Army which is our eventual goal. My best wishes to you and your command for continued success."

While 5th Armored men changed tank motors and reconditioned equipment as they paused near Mantes, the 4th Inf. Div. and the 2nd French Armored completed the liberation of Paris that civilian patriots had started a few days before.

A hard first month of combat had paid big rewards for the three years of training in the U. S. and England.

THE 5th Armored Div. was born Oct. 1, 1941, at Fort Knox, Ky., home of the Armored Command. Maj. Gen. Jack W. Heard was its first commander.

Officers and men who were the cadre of the division trained at Knox until Feb. 16, 1942, and then moved to newly completed Camp Cooke, Calif. Inductees who arrived during March and April brought the division to full strength.

The division left Camp Cooke Aug. 8 for eastern California where it trained in open tank tactics on the vast Mojave desert. Desert maneuvers over, the division returned to garrison training at Cooke Nov. 23.

Gen. Heard was transferred from the division, and Maj. Gen. Lunsford E. Oliver took command March 2, 1943. Gen. Oliver came as an officer experienced in armored warfare as fought in World War I. Shortly before he had returned from North Africa where he led Combat Command B of the 1st Armored Div. in the initial invasion of Oran and the drive east into Tunisia.

For his successful campaign in Tunisia, Gen. Oliver was promoted to major general, awarded the Distinguished Service Medal, and returned home to command a division.

Two weeks after Gen. Oliver assumed command the division went east for maneuvers in Tennessee. In July 1943 it moved to Pine Camp in northern New York.

Dec. 6 the division made another move—to Indian-town Gap Military Reservation. Here the men completed unit combat tests, received pre-overseas furloughs and on receipt of movement orders moved to a staging camp.

Men of the 5th Armd. Div. walked up the gangplank in New York Feb. 10, 1944, and Feb. 24 they walked down the gangplank in England. They went immediately into training at Camps Chiseldon, Ogbourne-St. George and Tidworth-Perham Downes, all in Wiltshire.

In April there came a new job for the division. Its men were called on to operate hundreds of camps and hotels in Cornwall and Devonshire. There they serviced First Army troops as they embarked for the invasion of France.

When their charges left England's shores for the invasion of the continent, 5th Armored men returned to their tents and units and bivouacked in Wiltshire. There they made their own final preparations for combat. On May 22 the division moved to its assigned marching points and the following day embarked for France, the job for which it had been prepared for nearly three years.



Belgium Ties

WITH Paris liberated and its short rest and maintenance period over, the Victory Division pushed north to the fight. The men, who had fought within striking distance of Paris for so long, were not to be denied at least a glimpse of the famous capital. The city fell in the line of the division's next advance, and on Aug. 30 its world-renowned boulevards and avenues were lined throngs of jubilant civilians cheering the marching men. Crowds strained against 5th Armored MPs and local gendarmes in a wild demonstration along the division's three routes. When CC A halted in the Bois de Vincennes for the newly-attached 629th TD Bn., it was mobbed and delayed for several hours by a rejoicing populace.

The march through Paris was no sightseeing tour—it was the start of an incredibly swift drive to the Belgian border, 130 miles north.

Smashing through enemy rear guards and attempted ambushes, the push overtook many German forces that had fled Paris. Resistance was strong from the very outskirts of the city, where 5th Armored forces pushed through the 4th and 28th Divs. Lt. Col. Fay

was killed at Rully while leading one of his reconnaissance troops in an armored car.

Led by CC R, the division cut through historic Compiègne Forest, crossed the Oise and Aisne Rivers, then the Somme. Columns sped forward toward Belgium so rapidly that most of the reconnaissance was done by artillery liaison planes.

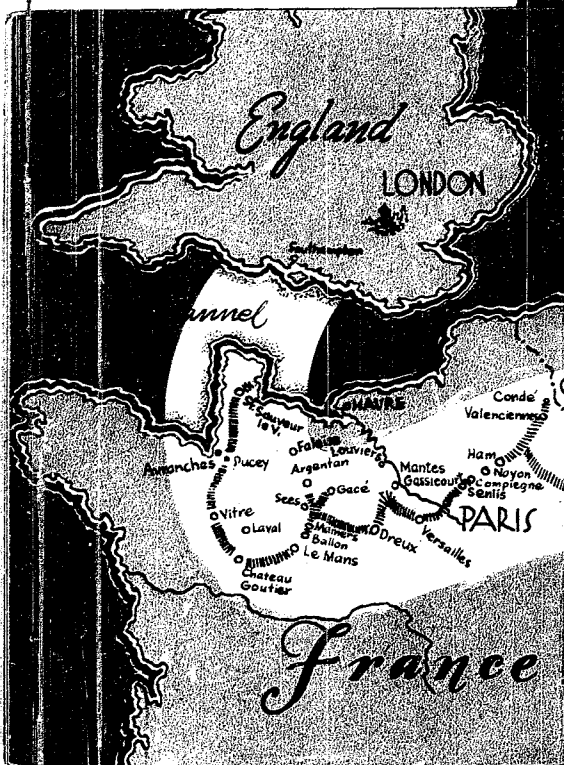
GEN. Oliver led one armored column in his unarmored peep, reconnoitering roads and bridges. With his aide, Capt. Maurice E. Davidson, his driver, and his guard, he was point for the column. Once, crossing a high bridge over a canal, he spotted a German anti-tank gun trained on a bridge only 100 yards away. The driver swung the peep behind the wall of a roadside house. Gen. Oliver ran back over the bridge, halted the first tank and directed its fire from a defilade position until the enemy gun was destroyed.

For leading that column more than 70 miles Sept. 2, Gen. Oliver was decorated with the Silver Star by Maj. Gen. L. T. Gerow, commander of First Army's V Corps, to which 5th Armored was attached.

By midnight the division was at Conde on the Belgian border. More than 500 prisoners, 70 two-horse teams and several saddle horses were captured. Most of the enemy's vehicles already had been destroyed by the division in its three-day drive.

On Sept. 4 new orders sent the Victory Division racing another 100 miles to the Meuse River, advancing southeast below the Belgian border. Its mission: to cross the Meuse at Sedan and Charleville.





Miles
Trek of the 5th Armored Division





The Meuse River and Sedan, names already familiar to war and its history, now stood for a new delaying defense line as the Wehrmacht hastily retraced its once-victorious steps of four years before. The 100 miles between the 5th and the Meuse were defended only by road blocks and blown bridges. The biggest threat was the first gasoline shortage to confront the division after its long, fast marches and extended supply lines. Fuel soon caught up with the columns and the division raced on.

CC R dashed 96 miles to the edge of Charleville in one day, Sept. 5, and with barely a pause for breath began to locate river crossing sites that night. For the first bridgehead, Cos. B and C, 47th Inf., crossed a partly destroyed dam. Covering the crossing were Hq. Co. mortars and assault guns, tank guns of the 10th Tank Bn. and 105s. of the attached 196th F A.

FROM protected positions on a 50-foot cliff overlooking the far bank, the enemy continued to pour heavy rifle and machine gun fire and grenades, but infantrymen forged ahead. Before noon on the 5th they won the cliff and five hours later, CC R's engineers had laid a temporary 192-foot treadway bridge across the Meuse.

Turning south, CC R ripped through to Sedan to liberate the city. CC A established a bridgehead at Pont Maugin south of Sedan where a flat river plain offered no protection against intense enemy fire from high ground around Bazeilles. The battle raged through the night of Sept. 5. Next day CC A captured the heights and completed the bridge. On the 7th, the 28th Inf. Div. started clearing the way eastward.



The Meuse behind, 5th Armored now lashed out toward Germany. Nearest border of the Reich was along the Moselle-Saur-Our Rivers 100 miles east of Sedan across a corner of Belgium and the small Grand Duchy of Luxembourg. Routes traversed wooded hills with many dangerous defiles, roads that had been made treacherous by enemy blocks and demolitions.

A combat team of the 28th Div. passed through CC A and advanced to the south and east from Sedan to the Belgian border near Thonelle-Thil. From there CC A again took the lead on Sept. 9, plunging through 20 miles of Belgium to Aubange and Athus to enter Luxembourg at the village of Petange and fight to within five miles of the City of Luxembourg.

On a parallel route to the north, CC R was lancing through Florenville, Tintigny and Habay la Neuve into central Luxembourg at Useldange. Supporting fighter planes viciously attacked the enemy, sometimes as close as 100 yards in front of CC R forces. Planes left 40 German vehicles burning near Illy.

CC A met stubborn resistance that day from Germans concentrated in Luxembourg for a last delaying defense before the Siegfried Line. Near Virton, CC A troops overtook a German supply train, destroyed 10 trucks, 25 horse carts and many horses. At Athus they overran

a German bicycle force, nabbed 50 prisoners. Just inside Luxembourg they pushed through a hail of small arms fire from behind a railroad train and from houses along the road.

On another main road just north of CC A's route, an enemy armored column entering the City of Luxembourg lost two tanks and 30 vehicles to CC A's artillery and air support. Elsewhere fighter planes destroyed 10 Kraut tanks and 40 vehicles.

On the open country just west of the city, CC A was halted by a strong force of German tanks and anti-tank guns that opened fire from well-protected positions. TDs, artillery and planes slowly forced the German armor into the open and destroyed five Panther tanks. The enemy withdrew into Luxembourg. CC A regrouped in front of the city, preparing to enter the next morning.

During the fighting march through Belgium and Luxembourg that day, Prince Felix of Luxembourg accompanied the division, most of the time up front with the fighting elements of CC A's column. Having been an exile for four years and four months with the reigning Grand Duchess Charlotte, the Prince was seeing his realm for the first time since the Nazi occupation. In his British brigadier's field uniform, he passed through Luxembourg in a peep and was given a rousing welcome home by villagers near the division CP.

The city was entered with little opposition on Sept. 10. Maj. Foote commanded the advance guard, which included Cos. A and D, 34th, and a platoon each of

TDs and engineers. Teller mines had been laid at the big highway bridge over the railroad at the city's entrance but were tossed aside by Lt. Leonard Hamer, a 22nd Armd. Engr. Bn. officer, and Lt. Thomas Grose, aide to Gen. Regnier.

Liberation of all Luxembourg was completed the next two days as 5th Armored tankers, infantry and supporting artillery cleaned out German rear guards and fanned out along the border just across the river from the Siegfried Line. CC A drove east from the capital through heavy resistance. An artillery concentration cleared the eastern heights of enemy troops, but as they withdrew they replied with a few shells aimed at towers of the city. The celebrating populace scurried to shelter.

A second concentration from guns of the 47th and 2nd Armd. Bns. cleared the woods north of Hamm as CC A continued east. At Neendorf Airport the leading task force met a last line of the enemy. Well equipped with tanks, armor and mortar, four units of the enemy were destroyed and a Tiger tank opened fire on the attacking force.

Gen. Regnier, Major Grose, who had been with the lead tank, and Lt. Donald H. Coulter. While their own forces strafed, bombed and shelled the area, they found shelter in nearby

fred M. Maffei and Pvt. Arthur H. Gibble advanced, routing the German tanks with a bazooka. Gen. Regnier's column reformed and stopped for the night while artillery continued to blast the enemy.

On Sept. 11 and 12, CC A pushed east in two columns to Hemstal, 10 miles from the border. On the left a combat team of the 28th Div. came up behind Task Force Burton and the latter dashed up to Junglister to capture the powerful five-towered Radio Luxembourg transmitter by night on the 11th.

Undefended by retreating Germans, the station was taken intact. T/Sgt. Mitchell S. Janowicz of the 46th was the first to enter the station, second only to Radio Moscow among the most powerful European stations.

CC A now embarked on the mission of defending the Grand Duchy on a wide front from Bollendorf on the Saur River south along the Saur and Moselle Rivers. Strong German forces maintained bridgeheads on the west bank. To counter infiltrating enemy patrols, CC A outposted and patrolled the area, later was joined by two battalions of the 28th's Combat Team 112 and by the 85th Recon. Sqdn.

Meanwhile, CC R and CC B had advanced against fighter resistance through central and northern Luxembourg to the German border along the Our River. CC B shot to the north of Diekirch and sent patrols to the border Sept. 10.

At Mersch, midway between the capital and Diekirch, the 47th Inf. of CC R pursued a fleeing German force. A patrol arrived at the Mersch bridge over the Alzette

just as it was blown, but forced back the Germans before they could demolish the nearby railroad bridge. It was there that Capt. Charles Perlman and his engineers removed two truckloads of explosives under enemy fire, then laid planking across the tracks so the force could continue its smashing drive to the border. At about the same time the "married" Cos. C crossed the Alzette at Pettingen, north of Mersch, and overtook a large German column just after an attack by fighter planes. Eighty-seven German vehicles were captured or destroyed in a hour.

The Victory Division's hard-hitting forces had over-run the entire Grand Duchy in short order. Facing them now was the pillbox-studded Siegfried Line on steep heights just across Luxembourg's river boundaries.

IN Belgium to the north and France to the south other American divisions were closing in all along the Reich's western border, but the 5th Armd. Div. sent the first force into Germany. A strong dismounted patrol of a light tank company crossed the Our near Stalzembourg at 1815 hours Sept. 11. Tanks of that company and

other patrols of CC B crossed the next day and continued patrolling the frontier 25 miles northwest of Trier the next three days.

Although the line of pillboxes was not penetrated by these patrols, they learned the defenses were manned by light forces, armed only with machine guns and small caliber anti-tank weapons. Strong German counter patrols put up fight and the enemy began building his strength in mortar and light artillery fire. Steep hills, mud and defiles hampered medium tanks.

CC R reassembled opposite Wallendorf, prepared to force a crossing and plough through the Siegfried Line toward Bitburg and Trier. This would be more than a test of the enemy's strength; it was planned as a large-scale diversion aimed at drawing a big German force into the fight while the main penetration was made near Aachen.

In the two days preceding CC R's assault on Sept. 14, practically all artillery of the division, including the 628th TD and 387th AA Bns., fired across the river into



pillboxes. At 1400 hours Sept. 12 a concentration of direct fire was delivered by tanks of the 10th Tank Bn. and assault guns of the 47th Inf. No fire was returned from Germany:

At 1100 on the 14th, CC R, strengthened by the 400th and 95th FA Bns., started crossing the Our at Wallendorf. Picked 155mm. gun crews of the 987th FA fired in direct support against opposing pillboxes and enemy forces.

Engineer-infantry assault teams forded the Saur River at Reisdorf and advanced to the Our junction at Wallendorf. Small arms fire pinned them down before they could seize the high ground above the village. CC R tanks forded the river, sheltering the infantry and spraying the village with machine gun fire.

At noon Sept. 14 the two CC R task forces lashed out toward the heights beyond the Siegfried Line; 28 hours later they stood on Hill 407, the last of the pillboxes behind them. Increasing artillery and aggressive tank resistance from the German defenders had barely slowed CC R tanks and infantry.

Assault teams worked up the hill, cleaning out heavy concrete pillboxes to make way for oncoming tanks. Although glare from the burning village below dangerously illuminated CC R's exposed position, that first night Col. Anderson's men captured 250 Germans and killed many others in their advance.

Krauts were blasted out of fortifications, but the pillboxes withstood the heaviest fire from CC R's guns. Until engineers could demolish the "boxes" with



400-pound explosive charges, Germans frequently infiltrated back into them and had to be routed out by renewed assaults. Lt. Col. Boyer's battalion staff bedded down briefly near a pillbox, only to find at daybreak that Germans had drifted back to the pillbox and the immediate area. Thirty Germans were taken.

At the Niedersgegen ford, Lt. Col. Boyer's troops turned deadly fire on a force of German armor, dispersing it and destroying two Mark IV tanks, a half-track and an anti-tank gun. Only one of his tanks was hit and its crew was untouched.

Down at Wallendorf on the night of the 14th, Co. C engineers started laying a 72-foot treadway bridge under

heavy enemy fire. Completed the next day, the bridge remained under fire during the entire operation.

Hill 407, the objective near Mettendorf, soon was dubbed "Purple Heart Hill" by GIs. The day after they gained it they had their hands full. Artillery fell on all sides, patrols constantly filtered to the rear to cut supply lines. To safeguard the supply line the next three days meant continuous mopping up in their own rear. The enemy, meanwhile, built up strength in front. One wood had to be cleared by tanks three times in a day.

Lt. Col. Hamburg's forces, now including a battalion of the 112th Inf., also had dashed through German tanks and heavy artillery fire to attain Hill 407 and the high ground beyond. Defensive positions were established around the all but deserted villages of Halsdorf, Stocken and Wettlingen. By dark on the 16th, three strong counterattacks were thrown back by the 112th at Wettlingen. Heavy artillery fell throughout the night. After an hour-long artillery barrage in early morning, four Mark IV tanks opened fire at long range, knocking out two of Co. D's tanks, but nearby Co. C destroyed all four attacking tanks. Now the tables were turned and the "married" A's counterattacked the German armor from the left, eliminating five more tanks and a zomm. self-propelled gun.

Sept. 19 brought two heavily armored counterattacks, both of them smashed by heavy fire from CC R's tanks, TDs and artillery. Ten Panther and Tiger tanks and four vehicles were burned before the enemy fled. Tank



Destroyed by heavy fire. Nearby, ten German tanks were destroyed at dusk.

Despite heavy losses, troops and armor were poured in, threatening to cut off CC R's forces. Artillery fell incessantly.

CC R was ordered to recross the Our, passing through CC B forces which had entered Germany Sept. 16 and occupied the Wallendorf area as CC R pushed on. CC R's crossing was accomplished without a loss during darkness on the 19th.

Intensified enemy activity continued next day. A CC B task force commanded by Lt. Col. Gilson was withdrawn across the Our successfully. Task Force Anderson and Col. Cole's headquarters, remaining on German soil, dug in on Hill 375, between Niedersgegen and Ammeldingen, prepared a tight defensive ring under heavy artillery and mortar fire. No Heinies appeared that night for an anticipated assault, but next morning they attacked

through heavy fog. Prepared to shoot anything in sight, GIs blasted away, killing 40 and breaking the attack.

The engineer bridge at Wallendorf, captured by the Germans and then regained on the 19th by Lt. Col. Elmer I. Kennedy's 387th AA Bn., fell into German hands again before it was destroyed on the 21st.

As enemy forces kept closing in, CC B sent out tank-infantry patrols to clear a few hundred yards around the tightly-ringed defenses. So close was the enemy that an 81st medical aid man searching for wounded walked into German headquarters in a concealed pillbox on the very hill CC B was occupying—a three-minute walk from Col. Cole's CP.

On the 21st, Task Force Boyer infiltrated back into Germany to help cover CC B's withdrawal that night. Before dark, a tank patrol cleared a corridor from Hill 375 to the Wallendorf ford and by darkness the forces withdrew in order under small arms and artillery fire.

Col. Cole, standing knee deep in the ford guiding the entire command across, was the last man to cross. For his leadership he was decorated with the Silver Star by Gen. Oliver.



This last hazardous operation was not without a touch of humor. As Col. Cole, unrecognizable in the dark, waved on the vehicles, the tanker came to a halt. Previously warned of a deep spot in the ford, he called out: "Say, buddy, where's that hole?" "Don't know," the Colonel called back. "Well, you're a hell of a road guide," retorted the tanker as he started his tank across.

The 5th Armored left Germany—for the time being. But those eight days under fire in the Reich had not been fought in vain. The troops had accomplished their diversionary mission, and as they pieced together the whole picture in the brief rest period that followed they came to realize the significance of their hard-won success.

They had drawn into their sector and contained German forces greatly outnumbering them—forces powerful and mobile enough that they might otherwise have resisted the main assault by other First Army divisions at Aachen.

German forces opposing CC B and CC R included, a GAF infantry division, a separate infantry regiment a machine gun battalion, several medium and heavy artillery battalions, a Panzer Brigade, and elements of

a Panzer Lehr Division, and the less effective border defense troops first encountered.

Nearly 100 German tanks were committed to action. Of these 44 were destroyed by the division and 19 others knocked out by supporting fighter planes. In addition, pilots reported 14 tanks hit but not definitely destroyed.

The enemy suffered extremely heavy casualties and his prepared defenses in the sector were permanently weakened with the demolition of 103 pillboxes by Cos. B and C. of the 22nd Armd. Engrs.

The action in Germany brought to a climax 50 days of almost continuous action during which the 5th Armd. Div. captured 7243 Germans, killed 4637, destroyed 250 tanks, 808 other vehicles, 218 artillery pieces and 180 anti-tank and infantry guns.

In the battle of Hurtgen Forest, CC R took the fanatically held towns of Kleinhau, Brandenburg and Bergstein, killing and wounding 1200 German infantrymen, taking 400 prisoners, destroying 20 tanks and anti-tank guns.

The assault on Kufferath by CC A was termed by observers as one of the most perfectly executed tank and infantry attacks. One tank company was used in the initial assault and was stopped just short of the town by anti-tank fire. A second company immediately was thrown through the gap created and drove into the town before surprised defenders could reorganize. Infantry quickly followed the tanks and mopped up.

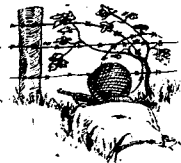
Dangerous pockets of resistance to the First Army front were wiped out by CC B with a pile-driving armored

thrust around the towns of Untermaubach and Overmaubach, clearing a salient to the Roer.

Many of the soldiers who fought in Germany with the 5th were decorated for individual achievement and gallant acts. Both combat commanders, Col. Anderson and Col. Cole, were awarded the Bronze Star for inspiring leadership and their full accomplishment of the mission on German soil.

Losses were heavier than in previous battles, and gains were not all of a direct nature. Fighting in Germany left an added stamp of experience on already battle-tested soldiers. Out of Germany came a new fighting spirit for the 5th Armd. Div.

• This spirit, infused into the whole division, might well be described in the words of two battalion commanders as set down in official reports of the action:



"It was proven that even in an adverse situation the battalion could overcome fanatical resistance. The unit is now a well-disciplined, experienced and confident fighting force." (Lt. Col. Anderson, commanding 81st Tank Bn.)

"The heavy action has welded together our organization and has given the officers and men confidence in their ability to stand up under severe strain when necessary, while continuing their mission." (Lt. Col. John R. McLean, commanding 400th FA Bn.)

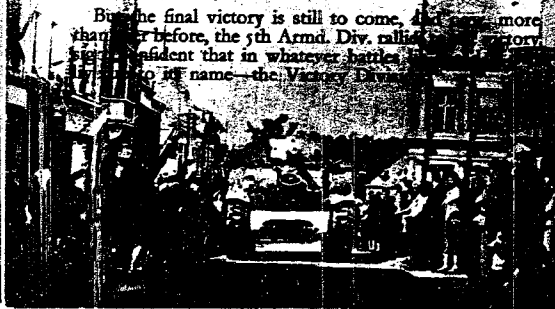
THROUGH Normandy and northern France, through a corner of Belgium and the entire Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, thousands of happy, newly liberated people waved on the 5th Armd. "Victory" Div. with the familiar two-fingered "V" for Victory symbol.

This sign has been more than a good-luck greeting to the 5th Armored; it has been a challenge and a spur to a division with a name to fulfill.

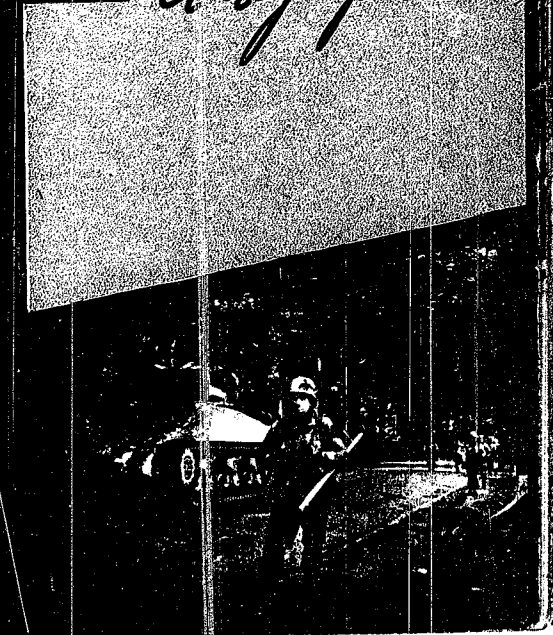
The name "Victory Division" was adopted upon the division's formation three years ago, at a time when the only defiance of Hitler's occupation in western Europe was that V—symbol of hope among conquered peoples. Since the significant V was also the Roman numeral for the division's number, the division became known as the Victory Division.

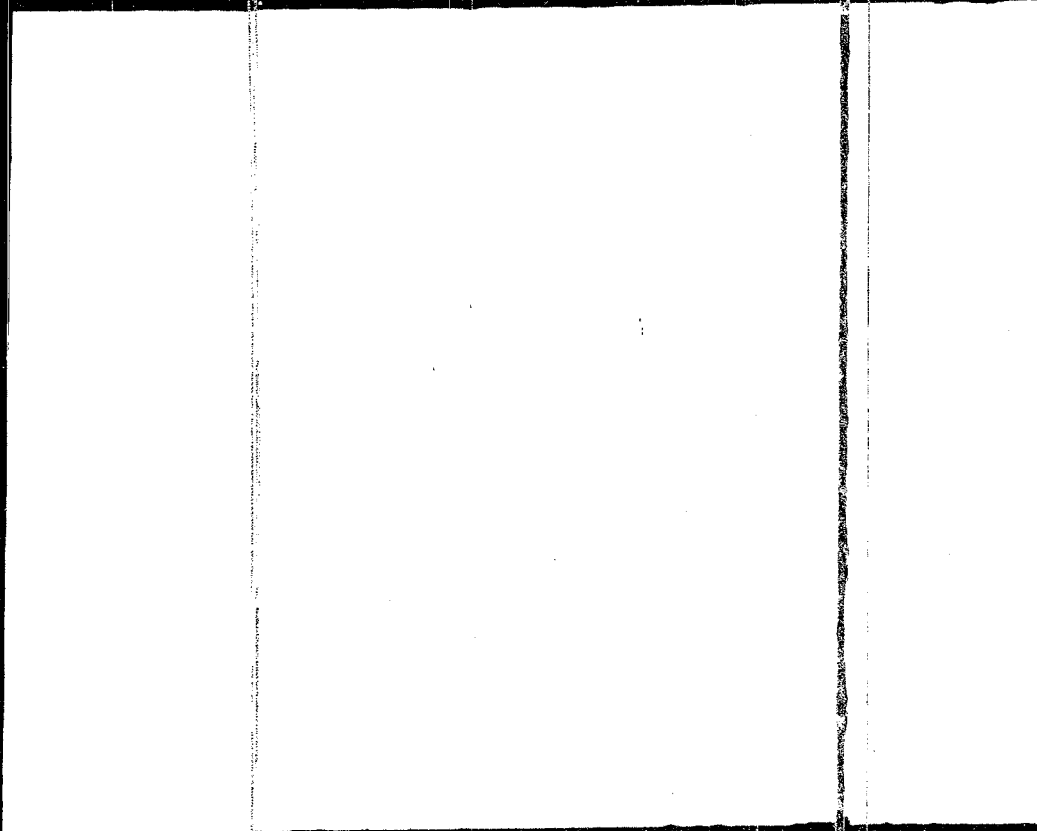
The division has borne its name with honor. It closed the Falaise trap that meant victory over the German Seventh Army in Normandy. Then, after pursuing and hammering the Wehrmacht across half a continent, it forced an entry into Hitler's Reich.

But the final victory is still to come, and more than ever before, the 5th Armd. Div. rallies to the Victory sign—evident that in whatever battles it may have to fight, it will fight in the name—the Victory Division.



THE TEAM *Autographs*







This is one of a series of G.I. Stories of the Ground, Air and Service Forces in the European Theater of Operations, to be issued by the Stars and Stripes, a publication of the Information and Education Division, Special and Information Services, ETOUSA... Major General R. W. Grow, commanding the Armored Division, lent his cooperation to the preparation of this pamphlet, and basic material was supplied to the editors by him.



Battle Areas

Citations

EACH member of the 6th Armored Division has ample reason to thrill with pride for what he and his comrades have accomplished in more than six months of uninterrupted combat. The following pages give but a meager picture of the gallantry and the sacrifices that mean so much to each individual. The story, as told here, briefly describes how brave and resolute men, organized to fight as a team, inspired by the heroic action of many of their fellows, marched and fought from one success to another through the whole of Northern France from Normandy to the tip of Brittany, to the eastern borders of Luxembourg. I dedicate these pages to the memory of our comrades whose spirit will forever urge us on to win Peace.



R. W. Grow

Major General, Commanding

THE STORY OF

The 6th

ARMORED DIVISION

BLOODY Bastogne—30 days of freezing hell!

This was the end of the first six months of combat for the 6th Armd. Div. Withdrawn from the Saar River area Dec. 24, 1944, and put in Corps reserve, the men under Maj. Gen. Robert W. Grow were rushed to the Third Army front on the south of the Ardennes salient, relieving the 10th Armd. Div. north of Mersch, Luxembourg.

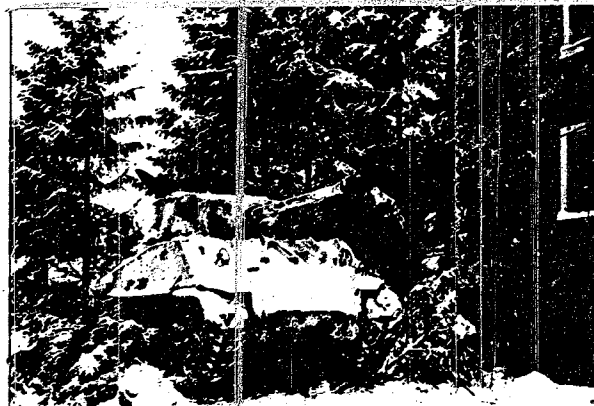
Five days later, Super Sixth was shifted to positions northeast of the now-famous city. The pocket in which the 101st Airborne and armored units had made such a gallant stand had become a bulge. Facing that bulge was one of the greatest enemy concentrations since the Ardennes Forest offensive began.

Still trying desperately to capture Bastogne, the Germans threw everything in the book at the 6th—tanks, infantry, artillery, rockets, bombs. For 23 snowbound, freezing days, 6th and Nazis fought a see-saw battle. Yanks took towns, lost them to numerically superior forces, later recaptured them.

Slowly, the Germans relinquished their grip on the east shoulder of the bulge. Waging strong rear-guard action, they completed their 20-mile withdrawal across the Our River into Germany and the Siegfried Line by Jan. 26, 1945.

For the enemy, Bastogne marks the stumbling block in its Ardennes offensive. For the 6th Arm. Div., Bastogne, where it faced the most formidable force of SS and Wehrmacht troops since going operational, stands as the supreme test. Primed for the thrust, Hitler's troops were the elite of his army, possessing the best equipment, vehicles and supplies. The 6th was greatly outnumbered by elements of six enemy divisions which constantly applied pressure against its entire front.

Bastogne brought a new experience. Snow, ice and sub-freezing weather provided the setting for one of the most severe campaigns ever fought by American



troops. Tank turrets froze, had to be chipped free to regain traversing action. Iced breach blocks had to be manually operated. Mills refused to function until bolts were beaten back and forth with grenades. When escape hatches and tank doors stuck fast, they got "blow torch" treatment. Ice formed in gas tanks and clogged lines. Feet froze. Men became so cold they "burned."

That was Bastogne!

WHEN the Super Sixth hit the front Dec. 29, the 101st Airborne was on the left, the 35th Div. on the right flank. Entering the campaign along a line

two miles northeast of Bastogne, CC A jumped off Dec. 31. A task force under Maj. Chester E. Kennedy, Detroit, took the high ground near Wardin, assisted by Task Force Brown on the right. Further gains were made the next three days against mounting resistance. Neffe and Bizery fell to CC A while a task force under Lt. Col. A.R. Wall, Denver, captured Mageret, went on to enter Michamps. Other forces commanded by Lt. Col. Embry D. LaGrew, Lexington, Ky., and Lt. Col. Frank K. Britton, Hartford, Conn., entered Wardin and took high ground to the south.

BUT their 12,000 yard front proved too much to hold with only three infantry battalions, and lines were shortened to 8000 yards. Then came the Germans' inning. While withdrawing at dusk Jan. 4, task forces under Col. Britton and Lt. Col. Charles E. Brown, Tacoma, Wash., were struck by artillery, tanks and infantry. Although temporarily cut off, some units withdrew to a new position, organized and repulsed the attack. Troops under Col. Wall and Lt. Col. H.C. Davall, Washington, D.C., stopped counter-attacks in CC B's sector with infantry, tanks, TDs and well-directed artillery.

Germans held the upper hand for five days, directing tank-infantry teams against the entire front. The tide shifted Jan. 9 when the 6th began to surge forward reinforced by the 320th Regt., 35th Inf. Div.

It was a grueling ordeal. Nine long, bitter-cold days were used to push back the enemy four miles, taking the ground astride the Longvilly-Bourcy highway and the

by-now familiar towns of Wardin, Mageret, Benonchamps, Arloncourt, Coubourcy, Longvilly and Michamps.

Germans pulled back from the western-most tip of the salient, and the 6th ploughed forward. Troine, Crendal, Lullange, Hoffelt and Hachiville fell quickly to tank-infantry teams making five-mile dashes through heavy snow. Strong rear-guard action was encountered, but Asselborn, Weiler, Basbellain, Biwisch and Troisvierges were retaken in two days. The enemy's Ardennes salient was wiped out completely during the next three days. Wilwerdange, Briedfeld and the high ground astride the Skyline Drive were captured.

By Jan. 26, the enemy, with losses of 2298 prisoners, 87 tanks, 33 big guns, 17 vehicles and one JU-88, had withdrawn across the Our River, more than 20 miles from Bastogne.

Campaigns

MADE TO ORDER

WHEN the last units of the untried 6th Armd. Div. arrived at Les Mesnil, Normandy, July 24, 1944, orders for embarkation from England to Omaha Beach were but 10 days old.

Two weeks later, the Super Sixth pulled up at the gates of Brest, creating complete disorganization enroute and bottling up 40,000 Germans for eventual capture.

How the division, operating in vitally important territory defended by 80,000 Nazis (about six times the division's strength) made the 250-mile drive in 10 days is a masterpiece of armored operations.

Confident but never cocky, each member of the division always felt the Super Sixth was destined for greatness. The 6th had received the best unit and maneuver training AGF could dish out at Camp Chaffee, Ark., in Louisiana, the California desert and at Camp Cooke, Calif. After arriving in the United Kingdom, the division sharpened up for the big show with five months of dress rehearsal.

This potent feeling was amplified further on the eve of the 6th's jump-off through Lessay when Gen. Grow said:

I don't care if we do get so far out in front we are completely surrounded. We've enough fire-power and mobility to punch out of anything the Krauts have to offer.

THE division maintained that spirit from the moment it passed through the 79th Div. at Lessay, cleared Brehal and Granville, shot through Avranches, swung west toward Brest, cut a 20-mile swath 200 miles into the heart of the Brittany Peninsula.

The 50-mile end run down the Normandy coast to the mouth of Brittany and the drive on to Brest paid tribute to the soundness of training and tactical principles. It demonstrated to infantrymen that their rugged operations in establishing beachheads and setting the stage for the breakthrough were not in vain.

The entire campaign was a series of engagements made to order for effective armored operations. Dashing into

enemy territory without infantry support for mopping-up purposes, the division found its zone allowed sufficient latitude for by-passing, enveloping, feinting and cutting Nazi communication lines, despite numerically superior enemy forces.

Speed of its advance permitted the division to fight on ground of its own choosing. Bold marches and by-passing enemy strongpoints kept losses of men and equipment to a minimum. Because of the rapid advance, the enemy could not establish a solid defense line. Through a country faced with rivers, the Germans had time to destroy only two bridges, each involving no more than a 12-hour delay. Outflanking the enemy brushed aside his resistance.

Tactics permitted racing columns to average 25 miles a day. The greatest distance — 48 miles — was swallowed on Aug. 3. The division captured 4556 prisoners while suffering only five percent casualties. An esti-

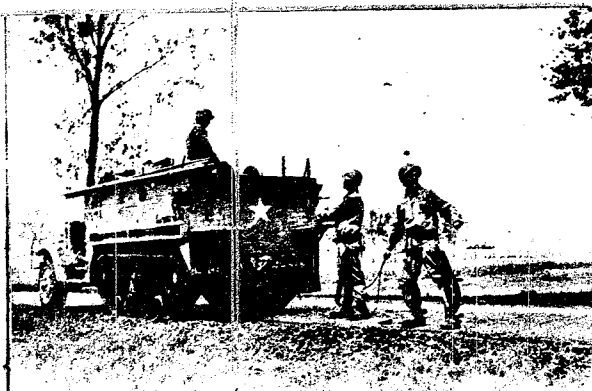


mated 4000 enemy were killed, and 1000 guns, combat and other vehicles were knocked out or abandoned during the period. Top PW prize was Lt. Gen. Karl Spang, Commander of the 266th German Inf. Div.

WHEN Troop A of the 86th Cav. Recon. Sqdn., commanded by Capt. Frederick H. Eickhoff, St. Louis, moved out at 1630, July 27, to contact the enemy, it became the first Super Sixth unit to be committed. The division moved out in force the next day when CC A, under Brig. Gen. James Taylor, crossed the Ay River at Lessay, passed through the 79th Div. and became the spearheading force.

CC B was commanded by Col. George W. Read, Santa Barbara, Calif., Reserve Command by Col. Harry F. Hanson, Elgin Ill. In support was Division Artillery, under Lt. Col. William J. Jesse, Mexico, Mo. Other separate commands were the 86th Recon, under Col. Albert E. Harris, Reno, Nev.; and Division Trains, commanded by Col. Elmer H. Droste, Mt. Olive, Ill.

Jump-off day found Super Sixth under Maj. Gen. Troy H. Middleton's VIII Corps, then a unit of First Army. Operations with First Army were short but sweet. With CC A and B alternating as spearheading forces, the division was quick to catch the competitive spirit. During the first four days it advanced 58 miles, flushed out 841 prisoners, captured key Normandy points of Pont de la Roche, Brehal and Granville. A treadway bridge was constructed over the Seine River by the 25th Armd. Engrs. near Pont de la Roche, July 29 and 30.



The Nazis, cornered in the Avranches area by the 4th and 6th Armd. Divs., lacked gas. Their horse-drawn vehicles were cut to ribbons by tank and artillery fire and fighter planes.

On Aug. 1, when Lt. Gen. George S. Patton, Jr., commander of Third Army, was disclosed as being on the warpath in the ETO, VIII Corps and the 6th Armd. Div., among other units, came under his command.

This change brought together Generals Patton and Grow for the first time since they were members of the 2nd Armd. Div. at Ft. Benning, Ga. Then, Gen. Patton was Division Commander of the "Hell-on-Wheels" outfit, while Gen. Grow was Asst. Chief of Staff, G-3.

Task Force Hanson moved out July 31 to enter the mouth of the peninsula and secure bridges northwest of Avranches and at Pontaubault. Next day, elements of the division ran into their first real engagement when Task Force Hanson encountered a roadside ambush near Bree where Germans were ready with 88s, mortars, bazookas and small arms. Initial fire was directed at Btry. A, 231st FA, the last unit in the advance guard.

DESPITE this surprise attack, the advance guard pushed ahead 28 miles to complete the mission — forcing a bridgehead across the Couesnon River at Pontorson. Attacked while passing through a narrow defile, three M-7 105mm, self-propelled artillery pieces were knocked out. Other units of the task force went into action and gained the upper hand after sharp action.

That action made veterans. Topping the list was "One-Man Army" Sgt. John L. Morton, Btry. A, 231st FA. When the enemy put three of his M-7s out of action that didn't daunt this Boonville, Mo., GI. He bagged 26 Germans with a carbine before his ammunition ran out. Then he picked up a sub-machine gun and dropped three more trying to escape on a truck. He received the division's first Distinguished Service Cross.

Courage and initiative displayed against enemy fire was outstanding up and down the line. Many tankers, including S/Sgt. Vernard T. Brock-Jones, 68th Tank Bn., Westfield, Ill.; Sgt. Paschal S. Mathison, 69th Tank Bn.; New Rochelle, N.Y., both battlefield lieutenants now; and S/Sgt. Peter Turko, 15th Tank Bn., New Hyde Park, N.Y., demonstrated their coolness and gallantry, received Silver Stars.

Armored infantrymen like Pvt. Jack Phillips, 9th Bn., Heflin, Ala.; M/Sgt. Albert Blumberg, 44th Bn., Philadelphia; and T/5 Thomas R. Sills, a medic with the 50th Bn., from Model, Tenn., also covered themselves with glory. T/Sgt. John H. Watson, 128th Ord., Pittsburgh, a volunteer ammunition trucker, showed fortitude when he drove much-needed ammunition to tankers through enemy fire.

In the Avranches bottleneck, Super Sixth men got their first glimpse of the Luftwaffe—many with a foxhole perspective. For several days, German airmen strafed 6th Armd. columns and bombed bridges that had been captured too swiftly for demolition crews to destroy. But the division passed into Brittany with negligible losses.

LIGHT casualties were attributed to excellent marksmanship of the 777th AAA Bn., commanded by Lt. Col. Joseph H. Twyman, San Pedro, Calif. During a 40-hour period enemy planes were particularly active. The 777th, engaging in its first combat, knocked down 18 of 44 planes to establish a percentage record for Third Army AAA outfits.

Carrying precious gasoline, ammunition and food, Division Trains, the last unit to pass through the only available highway into Brittany at Avranches, found the triple 7s exceptionally lucky numbers to have around. German bombers made an all-out effort on the moonbathed night of Aug. 1 to bomb a critical bridge. At the peak of the assault, with 500-pounders striking within 200 yards of the objective, Trains units successfully ran the gauntlet of the attack.

Super Sixth

POISED FOR BAYO!

AUG. 2 marked the first time the division engaged the enemy entrenched in fortified positions. CC B hit the foe in force east of Dinan, which constituted part of the St. Malo defensive works manned by 20,000 Germans. To reduce the fortress would cause several days' delay, so CC B was ordered to break contact and sideslip the town. Despite the active day, the division suffered light casualties, advanced 26 miles, captured 150 prisoners, left the strong Dinan defenders feeling as ignored as a boxer with no opponent but his shadow.

"These maps are too small. Give me a map large enough so that I won't run off it today." Gen. Grow's statement was prompted by the speed of the advance which had put maps on the critical supplies list. Columns raced across sections of maps almost before navigators could fix them to boards.

"You're doing pretty good, Bob!" Gen. Patton told Gen. Grow at the division CP near Merdrignac, Aug. 4. With the sun blazing down on the dusty bivouac area, Gen. Patton then presented him with a Bronze Star for meritorious achievement, the first battlefield decoration received by Super Sixth.

The Division Commander learned definitely that the 6th was to make the run for Brest without any direct

infantry support. The 4th Arm'd. Div. was on the left (southern) flank with the mission of taking Lorient and Rennes. Gen. Grow realized the Germans in that sector were a ragged, disorganized army with disrupted communications. To give them any quarter was to invite them to get in on the 6th's march into Brittany.

CCA and Reserve Command hacked away at Huelgoat, the next enemy stronghold. Reserve Command ran into enemy forces at Poellivren and after a two hour fight smashed back into Huelgoat. CC A captured sharp encounters. The enemy defenses.



The first posthumous DSC was earned by 2nd Lt. James L. Durden, Mt. Vernon, Ga., reconnaissance platoon leader with the 15th Tank Bn. in the Huelgoat action. Lt. Durden was greatly responsible for the success of the attack when he went forward on foot to clear a mine field and direct tank drivers along a safe path.

During this same two day period, the division advanced 47 miles, killed or wounded an undetermined number of the enemy, destroyed seven big guns and three vehicles.

THE ninth and tenth days saw Super Sixth advance 80 miles, draw up before the outskirts of Brest, after Lesneven, Plouvien and Bourg Blanc were cleared. CC B encountered considerable artillery, mortar and machine gun fire just south of Bourg Blanc until a large OP and AA warning system were destroyed.

That final day's operation set the stage for a concerted attack on the Nazi stronghold.

But first, on Aug. 8, Gen. Grow issued an ultimatum to the German Commander of Brest. Delivered by Lt. Col. Ernest W. Mitchell, Arlington, Mass., and M/Sgt. Alex Castle, New York City, an interpreter, the ultimatum read:

1. *The United States Army, Naval and Air Forces troops are in a position to destroy the garrison of Brest.*
2. *This memorandum constitutes an opportunity for you to surrender in the face of these overwhelming forces to representatives of the United States government and avoid the unnecessary sacrifice of lives.*

3. *I shall be very glad to receive your formal surrender and make the detailed arrangements any time prior to 1500 this date. The officer who brings this memorandum will be glad to guide you and necessary members of your staff, not exceeding six, to my headquarters.*

But history already has recorded how the Germans rejected the ultimatum, blew the docks sky-high and caused the city to be shattered by Allied ground, air and naval forces before surrendering to VIII Corps.

"Brassiere Boys" WAVE GOOD

THE planned attack on Brest momentarily was postponed. Artillery from the fortress pounded elements of CC A while the 266th German Div., attempting to break into the city, struck the division's rear. The 6th executed an about-face and attacked.

The 266th ran head-on into the 86th Recon as well as other covering units as it threatened to over-run the PW enclosure (with General Spang as the choice prize) and Div. Hq. The Germans completely surrounded the division. Towering hedgerows prevented identification of friendly or enemy forces. Small arms fire spattered over the bivouacs.

But the battle was really one-sided. CC B, smacking

the center, soon made the Germans lose interest in finding an avenue of escape into Brest. When smoke of the eight hour battle lifted, the scoreboard read: 230 Germans killed, 70 wounded, 800 captured. More than 200 vehicles and 20 anti-tank guns were captured or destroyed.

PLOUVIEN, which was to be known as the "massacred" town of Brittany, had to be retaken by CCA. The Germans reentered the town after the 6th passed through and blazed fire down streets and into homes, killing many civilians. Planes supported CC A tanks and infantry in ridding the town of the German plague for the last time.

Reserve Command sharpened its sights on the left flank. Encountering a heavy weapons company, doughs of the 50th Inf. killed 19, captured 47, destroyed one 88mm, six mortars, four machine guns, several vehicles.

Contributing to the success of combat troops was Trains Command, truck companies, medics and ordinance personnel who performed their duties in superior style. At no time during the long and arduous fighting march did any unit find itself unable to move for lack of supplies, equipment or maintenance. Trains units assumed a definite combat complexion by taking more than 1000 prisoners.

Some runs made by supply trains totalled 400 miles round trip, many times through towns and country reoccupied by Germans. Tank and other combat units protected the long line of communications and local installations.







A serious problem developed when Nazi paratroops attempted to destroy the division gas dump near Poullaquen. Only a small portion of the supply was burned before band members, appropriately named the "Attackers" and led by "Music Maestro" Carroll W. Thompson, Enid, Okla., left to guard the dump, drove them off.

The 76th Medical Bn., under Lt. Col. James W. Branch, Hope, Ark., the 128th Ordnance Maintenance Bn., commanded by Lt. Col. Raymond B. Graeves, Jr., Silver Spring, Md., and the MP platoon all encountered evacuation troubles because of distances and German reoccupation. Wounded and prisoners had to be transported deep into the peninsula for lack of close-up support. Disabled vehicles were towed until they could be repaired or evacuated.

PRISONERS were being delivered to division cages in wholesale lots. On Aug. 10, 919 were bagged; next day, 828; another 439 on Aug. 12. Without a shot fired, 350 prisoners were taken from coastal artillery strongholds. Surrender arrangements were effected by Sgt. Alexander Balter, Pittsburgh, CC A interpreter, along with Capt. Allen Scullen, Boston, Recon CO, 603rd TD Bn.

On Aug. 12, infantry troops of the 50th and the 1st Bn. of the 28th Inf., 8th Div., attached to the 6th, pushed within 200 yards of the Gouesnou-Guipavas highway, the closest point to Brest yet reached. This was the last day on which the division operated with all units intact for more than six weeks. While a task force was

left to contain Brest, the remainder of the division whipped 100 miles east to the Lorient area, relieving elements of the 4th Armd. Div.

With a force of 4000, CC A bottled up 40,000 Germans in Fortress Brest. For this effectively carried-out mission, they were dubbed the "Brassiere Boys."

The month-long Lorient mission was used in giving personnel experience in patrolling, handling booby traps and forward observation. Veterans were born overnight. They had to learn fast. They were facing an experienced foe who knew all the tricks.

"I know of no other new division that has accomplished the things we have done in so short a period," Gen. Grow said in praise of his men and officers.

THERE were many heroes in every outfit. Pvt. Johnny Iolonardi, 50th Inf., Bronx, N.Y., exposed himself to enemy fire to throw 2 grenades into a machine gun nest and get 12 Germans. Pvt. Ray Williams, 69th Tanks, Collingswood N.J., returned a grenade the enemy had tossed into his tank, then continued the attack. Pvt. Arlie A. Moody, 231st FA, Bear Creek, N.C., grabbed a bazooka when ambushed and became a doughboy long enough to destroy an anti-tank gun.

Lt. Donald C. Peake, 128th FA, New Milford, N.J., beat off 100 Germans by firing his carbine, then calling for artillery fire on his own OP. Pfc C.F.B. Warner, 15th Tanks, Alliance, Ohio, destroyed an 88mm gun and crew with a grenade. Lt. Darwin D. Rounds, artil-

lery liaison pilot, Robbins Dale, Minn., deliberately flew low to draw enemy fire so artillery could neutralize positions. Sgt. Max B. Hansen, 86th Cav., Portland, Ore., carried his wounded platoon leader to safety when time bombs exploded near them on a bridge.

Bonjour BROOELTY!

Hello, FRANCE!

So closed the division's campaign in Brittany, where the Super Sixth found gratitude of a newly-liberated people; where "des œufs" became a pup tent word; where people outdid Hollywood versions of showering speeding columns with flowers, food, vin rouge.

While in the Lorris area, CC B performed a historically significant mission when reconnaissance patrols were sent out to represent Gen. Patton's Third Army in making contact with Gen. Patch's Seventh Army coming up from the south.

To a platoon from Troop B, 86th Cav., under 2nd Lt. Vernon Hill, Clinton, Okla., fell the honors. The link-up was established with the Second Dragoons, 2nd French Armd. Div., at Autun, near Dijon, Sept. 12, when

Cpl. Carl Newman, Brooklyn M-8 radio operator, shook hands with Jean Quignon of Montgeron, France.

Before the division assembled in the Seille River area, CC B, attached to the 35th Div., already had written the first chapter of that campaign with an effectively executed attack near Manhoue, Armaucourt and Lanfroi-court, Sept. 22. So outwitted were the Germans by Col. Read's skillful planning that they lost 250 dead and 413 prisoners in the one-day attack.

Most of the damage was inflicted on the 1000 Germans defending Armaucourt. The town was contested only until Capt. Walter G. "Snuffy" Smith, Ada, Okla.,



with his 69th Light Tank Co., supported by TDs, delivered a "one-two" punch. TDs stood back and blasted away with delayed-fuse shells at buildings. When Germans sprang out to escape, Co. D mowed them down with machine gun fire from light tanks. They killed 182 and captured 310. The knockout plan was the brainchild of Lt. Col. Ralph H. McKee, Shawnee, Okla., CC B executive officer.

A key man in the attack was S/Sgt. George D. Vinyard, 69th Tanker from Rock Island, Okla., whose bold action from his light tank's turret knocked out seven bazooka teams and accounted for 26 more Germans.

The remainder of the division closed near Nancy, Oct. 1, and went into action again as a concerted unit. CC A and Reserve Command coordinated an attack that ended a German counter-threat to cut off the XII Corps bridgehead across the Seille River near the Gremecey Forest.

CC A, commanded by Col. Hanson, attacked north of the forest through the 35th Inf. Div. at 0620. Despite heavy enemy resistance by artillery, infantry and mines, the high-ground objective belonged to the 6th three hours later.

Reserve Command, under Lt. Col. Harris, swung east, north of Chambrey in the face of severe artillery and small arms fire. After gaining its first objective, the task force continued mopping up to aid the 35th Div. establish a main line of resistance.

Putting the tank-infantry team across the goal in this action were veterans like 2nd Lt. Harry C. Linebaugh,

Schenectady, N.Y.; S/Sgt. Malcom Helton, Natchez, Ala.; and Sgt. James W. Abbott, Eubank, Ky., who dismounted under heavy mortar and small arms fire to clear and mark a path through a minefield for tanks. After the platoon leader had been hit, T/Sgt. John A. Petrick, Chicago, organized his 9th Inf. platoon and led them in seizing an objective.

RIFLES

Losses

30 TOWNS

THE next "Sunday-punch" was launched a week later in a two-day assault that straightened the line of the corps salient in the Letricourt area.

CC B jumped off in heavy fog at 0615 and swept through Moivron, Jeandelincourt, Arroye-Et-Han and Ajoncourt in a brilliantly executed attack that bewildered the Germans. Task Force Wall captured Moivron by 0800; Task Force LaGrew surrounded Jeandelincourt by 1100 and took the town several hours later following an action called the "Turkey Shoot;" Task Force under Lt. Col. Bedford H. Forrest, Saluda, S.C., swarmed into Ajoncourt at 1400, after taking control of Arroye-Et-Han. The 80th and 35th Inf. Divs., on both flanks, occupied these towns on the heels of the swift 6th.

CC A picked up the baton the next day with assault forces splitting three ways. Task Forces under Col. Davall, Lt. Col. Lewis E. McCorison, Marshfield Wis., and Lt. Col. Thomas B. Godfrey, Louisville, Ky., cleared woods and consolidated high ground positions south of Letricourt. The division's mission was complete. During the Seille River campaign from Sept. 17 to Nov. 7, the 6th killed an estimated 1500, destroyed 500 guns and vehicles.

From OPs, these unit operations looked like well-executed sand-table maneuvers taking place at Ft. Knox, Ky. which, on Feb. 15, 1942, had been the birthplace of the Super Sixth. But the "picture" was stern reality to fighters like T/Sgt. George Donald, 44th Inf., Philadelphia; T/Sgt. William Z. Fralish, 15th Tanker, Arton, Ala., and Cpl. Myron H. Berger, 50th Inf., Springfield, Ill.

Although twice wounded in the same attack and his platoon leader killed, Donald rallied his platoon, led them forward, summoned TDs for cover while the men took new positions.

A maintenance sergeant, Fralish organized his crews and blasted Germans from foxholes with grenades so tanks could be evacuated from a stream crossing.

Critically wounded, Berger, still under enemy fire, warned his squad of snipers, located positions and continued firing until he died.

Super Sixth never was stronger than when it launched the Saar River campaign. It had lost valuable men



in hard fighting, but experience had created battle-wise veterans.

These time-tested troops still had to rely on all the skill and cunning they had absorbed to crack stubborn German defenses. Mud, rain, knowledge of the Lorraine area and limited air support because of weather — all were the enemy's aids.

The Saar was reached in 26 days after the 6th had captured 80 towns and villages spreading over 400 square miles. The push was bitterly contested. But now the enemy had his back to the wall. It meant the fight would be waged on the Fatherland. When the last square foot of France in the division zone was cleared Dec. 5, the count showed 1216 Nazis prisoners, 202 guns

and 143 vehicles captured or destroyed, 73 of which were tanks or self-propelled assault guns.

Passing through the 80th Div., which had established bridgeheads at Nomeny and Port-sur-Seille, Nov. 10, CC A, now under Col. John L. Hines, Jr., White Sulphur Springs, W. Va., smacked the enemy first. Luppy and Secourt fell in quick dashes. CC B sliced through and took Buchy and Beux, despite determined enemy resistance, knee-deep mud and difficult terrain. Enemy dead offered mute testimony to the effectiveness of corps and division artillery, the latter under Col. Lowell M. Riley, Jacksonville, Fla.

Knifing

HOWARD BERLIN

THE toughest action in the division's combat history was crowded into the next four days when vital bridgeheads were established and enlarged over the French Nied River.

CC A successfully forced the bridgehead at Han-sur-Nied by capturing the bridge before Germans could destroy it. CC B duplicated the achievement on its sector to the north near Sanry.

Lt. Daniel L. Nutter, Waukesha, Wis., and T/5 Charles Cunningham, Columbus, O., both of the 25th Armd. Engr. Bn., raced across the Han-Sur-Nied bridge in the

first tank and cut wires leading to demolitions. Lt. Nutter was killed after completing his task.

Tanks of the 68th rumbling across the span were commanded by 1st Lt. Vernon L. Edwards, Collinsville, Ill., who braved artillery fire, tank and flak guns to help save the bridge by neutralizing two rocket-launcher teams with his machine gun. He was killed by a sniper, leaving the responsibility of tank defense to S/Sgt. Everett H. Tourjee, Catskill, N.Y.

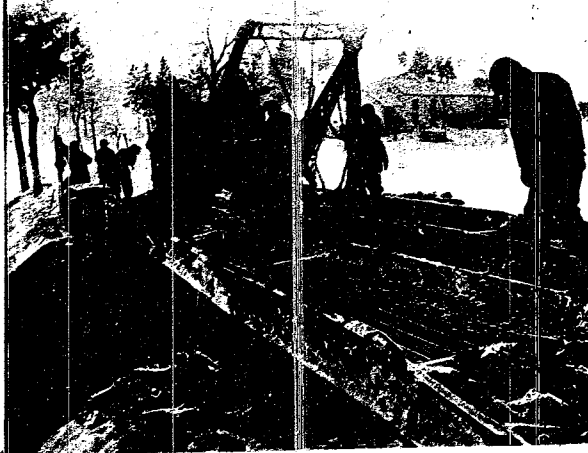
Germans used every conceivable weapon to rain hellish fire on the bridge, inflicting heavy casualties on the 80th Inf. Div. and 9th Inf. Bn. After smoke was laid to screen operations, Col. Hines, son of the former U.S. Army Chief of Staff, went forward and organized GIs for the hazardous crossing.

Elements of CC B had two bridges blown almost in their faces before 1st Lt. Frederick E. Titterington, Glens Falls, N.Y., 25th Engr., discovered the span near Sarry intact. With Sgt. Ray McCrary, Ft. Smith, Ark.; T/5 Francis A. Bolton, Philadelphia and T/5 Paul K. Smith, Monroe, Tenn., protecting him as he drove a half-track to test the bridge's surface, Titterington rode half-way across, then dismounted. Reaching into the swollen river, he cut the lead wires. The bridge was saved.

Lt. Col. Donald G. Williams, Kansas City, Mo., Div. Engr., rushed tanks to exploit the bridgehead. By nightfall, elements were across and in one of the hottest artillery spots in the Metz area. For their action, Hines, Nutter, Titterington, Edwards and Cunningham were awarded the DSC.

Another DSC was won by Capt. Clarence E. Prenevost, Red Lake Falls, Minn., commander of Co. B, 15th Tank Bn., who was shot through the chest while leading his dismounted tankers clear a minefield. Knocked off his feet, he resumed leadership, ordered wounded evacuated and briefed platoon leaders before allowing himself to be evacuated.

BRIDGEHEADS at Baudrecourt and Remilly were established later, and Herny, Vatimont and Arraincourt were taken in rough action. Forces under Col. Davall found out just how persistent Germans could be about losing a town, Nov. 14.



Tank-infantry forces had taken Landroff after much resistance. That night Nazis counter-attacked four times. The final attack, made in battalion strength, succeeded in getting Krauts into the town, and the ensuing hand-to-hand battle lasted until daylight.

CONFUSION in the darkness made effective use of weapons difficult. The defenders fought bare-handed, commanded by Maj. (then Capt.) Daniel E. Smith, Memphis, Tex., 68th Tanker, who received a DSC for this engagement. By morning the situation was under control.

This was the action anywhere along the Nied River. It meant men like Cpl. Robert R. Newman, 69th Tanker, Waterfall, Pa., who destroyed four bazooka teams with his tank machine gun, extinguished a turret fire, evacuated wounded, then pumped more lead into the enemy.

T/5 Roberto M. Martinez, 76th Medics, Brownsville, Tex., saved three seriously wounded men and five other casualties by evacuating them from a burning ammunition truck just before it exploded.

Second Lt. Edward B. Ledford, 212th FA, Lomax, Ill., when a fellow officer was mortally wounded, advanced to reach a radio, directed fire that silenced enemy guns.

S/Sgt. Walter R. Fick, Vergas, Minn., and Pvt. Clarence M. Smith, Pasadena, Calif., of the 603rd TD, knocked out a mortar crew with carbines, captured 37 prisoners.

The division assisted in taking Bertring, Gros-Tenquin, Hellener, Diffembach, Fremestroff, Hemering, Leyviller



and St. Jean Rohrbach within the next eight days, but there was no letup in the Nazis' tenacity. The 9th Inf., under Col. Britton, did a superior job in cleaning the woods of Krauts north of Leyviller.

The division outpost line extended through Puttlinge and Henriville when Remering, Morsbronn, Hilsprich, Barst-Marienthal, Cappel, Hoste-Bas and Hoste-Haut fell. Capture of that area prepared the way for the final ten miles between Henriville and the Saar River.

CC A with task forces under Lt. Col. Charles E. Brown, Tacoma, Wash., 44th Inf., and Col. Wall, 50th

Inf., advanced to positions overlooking the Saar, giving GIs their first view of Germany.

More heroic acts came to light. First Sgt. George P. Rimmer, 30th Inf., Cincinnati, ordered his platoon to lay low when artillery zeroed in, rescued four wounded men from drowning in the water where they were lying. Pvt. Thomas E. Clark, 15th Tanker medic, Silver City, N.C., braved withering fire in crossing a bridge five times to evacuate wounded. Driving to an aid station, his ambulance struck a mine. Clark was killed, the wounded were saved.

S/Sgt. Irvin C. Shoemaker, 86th Recon. Hyde Park, Pa., ran 75 yards under heavy shelling, evacuated a wounded GI, carried him 50 yards on his back to safety, then returned to lead his platoon in crushing a counter-attack.

T/Sgt. Frederick L. Thek, 9th Inf., Greentown, Pa., and his eight-man squad held a shallow bridgehead across the Nied for 12 hours against overwhelming odds until reinforced.

THE 128th FA was the first division unit to fire into Germany. The 86th Recon. commanded by Maj. Harry C. Brindle, Huntington, W. Va., not only was the first unit to move into the Vaterland but also had the unusual experience of patrolling in Germany to observe the enemy in France.

There was much more than appeared on the record. Never to be forgotten, for instance, was the day in the

Han-sur-Nied area when the 603rd TD Bn., commanded by Lt. Col. Clarence D. McCurry, Memphis, Tenn., ran into enemy tanks. The platoon of 1st Lt. Edward Snyder, Bentleville, Pa., kayded ten and touched off a battalion spree that boosted the total to over 30 in two weeks.

Artillery enjoyed praise from its severest critics — doughfeet and tankers. Col. Riley's battalions, the 128th of Lt. Col. Thomas R. Bruce, Mexico, Mo.; the 212th of Lt. Col. Phillip H. Pope, Washington, D.C.; and the 231st of Lt. Col. Thomas M. Crawford, Salisbury, N.C., who replaced Lt. Col. Robert S. Perkins, Maryville, Mo., injured on the Brest run.

Playing a major role in the success of every attack was the 146th Armd. Signal Co., which strung an average of 350 miles of wire a month and maintained a high standard of communications in all signal channels under difficult tactical and climatic conditions.

To describe the division's operations adequately would necessitate telling the story of every man who participated in the powerful Super Sixth thrusts. It is the story of every team, from division to squads, fulfilling missions because of ability, fortitude and will.

The roll call of the gallant is long. It must be or the Super Sixth never could have carved out its remarkable record. When the division passed its third anniversary on Feb. 15, 1945 in its sixth month of combat, 141 men had received Silver Stars; 737, Bronze Stars; 15, direct battlefield commissions. Three had earned an

oak leaf cluster to their Silver Stars: Capt. George W. Fry, 44th Inf., Columbus, Ga.; T/Sgt. John A. LaQuinta, 44th Inf., McKees Rock, Pa.; Lt. Peake, 128th FA.

The road had been long with many obstacles. But in every case pitfalls like the meeting engagements of Brittany, battles around Nancy, mud of the Saar, and cold and snow of Bastogne were overcome.

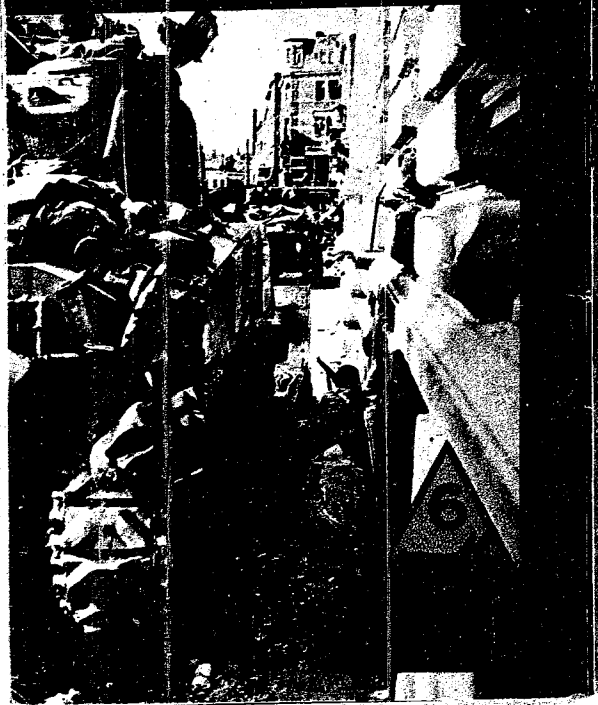
During all this concentrated action, one common thread ran through the variety of missions: complete success. Success that helped open a liberation path from Brest to Bastogne on a road aimed for Berlin!

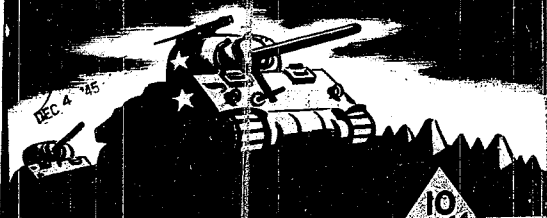


The Team



Brittany Was Like This





2nd THE STORY OF THE ^{C. 1945} _{M.G.}
10th ARMORED DIVISION





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United States Army, Forces **10** in the European Theater



THE STORY OF THE
10th Armored **DIVISION**

THE December wind swirled about the schoolhouse in the small French border town of Apach. Inside, the staff of the 10th Armored Division virtually had completed plans for a battle—a battle that never would be fought. The 90th and 95th Inf. Divs. had carved toeholds on the east bank of the Saar River. The 10th Armored Tigers were to roll through these bridgeheads and drive steel-tipped spearheads into the Saar Basin. This was to be Gen. Patton's march on the Rhine.

At 0330, Dec. 17, movement orders came over the war room ticker. Less than three hours later, leading tanks and half-tracks clattered down the road—not east toward the bridgeheads, but north toward Luxembourg! So precipitous was the change in orders that few men of the division realized the importance of the new mission.

Field Marshal Gerd von Rundstedt could have told them. Germany's stony-faced West Front Commander had struck a body blow in the Ardennes.

Men of the 9th Armd., 4th and 28th Inf. Divs.

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could have told the Tigers. Their lines, stretched thin and taut as a bowstring along a 95-mile front north of the Franco-German-Luxembourg border intersection, were snapping beneath the weight of concentrated German military might.

Von Rundstedt, who had chosen to marshal his remaining strength for a single paralyzing blow, hoped the haymaker might be the knockout punch. He had told his elite SS, Panzer and Volksgrenadier Divisions they would overrun Belgium, Luxembourg and northern France, and even penetrate to the Channel coast. This was no idle boast. Von Rundstedt had to be stopped. The Tigers were the first division called to help stem the raging drive.

That a successful penetration in depth can be only half the width of its base is a basic military axiom. To punch out a wider base, the Prussian Field Marshal sent a mailed fist crashing southward along a 30-mile front toward Luxembourg City.

The 10th arrived as the fingers of the fist were choking off isolated pockets of 4th Inf. Div. doughs at Echternach and half a dozen adjacent towns only 12 miles northeast of Luxembourg's capital.



Brig. Gen. Edwin W. Piburn's Combat Command A matched 75 miles in 18 hours Dec. 17, and the Tigers clawed into Rundstedt's south flank early next day. Task forces

for a three-mile gap between the ...
Inf. Div. lines. Lt. Col. ...
Cav. Recon Sqdn. plugged the gap ...

CCA had ... used to keep ...
balance. ...
Jumping ...
cleared the ...

As Maj. Gen. William H. H. Morris, commanding the 10th, sent his strong right arm, CC A, smashing into von Rundstedt's body, he unleashed a left hook, Combat Command B, which swung in a wide arc to catch the Germans squarely on the nose.

"STONE OF BASTOGNE"

Blunts NAZI BLITZ



GREYING dusk shrouded Bastogne as CC B's lead Sherman tanks, tank destroyers and half-tracks rolled through the town Dec. 18. These were the first combat troops to reach the threatened city and before leaving they would write a glowing chapter in the history of World War II.

CC B's commander, Col. William L. Roberts, split his command to form a crescent-shaped arc facing eastward five miles from the city. A task force commanded by Maj. William R. Desobry went north to Noville, while a similar group under Lt. Col. Henry T. Cherry wheeled east to Longvilly. Lt. Col. James O'Hara's group shifted southeast to Bras.

Capture of Bastogne, hub town where seven main roads spread spoke-like in all directions, was essential to the swift movement of Rundstedt's armor. Riding the crest of a 14-mile advance, five Nazi divisions knifed through blanket-like fog to strike CC B in the pre-dawn darkness of Dec. 19.

For the first time since he launched his onslaught, von Rundstedt was stopped!

Barbed-armed doughboys and a single platoon of tank destroyers came to grips with a column of German Mark IV tanks on the Houffalize-Noville highway, turned them back after a furious engagement. More enemy armor followed and with the road blocked, the



battle spilled into the snow-mantled fields and woods, raged unabated.

German Volksgrenadiers flanked TF Cherry's main defenses at Longvilly and surrounded the battalion CP. Cabin-firing clerks, cooks and drivers resisted fiercely; converting the chateau headquarters into a veritable blockhouse. TF O'Hara, lightly hit at first, felt increasing pressure throughout the first day's engagement.

For eight hours, CC B alone withstood the multiple blows of the Nazi's Hydra-headed attack. Then help arrived. First reinforcements of the 101st Airborne Div., which had moved into Bastogne under the screen of the 10th's actions, reached Desobry.

Drawing from a seemingly endless reservoir of might, Germans still maintained an overwhelming balance of power. The outnumbered Americans shifted their defensive arc nearer Bastogne.

Completely encircled, its CP ablaze, TF Cherry fought back to Mageret as the commander radioed CC B headquarters: "We're not driven out; we're burned out! We are not withdrawing; we are moving."

Attacked from three sides, the Noville defenders knocked out 31 Nazi tanks in two days. Then, led by Maj. Charles L. Hustead, they broke through a ring of steel to set up another defensive line near Foy. TF O'Hara pulled in its left flank slightly, stood fast.

Balked frontally, the German attack swirled around the city, shooting pincers to the north and south.



In 30 days of hell, these men of CC B had earned the Distinguished Unit Badge.

Von Rundstedt's spearhead first had been blunted when it struck CC B, labeled by the division, "Stone of Bastogne." Besieged now from all sides, the Germans, reluctantly withdrew the tattered and bleeding Wehrmacht. The scars of that fight never healed.

Patton Said- "TERRIFY AND DESTROY"

To this end the 10th Armd. Div. had trained on Georgia's burning red sands. With the exception of the summer of 1943, the 10th Armored Div. labored two long years in the pine woods and sand hills of the Peach State; had jokingly dubbed themselves the "Georgia State Guard."

However, behind the jocular cynicism was the work that fashioned raw steel and green men into a blend of armored might. The late Maj. Gen. Paul W. Newgarden was largely responsible. A Patton disciple, he molded a Pattonized armored division. "Terrify and Destroy!" became the 10th's cry in its battle with a ruthless enemy.

The Tiger Cubs rehearsed diligently for their combat debut. Ft. Benning's Chattahoochee River crossings prepared them for France's racing, yellow Moselle. Camp Gordon's Boggy Gut Creek and its fringe of

you guys, Army of Occupation? Whatcha gonna fight, yer shadow?"

Such were the greetings when the Tigers docked Sept. 23, 1944, in Cherbourg harbor, the second division to sail directly from the States to France in World War II.

Gen. Patton and Gen. Hodges had recently accomplished the St. Lo breakthrough, crushing a German Army in the Falaise-Argentan trap and chasing a retreating Wehrmacht across France. Now Third Army stood poised at the gates of Metz; First Army was astride the "holy soil" of Germany near Aachen.

Few anticipated the bitter fighting which still was ahead. The 10th soon was to find out for itself. Joining Gen. Patton's forces outside France's famed fortress city in late October, the Tigers received their baptism of fire in the shadow of mighty Fort Driant.

"Grab 'em by the nose and kick 'em in the pants!" was the essence of the tactical maneuver of envelopment. The Tigers were to do the pants kicking in an attack calculated to topple the Metz bastion for the first time in 1500 years.

The 5th and 95th Inf. Divs. would pinch the nose with an assault on the city itself. Meanwhile, the 90th Inf. Div. would drive northward, bridge the Moselle River on the vicinity of Thionville. Then the 10th's armor would crack the bridgehead line and play havoc with Metz's rear communications and supply, cut off the garrison's escape routes.

Tank-infantry teams of CC A and B crossed the rain-

walked ahead—first man of Patton's Third Army to cross the German border!

Two serpentine waterways—the Moselle and Saar—wriggle northward to a confluence just below Trier, Germany. The Siegfried Switch Line, east-west spur of the main fortifications, spans the distance between the two rivers to form the base of the Saar-Moselle triangle. CC B already had driven a steel wedge parallel to and seven miles south of the Siegfried fortifications. Now XX Corps directed Brig. Gen. Kenneth Althaus' CC A to cross behind CC B and attack northward to penetrate the formidable triangle defenses.

The Tigers struck at dawn, Nov. 21, moving in four columns along the Moselle Valley. They clawed their way forward to seize towns bordering the Siegfried three miles inside Germany.

Concrete fortifications made armor impotent, demanded infiltration and demolition by foot troops. Raked by 88s, mortars and small arms fire, doughs and Lt. Col. W. P. Clapp's engineers slowly and painfully yanked the dragon's teeth, blasted the Krauts from one pillbox after another. Five days of steady slugging netted little more than a mile—a costly mile.

Corps postponed the triangle's conquest. CC A left the Siegfried Line to fight beside CC B in mopping up pockets of resistance to the banks of the Saar west of Merzig. However, the triangle had not seen the last of the 10th.

The Tiger's first operation ended Dec. 5. Metz fell

soon afterward. No longer green, the Tigers had (1) liberated 100 square miles of France and occupied 50 square miles of Germany; (2) captured 2000 prisoners; (3) repulsed 11 counter-attacks; (4) destroyed vast quantities of enemy personnel and materiel.

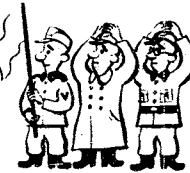
Warfare had been a brutal, exacting teacher but Tiger neophytes had learned their lesson well. They were to apply this knowledge with vigor in the Battle of the Bulge which began two weeks later.

TRIER — *Prey*

TO TIGERS' CLAWS

PREPARING for the final blow in mid-February, 1945, Western Front Armies straightened kinks in the line, massed men and materiel along the Reich's frontier.

Gen. Patton's Third Army had already cracked the vaunted West Wall east of the Luxembourg border, but the Saar-Moselle triangle to the south, which had served as a protective screen while von Rundstedt funneled supplies and troops through Trier for his December offensive, remained an unplucked thorn. Still a potential marshalling area for a German attack southward, the triangle hung like the Sword of Damocles over the Allied-held portion of the Saar Basin. It had



Meanwhile, nine towns in the western half bowed in rapid succession to the persuasive firepower of Col. Wade C. Gatchell's teams led by TF Cherry and TF Standish. By nightfall, TF Cherry had contacted cavalrymen who spanned the Moselle to seize Wincheringen.

CC B joined the fight the second day. TF Riley's tankers and TF O'Hara's doughs drove three miles through a thickly wooded area to envelope and seize Saarburg, wine capital of the Saar Valley. Nestled on the west bank of the Saar River, the triangle's largest town had been the division's goal three months previous. In the west, CC R moved steadily up the vineyard-lined Moselle Valley to join CC A on the final objective. The combat command then pushed its units eastward to high ground overlooking the Saar.

Except for scattered pockets of resistance undergoing speedy elimination by cavalry, the triangle operation was finished. In two days, the 10th had blitzed 85 square miles of German territory and seized 23 towns. The Tigers had their revenge but no time to enjoy it.

Maj. Gen. Walton H. Walker, XX Corps Commander, issued terse orders Feb. 21: "Bridge the Saar and take Trier!"

Retreating Germans had destroyed the Saar's three bridges. Infantrymen would have to cross in assault boats, storm the east bank. Then engineers would bridge the river for the 10th's rolling stock. Hazards of an assault crossing, normally a difficult and complex operation, were multiplied by enfilading fire from the

Siegfried's main fortifications.

A 94th regimental combat team moved to the crossing site, eight miles upriver from Trier and prepared to strike the reeling Germans before dawn Feb. 23. The blow never fell as planned.

Assault boats trucked from rear areas were delayed by road blocks; other transports were lost at night along the triangle's tortuous, mud-rutted roadways. The opportune moment for a crossing passed because of the insufficient number of boats. Nazis gained precious hours to reorganize and man their defenses.

Attackers soon learned how precious were those hours. With assault boats brought forward during the day, doughs attempted a crossing at 1630, 12 hours after the first try was scheduled. By then, the Germans were set. Artillery and automatic weapons raked the narrow west bank with devastating fire. Most of the assault craft did not reach the water. The few that did were sunk.

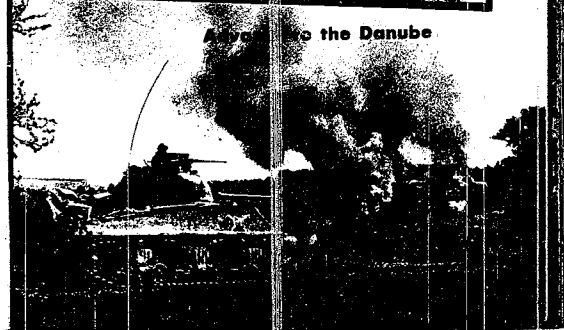
Not until 2300 hours did the infantry, screened by darkness, man-made smoke, and the greatest artillery barrage Col. Bernard F. Luebbemann's cannoneers ever laid, succeed in gaining a foothold on the east bank.

On the second day of the bridgehead, engineers attempted to span the Saar. Steel fragments of German shell and mortar fire ripped their pontoons, thwarted this and repeated efforts for the next three days.

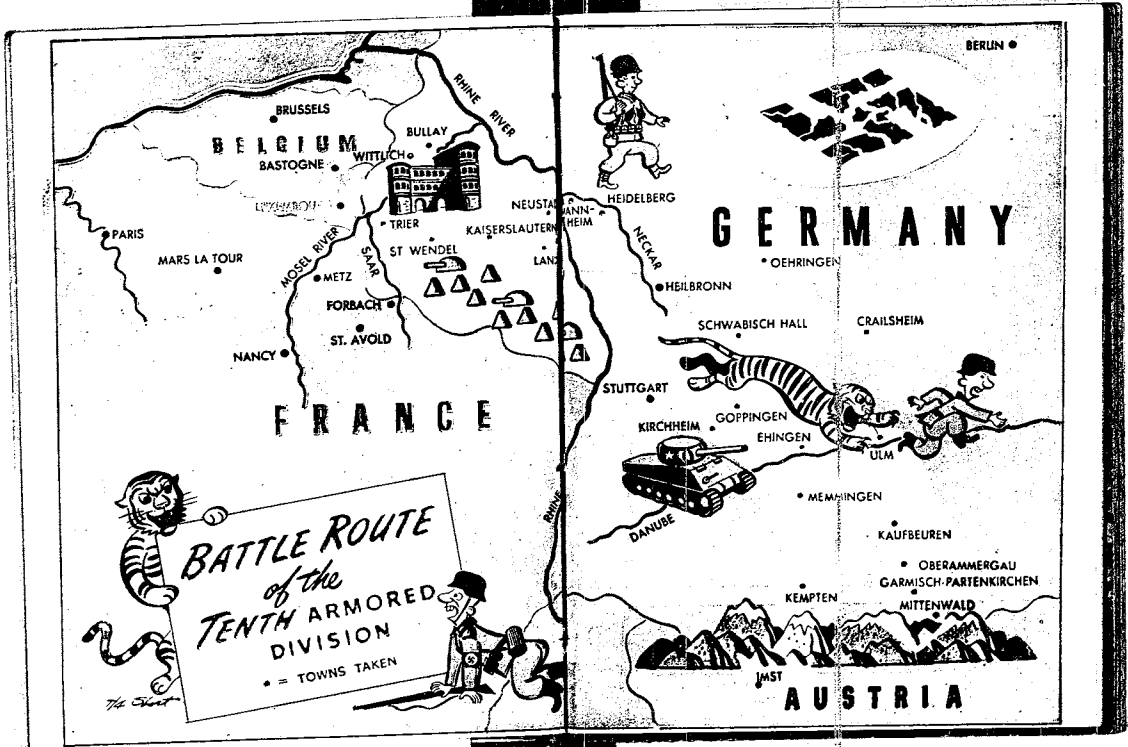
Three miles to the south, however, two 94th Div.



Worms, Germany: Armored Infantry Advances



March to the Danube



BRUSSELS
BULLAY
WITTLICH
BASTOGNE

PARIS
MARS LA TOUR
METZ
FORBACH
ST. AVOLD
NANCY

FRANCE

BATTLE ROUTE
of the
TENTH ARMORED
DIVISION
• = TOWNS TAKEN



HEIDELBERG

NEUSTADT
MANNHEIM

HEILBRONN

STUTTGART

KIRCHHEIM

GOPPINGEN

EHINGEN

MEMMINGEN

KAUFBEUREN

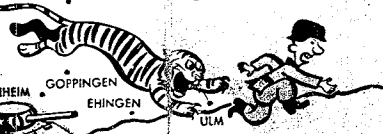
OBERAMMERGAU

GARMISCH-PARTENKIRCHEN

MITTENWALD

INNSBRUCK

AUSTRIA



GERMANY

BERLIN

OEHRINGEN

SCHWABISCH HALL

CRAILSHEIM

ULM

KEMPTEN

MITTENWALD

AUSTRIA



regiments had punched out a two-mile area on the Saar's west bank and successfully bridged the river. Gen. Morris then put his breakthrough plan into effect. Three armored infantry battalions, commanded by Gen. Piburn, crossed the river to attack southeast.

Next day, CC B's tanks and empty infantry half-tracks crossed a bridge in the 94th Div. sector. The Shermans and tracks lumbered northward for a junction with the doughs.

TF Riley's tankers and TF Richardson's doughs met in the little town of Irsch, flushed 100 Germans from 10 pillboxes. Infantry then boarded the vehicles and the armored column knifed eastward. The stalemate had been broken. The Tigers were rolling!

CC A and CCR crossed the Saar Feb. 26, following CCB's route of attack. TF Riley and TF Richardson pounced on Zerf, five miles east of the Saar and nine miles south of Trier. This German rail center became the elbow of a brilliant turning movement which Gen. Patton described as "a daring operation, well executed!"

While CC B held strong enemy forces at bay a few hundred yards to the east, CC A slipped through thick fog to Zerf, made a 90-degree turn to the north. Flanks exposed to withering enemy fire, TF Chamberlain lunged toward Trier.

Joined by TF Riley and TF Haskell, the trio carved a mile-wide swath through stubborn opposition. Maj.

Warren B. Haskell's troops first glimpsed the spires of Germany's oldest city early March 1. By 1100 they swooped down the eastern heights into the city and tackled German barracks which were being used as defensive strong points.

Five additional task forces converged on the city during the afternoon. TF Richardson entered from the south. TF Chamberlain and TF Norris blocked the southern gateway, while TF Riley and TF Cherry looped northeast to slam the back door.

"Fester Platz (Fortress Place) Trier-An-Der-Mosel" fell at 1500 March 2. In 28 hours, the 10th had crushed all resistance in the first major German city to fall to Third Army. So speedy had been its conquest that the German commander at Trier and his entire garrison of 3000 men were snared.

ABOVE Trier, the Moselle becomes the Mosel, points a multi-crooked finger northeastward to the Rhine at industrial Coblenz. The Tigers who had opened the southern gateway to the Mosel Valley would now drive up this broad, strategic avenue to further conquests.

Two thousand years before, Rome's Tenth Legion had conquered Trier, and Emperor Augustus Caesar's engineers had built a sturdy bridge across the Mosel. When TF Richardson fought its way to the river, the "Roman's Bridge," whose pillars were of the first ancient structure, stood intact. An inebriated Nazi had failed to blow it.

When Mosel...
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seize a north-south bridge over the Mosel at Bullay, half way between Trier and Coblenz. Finding the bridge blown, tankers destroyed a 50-vehicle convoy.

The operation ended March 12, and four days later the 10th struck the Nazis in a new direction. This was another of the lightning moves that led the 82nd German Corps to label the Tigers, "Ghost Division."

Armoraider's STITCH PALATINATE POCKET

LIKE the sweep of a giant pendulum, the Allied war machine had closed on the Rhine from the Netherlands to Coblenz by early March. The hill-studded Saar Basin and forested Palatinate, sprawled in the shape of a rough diamond, represented Germany's remaining holdings west of the Rhine.

Gen. Patton's Third Army now faced south the length of the Mosel and Gen. Patch's Seventh Army looked north into the Siegfried Line, both Armies forming the jaws of a huge nutcracker. The Saar-Palatinate—with its coal, its steel and its 100,000 German soldiers—was the nut. On March 14, the jaws began to close.

The 10th, at the cracker's fulcrum southeast of Trier, would make the difficult frontal assault eastward. The 94th and 80th Inf. Divs. dented the Nazi lines and the Tigers' own spearheads, CC A and B, darted through at dawn, March 16.

21

The German 2nd Mountain Div. challenged the advance, and the hills rang with the terrifying sound of screaming meemies, the familiar *whoosh-bang!* of the 88s and the ripping sound of lead-spitting burp guns.

At night, Tigers trained anti-aircraft searchlights on overhanging clouds to illuminate the battlegrounds. Fighting around the clock, the 10th pushed a 13-mile front 25 miles in three days, stood outside its first objective, St. Wendel, on March 18.

Twenty miles to the south, Seventh Army forces were cracking the outflanked Siegfried Line, pouring through for the first junction with Third Army.

Kaiserlautern was the next target for the 10th's rampaging tanks. Twenty-eight miles east of St. Wendel, this city of 100,000 was the key supply point for the two German armies facing the forces under Gen. Patton and Gen. Patch.

Resistance suddenly disintegrated as the Tigers attacked March 19. TF Cherry spurred 22 miles along the south flank while TF Chamberlain rolled 16 miles to the north. The following day, task forces swept through and beyond the vital rail center.

Six armored divisions now ran amuck in the dwindling pocket. Driving north, the Sixth Armd. Div. crisscrossed the 10th's eastward flight near Kaiserlautern. Of this movement, *Time* Magazine wrote:

...Armored divisions sometimes perform feats that would be textbook nightmares. Two Patton armored

22



10th Armored



"ALWAYS INTO THE ENEMY"

THE Rhine, Germany's legendary pre-Siegfried West Wall, had become a leaky dike by late March and Germany hadn't enough thumbs to plug five major breaches through which tides of Allied might poured.

The 10th's southward drive in the Palatinate had overrun Seventh Army boundaries and brought the Tigers under Gen. Patch's command. Seventh Army had bridged the Rhine near the cathedral city of Worms and was fighting in pulverized Mannheim on the river's east bank. To join the 44th Inf. Div. there, the 10th rolled across the historic stream March 28-29.

From Mannheim, where it empties into the Rhine, the bed of the Neckar River extends eastward for 20 miles, then curves gently southward through the Wehrmacht arsenal of Heilbronn. The Neckar became the hinge for Gen. Morris' tri-pronged blow at Germany's vitals March 30.

Reserve Command and TF Lichirie's swift cavalry reconnaissance troops knifed along the river's north

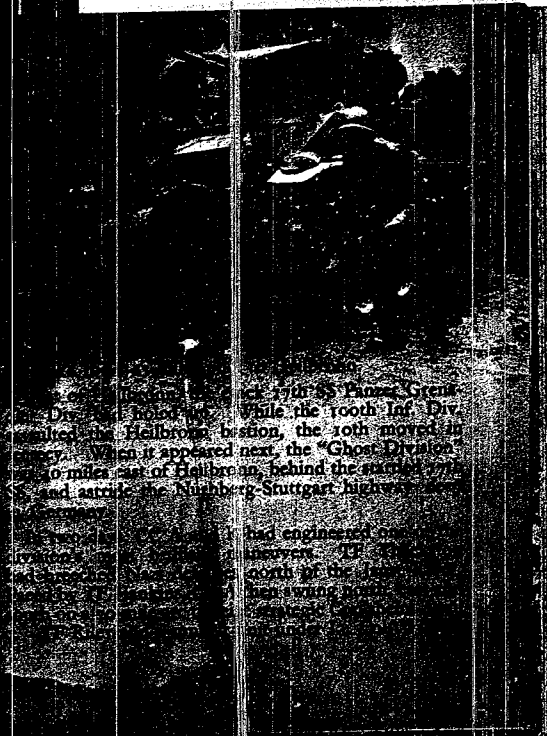
bank. CC A attacked southeast directly toward Heilbronn, and Col. Basil G. Thayer's CC B thrust southward paralleling the Rhine's east bank.

At the day's end, TF Chamberlain had struck rough going, smacking into Germany's 198th Inf. Div., one of the Western Front's strongest. Elsewhere, the sailing was smoother. Cavalrymen and TF Thackston had dashed 20 miles virtually unopposed. TF Richardson sped along the Mannheim-Stuttgart superhighway, and TF Riley advanced 10 miles, pushing through Heidelberg which had capitulated a few hours earlier to the 63rd Inf. Div.

Beneath Heidelberg's statue of Bismarck, the Tigers found a letter addressed to Gen. Eisenhower, signed by the "Women of Heidelberg," asking for the "resurrection of common sense and decency" and "a peace based on wisdom." Ahead were other Germans, with rifle in hand, who would ask the same—once the rifle could be taken away from them at the cost of an American life.

Screened by TF Chamberlain, elements of the First French Army hopped the Rhine near Speyer March 31. The 10th was the first Allied unit contacted by French troops east of the Rhine.

Tigers cracked the backbone of Nazi defenses in the Rhine-Neckar area April 1-2. In successive jumps of 16 and 22 miles, TF Riley's tankers arrived at the gates of Heilbronn. TF Richardson and TF Chamberlain crushed two shells of fanatical enemy resistance to reach CC B's objective 20 miles south of Mannheim and pivot



T. S. Roberts followed, drove west toward Heilbronn to further encircle the SS division.

The Nazis were swift to recover from the initial shock. A fading Wehrmacht and dying Luftwaffe suddenly were rejuvenated in demoniacal fury reminiscent of 1939-40.

Germans rocked Crailsheim with concussion bombs and shells, burned it with incendiaries, assaulted it with whole battalions of infantry. They severed the defenders' supply lifeline, a thin, 22-mile strip of highway.

But the Tigers stuck, threw back the Nazis' best. Giant C-47 transports landed supplies within rifle range of enemy lines. In a determined attack, Germans died within 40 feet of a 10th Armd. mess hall.

Of 325 enemy planes attacking Crailsheim, 50 were blasted from the skies by CC A's anti-aircraft defenses.

For four days the fighting at the tip of the Crailsheim finger was the most bitter along the Western Front. Revised Corps plans now called for the 10th to shift its entire weight in the direction of Heilbronn, where the 100th Div. still battled.

To attack westward, Brig. Gen. Piburn's troops pulled out of Crailsheim April 10. Two thousand Nazis went with them—as prisoners. Another thousand Germans were left behind—dead.

Task forces led by Lt. Col. Riley and Maj. Richard W. Ulrich hurdled the Kocher River April 11, attacking toward Oehringen, home of Bavarian Prince Hohenlohe-Oehringen.

for two days, then broke into the clear. This was the 10th's specialty—this broken field running. Like fleet-footed halfbacks, six armored columns of three combat commands streaked through the opposition's backfield. The objectives—Schwabische Hall, Wielandsweiler, Gaildorf, Goepfingen, Lorch, Kirchheim—flashed by in rapid succession.

Task Force Hankins grabbed bridges across the Rems and Fils Rivers intact, rolled 32 miles in two days to reach Kirchheim April 20 and slam the back door to Stuttgart, then under assault by French troops. The remainder of CC A, then commanded by Col. Thomas M. Brinkley, all of CC B, and Reserve Command closed rapidly on the same target.

Two days later TF Chamberlain and TF Richardson stood on the goal line—the fabled Danube River. Fleeing Nazis had no time to destroy one of the river's spans near Ehingen. The Tigers' 70-mile dash in four days had paid dividends.

By late April, the Third Reich was writhing in death throes. British pushed on Hamburg; American First and Ninth Armies lined the Elbe facing Berlin; Patton's Third Army entered Czechoslovakia.

The 10th poised above the vaunted National Redoubt. Here, the Nazis, by their own admission, would resist to a bloody end. Resistance was there—but when struck by the Tigers' mailed fist, it crumpled like a wind-filled paper bag.

Road-weary, battle-worn tankers and doughs hooked left into the Danube city of Ulm April 23, then crossed the river driving southeast toward the Austrian-German border. Ulm and the Iller Canal to the south proved initial stumbling blocks. These were brushed aside April 25 as the Shermans shook loose for the pulse-pounding race to the finish.

Mile upon mile, through town after town, armor ran rampant. In the 10th's path, swastikas gave way to white flags. The beaten Wehrmacht and die-hard SS troops surrendered in droves. In five days, the Tigers took 9000 prisoners, the equivalent of a Nazi panzer division.

TF Chamberlain captured Memmingen, liberating nearly 4000 Allied prisoners. TF Thackston swung east to flank Landsberg's notorious concentration camp. TF Hankins spearheaded 23 miles April 29 to occupy the world shrine, Oberammergau, home of the Passion Play, and Garmisch-Partenkirchen, scene of the 1936 winter Olympics. The same day, TF Chamberlain and Maj. James B. Duncan's combat teams crossed the Austrian border below Fussen in force, first Seventh Army unit to enter the country.

By April 30, the 10th was deep in Austria's snow-mantled Alps, only 40 miles north of the Italian border. TF Hankins had penetrated within 20 miles of Innsbruck, Austria. A week before, the 10th had been on the Danube. Now it was more than 100 miles to the south.

This was the finish line for the Tiger Division; it was



Teamwork

is essential to any successful combat organization, but in few instances does it surpass that found in the armored team. In the breakthrough type of fighting—mechanized warfare—tankmen and motorized infantry invariably are surrounded by the enemy. They advance swiftly, placing lives in the trust that engineers can clear mine fields and road blocks, that artillerymen can destroy a strongpoint, that signalmen can maintain communications, that ordnancemen can repair, replace damaged vehicles; that medics will care for the wounded.

The story of the Tenth Armored Division is the story of one such team—a winning team!



Panel: Information and Education Division, GSPF. Major General Wm H. H. Morris, Jr., commanding the 10th Armored Division, lent his cooperation, and basic material was supplied by his staff.

Tank-Infantry Enter Geiselhardt, Germany



THE STORY OF THE

Eleventh

ARMORED DIVISION



THUNDERBOLT



THE accomplishments of the 11th Armored Division are told briefly in this little booklet. Its simple statements of fact will recall to you men of the Division the glorious accomplishments of your particular units.

You tankers remember the horror of the days of Bastogne and the burning and exploding hulls of your comrades' tanks.

You infantrymen remember your friends who caught it from a bunker in the Siegfried Line, so that you might go on. And you artillerymen know with what courage your buddies lent the support of their weapons to the attack.

You hard-working men of the supply services who forced trucks through icy, traffic-laden roads of the Ardennes, all the way into tank-convoys lanes in "Indian Country," remember those who paved the way with their lives so that the road could be opened.

The Division dedicates this booklet to those whose lives were lost in keeping the Thunderbolt running.

N. E. Jager

MAJOR GENERAL . . . U.S. ARMY . . . COMMANDING



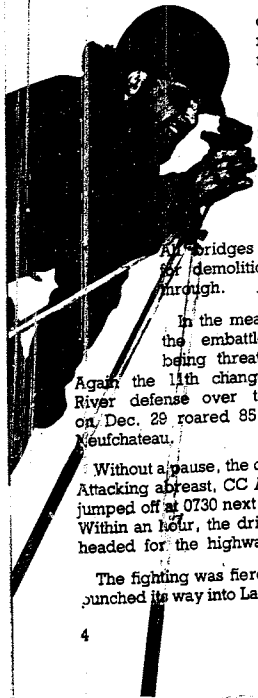
.... FIRST BLOOD

DEC. 30, 1944: The Nazis were bewildered. Intelligence had reported less than a week before: "The American 11th Armored Division has relieved the 94th Inf. Div. in the siege of the Lorient pocket."

Yet, here was the 11th, 500 miles from Lorient, smashing into the enemy's crack 5th and 15th Panzer Grenadier Divisions, and holding the vital Neufchateau-Bastogne highway. Once again, the speed of American armor had baffled the Germans.

The 11th was assigned to the Lorient Pocket on the day first elements of the division landed at Cherbourg. But that day was Dec. 16, when Field Marshal Gerd von Rundstedt unleashed his massive counter-offensive in the Ardennes. That scrapped original plans.

Tanks, half-tracks, armored cars, peeps and trucks took off in a dash through the rubble towns of Normandy, the Seine Valley, northeast through the Argonne to the banks



of the Meuse River. Bitter cold, rain and snow made the march a rugged test of armored skill.

On the Meuse, elements of the division were tactically deployed for the first time. Assigned to guard the river from Givet to Verdun, Combat Command A, commanded by Brig. Gen. Willard A. Holbrook, Jr., was divided into two task forces for patrol activity. All bridges across the river were prepared for demolition in the event Germans broke through.

In the meantime, the sole supply corridor to the embattled Americans in Bastogne was being threatened by German counter-attacks. Again the 11th changed its plans, turned the Meuse River defense over to the 17th Airborne Div., and on Dec. 29 roared 85 miles to an assembly area near Neufchateau.

Without a pause, the division launched into its first action. Attacking abreast, CC A and Col. Wesley W. Yale's CC B jumped off at 0730 next day with the 41st Cav. Recon Sqdn. Within an hour, the drive ran smack into an enemy attack headed for the highway.

The fighting was fierce and bitter. One CC B tank force punched its way into Lavaselle and seized high ground near

Brul and Houmont. Despite a heavy artillery barrage that night, all gains were held.

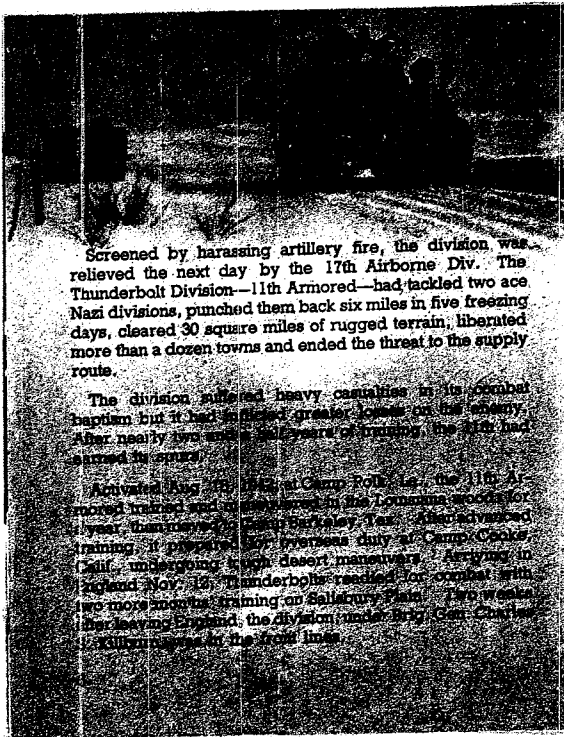
Reserve Command, under Col. Virgil Bell, struck next day, grabbed key terrain southwest of Pinsamont. Pressing on to Acul, CC B doughs were pinned down by heavy enemy artillery and mortar fire.

Twice, in the slugging battle, CC B armored doughs tried to seize the town of Chesnoigne but each time superior forces drove them off. The third and final assault was launched on New Year's morning. Tanks and artillery laid down massed fire while the infantry followed up. The town was completely secured by noon.

While CC B regrouped, 13 artillery battalions hurled a paralyzing barrage of fire on the heavily defended Bois des Valets. Armored doughs penetrated the thick woods and cleaned it out. Seizure of this key point doomed the German effort to cut the supply route.

CC B next caught Meuse St. Etienne in a pincers move Jan. 2, 1945, and held it against a powerful counter-attack.





Screened by harassing artillery fire, the division was relieved the next day by the 17th Airborne Div. The Thunderbolt Division—11th Armored—had tackled two ace Nazi divisions, punched them back six miles in five freezing days, cleared 30 square miles of rugged terrain, liberated more than a dozen towns and ended the threat to the supply route.

The division suffered heavy casualties in its combat baptism but it had inflicted greater losses on the enemy. After nearly two and a half years of training, the 11th had earned its stripes.

Activated Aug. 27, 1942, at Camp Pendleton, the 11th Armored trained and maneuvered in the Longinus woods for a year, transferred to Camp Berkeley, Tex. After advanced training, it prepared for overseas duty at Camp Cooke, Calif., undergoing high desert maneuvers. Arriving in England Nov. 13, Thunderbolt's readiness for combat with two more months' training on Salisbury Plain. Two weeks after leaving England, the division under Lt. Gen. Charles Kilgus was in the front lines.

PINCH

JAN. 13, 1945: Von Rundstedt had lost his great gamble. The Bulge was shrinking under the hammer blows of Allied power. With the 11th as spearhead, Third Army's VIII Corps kicked off to drive a northbound wedge into the enemy line, contact First Army elements knifing southward in the vicinity of Houfalize.

Attacking in column formation along the Longchamps-Bertogne highway northeast of Bastogne, CC A sparked the drive. Massed artillery fire adjusted by liaison planes pulverized an enemy counter-attack. Division engineers quickly breached a mine field that threatened to slow the advance.



Farther east, CC B plunged through Foy and Recogne to Noville where the column was forced to halt before stiffening resistance. By-passing Noville on Jan. 15, CC B seized high wooded ground east of the town. Meanwhile, CC A cleared

Plad Du Mont woods captured 400 enemy prisoners. A sudden counter-attack which knocked out nine tanks prevented further gains.

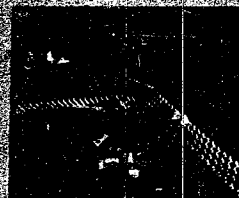
Elements of the 41st Cav. Recon Sqdn. commanded by Lt. Col. Herbert M. Foy, Jr., probed to the northeast in advance of combat commands, making contact with First Army patrols. Early Jan. 16 they met troops of First Army's 2nd Arm. Div. at Grinvel, on l'Ourthe River just west of Houffalize.

Initial contact was followed by CCIA's infantry, which battled artillery and sniper fire, blasted through road blocks. Furiously resisting Germans fired small arms, artillery and rockets at the advancing troops in a vain attempt to drive them out. Div Arty answered with a crushing barrage of 12,000 rounds.

The linkup was secure. Enemy units attempting to withdraw from the huge trap were cut off and mopped up by supporting infantry. The way was paved for an all-out smash at the enemy's touted Siegfried line.

In the drive for Houffalize, there were numerous examples of heroism. Sgt. (then Capt.) Wayne E. Van Dyke, Heavy Gunner in Co. B, 4th Tank Bn., earned a Silver Star for his action at Noville when his tank was knocked out by

an SS, he was left in the town with a seriously wounded driver and bow gunner. The tank commander and leader went to the rear to direct other tanks around the town. Van Dyke pulled the driver and bow gunner from the tank, dragged them over to a church wall, played



dead while German troops marched through the town.

Van Dyke sprawled on the driver who was suffering from shock. Once a curious German came over to the apparently lifeless group and looked at the bow gunner's wrist watch but didn't touch him.

After lying in this position for two hours, Van Dyke brought the two men into the church and placed the driver, who was unable to go farther, near the altar. Having given him first aid, Van Dyke and the bow gunner crawled back to their lines. The driver, in the meantime, was treated by a German medic and next day was rescued by his own men when they pushed into the town.

Another Co. B, 41st tank, T/S (then Pfc) Herbert Burr, Kansas City, Mo., found himself the only one of his crew able to carry on after two 88 hits knocked out his tank just outside of Houffalize. With the tank commander and gunner dead, the loader wounded, driver evacuated, the turret burning, Burr remained in the assistant driver's seat and fired his machine gun at the enemy shielded by a haystack. After knocking out the crew, Burr pulled the wounded loader from the burning tank, crawled 200 yards through snow back to the CP, dragging his helpless buddy. Then he crept back to the tank, extinguished the fire and drove it back. Burr was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross.

Capt. John F. Maggesin, Aurora, Ill., 42nd Tank Bn., won a Silver Star for leading his company against a counter-attack after his own tank was knocked out. Capt. Maggesin directed the assault from atop his tank, then rescued two wounded men under fire.

Alone in a tank hit by enemy fire, Lt. William J. Kieffer, Rockford, Ill., an artillery observer, directed effective fire on anti-tank guns by radio. Lt. Kieffer also was awarded a Silver Star.



PLUNGE

THE Bulge liquidated, the 11th Armored began a drive to pierce the Siegfried Line. It was a job for infantry, engineers and artillery. Mines had to be cleared, pillboxes crushed, road blocks demolished. To CC R went the assignment of penetrating the complex defenses, punching a hole to let the armor through.

At the edge of the line, CC R pulled a fast one. The Germans were expecting an armored frontal attack with the usual heavy artillery preparation. Instead, the command jumped off before dawn without artillery.

The surprise was complete. When dawn came, Nazis manning the bunkers and pillboxes found themselves surrounded—all their carefully plotted interlocking fields of fire outflanked and three towns taken.



Later, when CC R struck the main defenses of the Line the job had to be done the usual way. With heavy artillery preparation, the 63rd and 55th Armd. Inf. Bns. jumped off Feb. 6 from high ground overlooking the Line near Lutzkampen. Progress was slow as armored doughs cut their way through the barbed wire and mine fields. Lutzkampen fell the next day. Positions then were consolidated and preparations made for the last lunge against the Line.

The final assault began Feb. 17. CC R, following up a tremendous artillery barrage, stabbed two kilometers through the main defenses to seize Grosskempenberg. The desperate, stubborn enemy used every weapon available to halt the drive but Thunderbolt doughs pressed on to wrest two more kilometers the following day. Roscheid, key point in the center of the line, fell by Feb. 20.

Blasting pathways through the dragon's teeth, clearing menacing mine fields and booby traps, the 56th Armd. Engr. Bn., commanded by Lt. Col. Andrew V. Inge, opened the hole for the tanks and half-tracks which followed almost immediately.

North and northwest of Roscheid, an area three miles wide and two miles deep was breached. During the costly operation, 197 bunkers and pillboxes were crushed, 432 prisoners taken and approximately 400 Germans killed.

The 11th was now in open terrain, but soft, sticky ooze replaced the frozen ground that the hard-driving Thunderbolt tanks had encountered. While plans were perfected for the next drive, tankers and doughs took an earned respite.

THE RHINE

MARCH 3, 1945: Gerolstern on the Kyll River was the objective as CC B smashed forward against intense artillery and tank fire of the hard, tough German 5th Parachute Div. Jumping off from a high ridge overlooking a broad, flat plain, tankers were in their glory, able to use the tactics for which they had been trained.

Maneuvering freely, the tanks swept across the favorable terrain, backed up by punishing massed fire from artillery and TDs. Close behind, half-tracks brought up supporting infantry. At the end of the day, CC B had advanced four miles, seized Fleringen.

In the meantime, CC A joined the attack, drove on Wascheid while the 56th Engineers cleared extensive mine fields.

Resistance began to crumble under the trip-hammer blows of the 11th. Wallersheim and Budesheim fell to CC B after five enemy tanks and six 88s were knocked out. Seizing Scheuern, Kalenborn and Epth, CC B raced on, reaching the Kyll River at Ober Bettingen and Nieder Bettingen.

March 4. A bridgehead was swiftly established and, under terrific fire from enemy forces dug in on the opposite bank, the engineers began construction of a treadway bridge.

At Gerolstein, reached by the 90th Inf. Div., CC A crossed the Kyll on a captured span. Abandoning its bridging operations at Nieder Bettingen, CC B swung south to cross the Kyll behind CC A.

The Kyll crossing broke the Wehrmacht's back in the 11th's sector. Fighting only delaying actions at roadblocks, mine fields and blown bridges, the enemy retreated to the east. CC A smashed to the outskirts of Kelberg, seized the town on the night of March 7 despite anti-tank, mortar and rocket fire. Six enemy tanks were destroyed.

Driving through Mayen to Andernach on the Rhine, CC A cut the confused Nazi columns to ribbons. Simultaneously, CC B struck northeast from Kelberg through Mullenbach and Kempenich to the Rhineland town of Brohl. Both Andernach and Brohl fell March 9; Thunderbolt units rolled north along the Rhine to meet First Army forces and snap shut a steel trap on six enemy divisions.

It was in Andernach that a lesson learned 25 years ago by two 11th commanders paid off. Two cavalry officers in the American Army of Occupation after World War I studied the Andernach sector during maneuvers held along the Rhine. On many of the maneuvers Capt. Virgil Bell, Columbus, Ga., was involved in the defense of the town while 2nd Lt. Willard Holbrook, Washington, D.C., took part in the attack.

When the Thunderbolt division seized Andernach, Brig. Gen. Holbrook led CC A into the town. Col. Bell commanded CC R.

Results of the drive included the capture of dozens of towns, 10,883 prisoners, including the CG of the 277th Volksgrenadier Div. and his staff. Credit for the capture of the Nazi major general went to S/Sgt. Carlton E. Cassidy, Clayton, N.J., who was on a foot reconnaissance mission. Passing a cafe in a small German village, Cassidy signaled his squad to stand by while he went in to investigate.

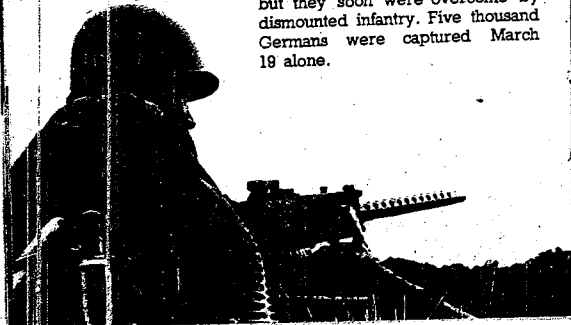
Armed with a .45 pistol, he pushed open the door and bumped into two Wehrmacht soldiers emerging from the cellar. They immediately threw up their hands and asked if they could go downstairs and bring up their comrades. The "comrades" turned out to be the general and his complete staff, consisting of 24 officers.



Swinging south, the 11th took off March 17 in Third Army's drive to clean out the Saar-Moselle-Rhine pocket. Under command of Maj. Gen. (then Brig. Gen.) Holmes E. Dager, the Thunderbolt division spanned the Moselle in the Kobern-Winningen area as part of XII Corps.

Light resistance met CC B as it swept through Altlay, Lauzenhausen, Buchenbeuren, Rhaumen, and Sulzbach. Attacking in the afternoon, CC A tore through Kappel toward Kirchberg. In a closely coordinated air-ground strike, the division raced ahead 30 kilometers the following day, adding Kirchberg and Gehweiler to the lengthening string of towns taken.

At Kirm there was scattered resistance; bridges were blown over the Nahe River, but the attack rolled through Marxheim and Meisenheim. Enemy bazookas, AT guns and infantry held up the advance at Meisenheim, but they soon were overcome by dismounted infantry. Five thousand Germans were captured March 18 alone.



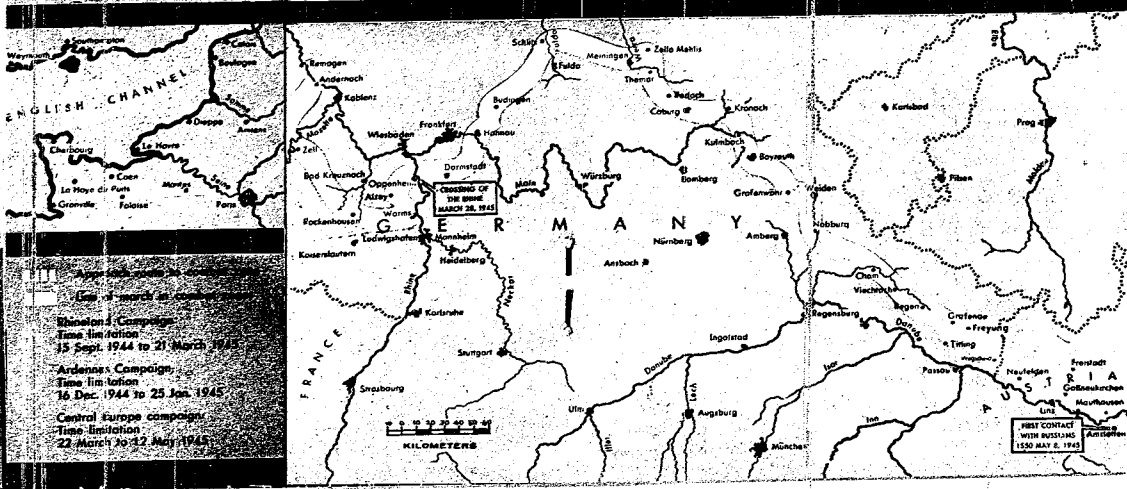
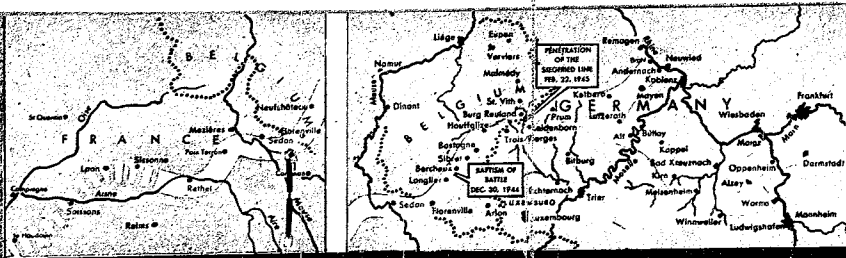
Thunderbolt doughs
march to Bulge Battle



Maj. Gen. Dager
and new "Pershing" tank



THE Eleventh IN THE ETO

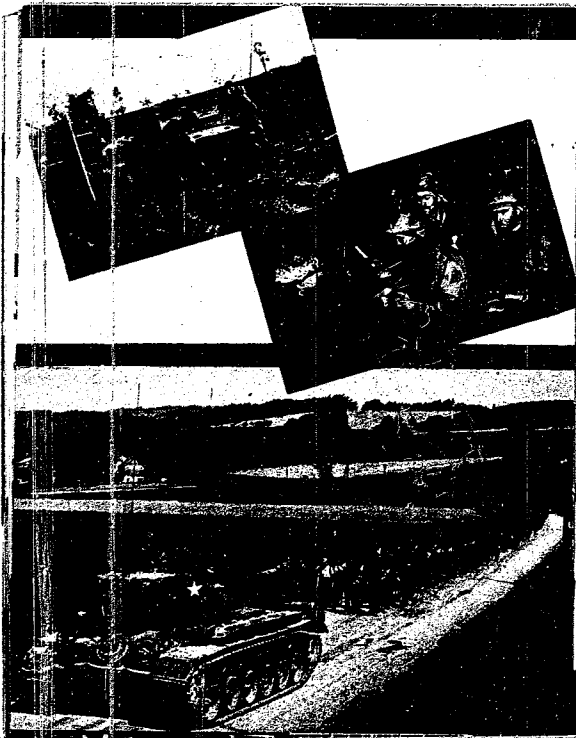


Appenian Campaign
 Time limitation
 13 Sept. 1944 to 21 March 1945

Rhineland Campaign
 Time limitation
 15 Dec. 1944 to 25 Jan. 1945

Ardennes Campaign
 Time limitation
 16 Dec. 1944 to 25 Jan. 1945

Central Europe Campaign
 Time limitation
 22 March to 12 May 1945



Teaming up for the final blow, CC A and CC B smashed to within a few kilometers of the ancient Rhineland city of Worms. After contacting the 4th Armd. Div., CC A wheeled to the north, began mopping up remnants of German resistance on the morning of the 21st. Thrusting southward, CC B met determined opposition at an airfield on the outskirts of Worms, crushed it in one hour.

Another Thunderbolt mission was accomplished. In a 50-hour, 75-mile dash, CC A and CC B captured 79 towns, destroyed undetermined amounts of enemy equipment and sent 11,789 more prisoners to the bulging cages. While Allied forces mopped up and consolidated along the Rhine, the 11th prepared to cross this final barrier. The Germans were whipped west of the Rhine. They had suffered a knockout blow from which they never would recover.



BEGINS



CCROSSING the Rhine March 28 at Oppenheim, the 11th roared through ruined Darmstadt and swept on to Hanau where resistance was encountered from German replacement troops and student engineer non-coms. Under strong pressure, the Germans reluctantly fell back to Gelnhausen where CC A ran up against mines, road blocks, mortar and anti-tank fire.

By-passing Gelnhausen, CC A sped on to converge with CC B on Fulda, key communications center, March 31. While CC B blasted the town, supporting infantry rushed up from the rear, moved in and cleaned out the defenders.

The division changed its course sharply April 1. Nazi big shots, fleeing from Berlin in the face of the Red Army threat to the capital, were reported to have moved to the vicinity of Arnstadt and Kranichfeld, due east of Fulda.

Hitler himself was said to be in the group. The division plunged into the Thuringian Forest, headed for the towns of Oberhof and Suhl.

Taking parallel routes, CC A and CC B spurred 30 miles beyond Fulda to the Werra River near Meiningen. At Grimmenthal, the division liberated 400 Allied prisoners. Suhl, one of the two objectives in the lightning drive, was reached by CC A April 3, but it took a day's stiff fighting to clear the town of stubborn Volkssturm troops.

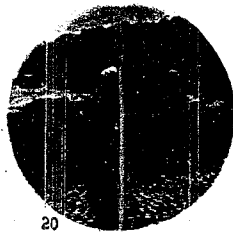
Despite a delay at the Werra because of a blown bridge, CC B reached Oberhof the afternoon of April 3, met strong resistance which was knocked out by heavy artillery bombardment. The town was secured the following morning.

While the two columns drove to the Werra, CC R swept from Steinbach Hallenberg to seize Zella Mehlis, home of the famed Walther small arms plants. Here, the 22nd Tank Bn. captured one of the largest concentrations of pistols, rifles and automatic weapons in Germany.

Said 1st/Sgt. Daniel H. Boone, Naples, Tex., Co. B, 22nd: "I feel like I'm sitting on the vault at Fort Knox, Ky., where they keep all the gold. And, on the other hand, I'm so sick of looking at German pistols that I never want to see another."

BAVARIA

NOW only 80 miles from the Czechoslovakian border, the 11th changed direction, shooting its swift-moving spearheads to the southeast. The enemy's retreat turned into a rout — prisoners overtaken by the flying advance columns were dazed by the Thunderbolt's speed. As the 11th flashed through Bavaria, supporting infantry often was unable to keep up and several times Corps was forced to halt the division to allow doughs to catch up. Pessimistic front line men sensed the kill, talked guardedly and hopefully of the end.



20

The two combat commands, CCA and CCB, drove on in parallel columns. Themar, Scheusingen and Hildburghausen fell in rapid succession to CC A, while CCB knocked out Zeilfeld. Resistance was expected in Coburg where the two columns were to converge but the garrison at Coburg Castle, on

Striking swiftly on the 10th, the 11th moved on to take Kronach, and the next day entered Kumbach where light small arms fire was encountered. While part of the command was clearing out the town, other elements sped on to occupy Stadt Steinach and Unter Steinach. In this drive two 240mm railway guns were captured intact as well as an experimental electronics laboratory specializing in ultra-high frequency radio which had been moved from Berlin only a few days before.

Thunderbolt tankers also ran up against a group of teenage youngsters, some of whom were only 13 years old. The youths had been given uniforms a few days previous to the Americans' approach and had been ordered to leave the town. Home sick, hungry and tired, they were picked up while carrying white flags by an MP detachment under Maj.

21



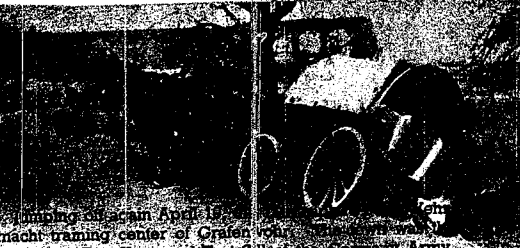
Booming again April 13, the Wehrmacht training center of Grafenwöhr, the combined Fort Knox and Fort Sill of the Germany Army, the birthplace of German panzer tactics. American tankers tested the terrain, found it like Louisiana.

The largest chemical warfare supply dump in Germany also was captured, with an estimated 3,000,000 rounds of chemical artillery shells and thousands of gas mines.

The Thunderbolt drove on, leading elements liberated 1722 Allied prisoners at Weiden April 22. Nabburg, Schwarzenfeld and Cham fell without resistance. South of Cham an airfield was captured with 50 enemy planes. After it was seized, three more aircraft, their pilots unaware that it was in American hands, landed and were seized.

Men of the 11th had a first-hand glimpse of SS atrocities in their drive to the Danube. Hundreds of bodies of political prisoners lay along the route of march, which led from the Flossenburg concentration camp. The SS had marched the prisoners out of the camp and killed those who could not keep up. On the way, tankmen liberated

Two tank men, Pfc Al Houck, Portland, Ore., and Pfc Chester Gayde, Detroit, Mich., captured five Germans on a hilltop overlooking Bayreuth. The two tankers headed for a plowed corner of a field to dig foxholes in the soft ground. Just inside the fence, in high grass, they found the Germans armed with bazookas. The Nazis, overpowered by the armored vehicles in the vicinity, threw down their arms and surrendered.



23

thousands of undernourished Allied prisoners of war.

Reaching the Regen River April 24, the rapid advance was halted by a blown bridge at the village of Regen. Dismounted infantry from CC B crossed the stream and seized the town after a short but sharp struggle. That night the 56th Engineers threw a trestle bridge across the river and the column resumed its advance next morning.

Smashing ahead, CC A swept through Grafenau, overtaking the Japanese legation of 37 men, women and children fleeing to Vienna by rail. Freyung fell to CC A on the morning of April 26 while CC B swung south of the city, and early that night the advance elements of CC A crossed the Austrian border.

As the main bodies of the division moved up and consolidated their positions in the next four days, heavy resistance developed at the border town of Wegscheid. Small arms, mortar, anti-tank and artillery fire burst from the town itself and surrounding woods. Div Arty moved up, amid a devastating barrage. Infantry closed in from the east and north, gained the summit of a series of hills overlooking the town, and on the night of April 30, stormed into the town and cleared it.

The end of April found the fast-stepping 11th Armored the easternmost division in the American Army, 250 miles from Fuida and with a record bag of prisoners. In the swift onslaught the Thunderbolt had liberated more than 3000 Allied PWs and hundreds of German political prisoners. As the end of the war neared, the 11th was poised for the last strike into Austria.



PLUNGING across the Austrian border May 1, CC A and CC B followed parallel routes toward the Danube River. Tearing through fanatical SS resistance and several defended road blocks, CC A grabbed Rohrbach and Neufelden, forded the Muhl River at Neufelden and struck out for the southeast. CC B also changed direction, sped to Zwettl, cutting the main north-south highway leading to Linz and continued east while CC A went on to Linz.

Wrote Russell W. Davenport in the New York Post:

There is no doubt in my mind that the most important "secret weapon" of this war is the tremendous driving power of the Americans. These boys of Gen. Dager's 11th Armored have never been in reserve for more than a few days at a time since they landed



The liberation of tattered, starved-looking slave laborers, mainly Russians, Poles and Yugoslavs, resulted in dancing in the streets.

Relieved by the 65th Inf. Div., the 11th pushed out of Linz. Advancing down the Danube, a reconnaissance patrol uncovered two notorious concentration camps at Mauthausen and Gusen. Here were 18,000 political prisoners, representing every country in Europe, all reduced to living skeletons and ridden with disease. The bodies of more than 500 were stacked in an area between two barracks. The few long-term prisoners still alive said that at least 45,000 bodies had been burned in the huge crematorium in four years. Other thousands were killed in the gas chambers, injected with poison or beaten to death.

The 11th rushed all available medical facilities to Mauthausen to prevent further loss of life while cavalry patrols probed eastward, seeking contact with the Red Army advancing westward from Vienna. At 1550, May 8, Troop A, 41st, commanded by Lt. Kedar B. Collins, Albany, Ga., met a patrol of the Soviet Seventh Guards Div., first unit of Third Army to link up with the Red Army.





Meeting took place in the midst of battle. The Soviet patrol of seven tanks was following the trail of its planes strafing and bombing a German column of SS Panzer troops. In the face of the Soviet advance, the American patrol, consisting of an armored car and three peeps, was almost taken under fire.

Sgt. John L. Brady, riding in the lead peep, leaped up and shouted: "We are Americans!" Lt. Gene Ellenson, Coral Gables, Fla., and Lt. Richard L. Lucas, Mt. Carmel, Ill., shot up flares to identify their nationality. The Red Army troops replied with their flares and jumped out to join the Americans. First Yank to meet the Soviet patrol was T/4 Frank H. Johnson, Reno, Nev., who was greeted by Lt. Pyodor A. Kiseyev.

T/Sgt. Clarence L. Barts, Chicago, at the time of the meeting, was mistaken for a German. The Red Army

soldiers demanded his pistol. When they learned he was an American, they hugged and kissed him.

Others who took part in the historic junction of the victorious armies were Cpl. Theodore Barton, Brisbane, Australia, a released PW who acted as interpreter; Pfc Robert P. Vanderhagen, E. Detroit, Mich.; T/Sgt. Joseph P. McTigue, Louisville, Ky.; Cpl. Will Richmond, Trenton, N.J.; Pfc Michael Tancredi, Springfield, Mass.; Sgt. Marvin H. Estes, Montrose, Colo.; T/S Andrew Florey, Medford, Ore.

Later that day, commanders of three German military units offered to surrender unconditionally to the division. These were the 2nd SS Panzer Corps, with 50,000 troops; the 8th German Army, strength 100,000; the Russian Forces of Liberation, a Nazi-sponsored army, 100,000 strong. All were told to remain in place.





ACCOMPLISHED

AT 0001 May 9, the war officially ended. The mission of the Allied Armies — unconditional surrender of Germany — was accomplished. The 11th Armd. Div., after four months and 10 days of combat, ended the European war in the forefront of the American eastern drive.

Following the surrender, men of the Thunderbolt Division could take stock of their achievements. They had captured 76,229 prisoners, nearly twice as many as were taken by the entire American Army in World War I. The figure did not include 10,000 prisoners turned over to

supporting infantry divisions for evacuation or 34,125 German troops who violated surrender terms by fleeing from the Red Army. These troops were rounded up and turned over to the Soviet forces.

The 11th had swept across Germany in one of the swiftest advances in military history, captured hundreds of cities and towns, destroyed a good part of the German forces and liberated thousands of Allied prisoners and slave laborers.

To accomplish its mission, the 11th functioned as a smooth-working, hard-striking team. Besides the armored infantry and tank battalions, the 183rd FA Gp. and attached units played an important role. Troops such as the 575th AA Bn., 705th, 602nd and 811th TD Bns., 991st Engr. Trdwy



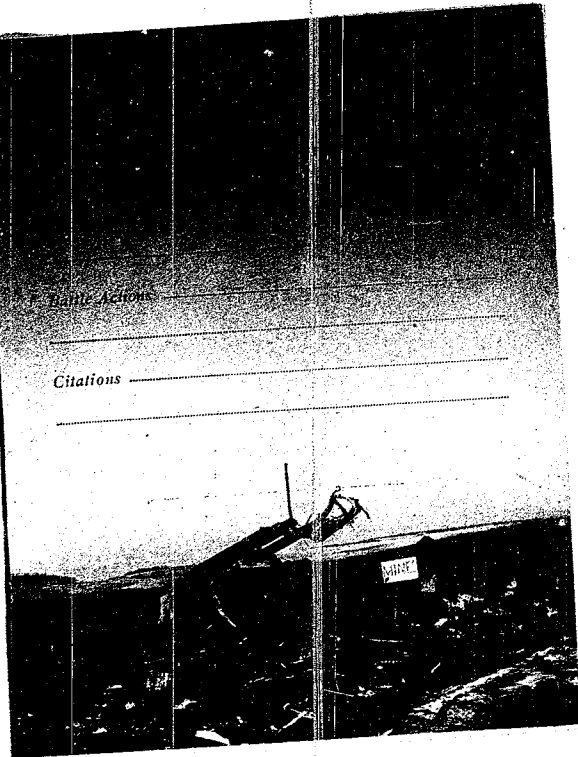


Br. Co., and 996th Engr. Trdwy Br. Co. helped in beating the Germans into submission. In many of the battles the 11th had the support of the XIX TAC.

Men of the 81st Medic Bn. worked tirelessly, treating and evacuating casualties swiftly and efficiently. Vehicles and weapons were kept in fighting trim under all conditions of weather and terrain by Bn. Truck

drivers of the 361st QM Trk Co., and 659th QM Truck Co., not only delivered over ever-lengthening lines but on one occasion dismounted and fought with the infantry. Wire men, radio operators and messengers came in for their share of praise also.

It was a team that adapted itself smoothly to ever-changing conditions under the control of the division staff, a team that met and defeated the best the enemy could throw against it. The 11th Armored accomplished every mission, made a combat record in which every Thunderbolt soldier could take genuine pride.



Battle Actions _____

Citations _____



LEBENSRAUM



...of the ...
...of the ...
...of the ...

Many of our comrades were fighting along the
coast from the Mauthausen Line to Austria. To
the memory of those who gave their lives
that the enemy in Europe might be defeated, let us dedicate these
pages. May those gallant dead live here as they will live forever
in the hearts of those who fought beside them.

We know not what we shall be called upon to do in the future,
but we do know that, whatever our mission may be, it will be
accomplished with the same magnificent fighting spirit which
has given this division a record of achievement equalled by few.
Nothing can stop us. Little can delay us.

Admiral

Major General, Commanding



Division
his cooperation, and basic material was sup

Early May 3, 1945, the 23rd Tank Bn. crossed the Austrian border, the division's objective, at Kufstein. There the mad drive halted—halted because a disorganized and defeated enemy no longer opposed it.

The war in Italy was over; American troops effected a juncture at the Brenner Pass. Germany's unconditional surrender followed on May 8. The combat job in Europe was complete.

Only then did the grimy, weary tankers and armored doughs commanded by Maj. Gen. Roderick R. Allen stop to reflect their achievements — blazing a path from the jump-off at Luneville, France, through the heart of Germany's Redoubt to the Austrian Alps.

When the war ended in the ETO, the 12th had but two battle stars to its credit, small acknowledgement when compared to the combat decorations of the veteran Seventh Army infantry divisions which teamed with the 12th from time to time — the 3rd, 45th, 79th, 36th and other veteran outfits.

But the Hellcat's stars represented the blue chip battles, the battles of the Rhineland and Central Europe. Men of the 12th had earned those stars the hard way.

From the time the division first went into the line, Dec. 7, 1944, until the end came — 151 rugged days later — elements of the division were in action continuously. One day's rest was all that the three armored field artillery battalions — the 493rd, 494th and 495th — received.

2

Much of the going was tough. Besides piercing the Maginot and Siegfried Lines, "Bloody Herrlisheim," a little town north of Strasbourg, where the inexperienced Hellcats paid a terrific price for combat seasoning, never will be forgotten.

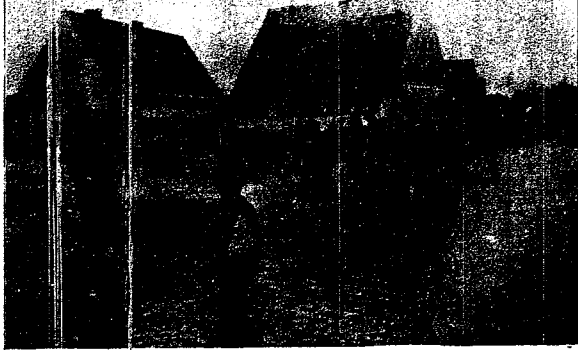
The 12th waged its only actual defensive battle of the war at Herrlisheim when it smacked into a numerically superior and well entrenched enemy. But while sustaining many casualties, the Hellcats thwarted repeated German attempts to break out of the riverhead pocket and strike south toward the political prize of Strasbourg. It was here that the 12th was dubbed the "Suicide Division" by the Germans, who eventually withdrew still puzzled by American tenacity. Later, according to Nazi PWs, Hellcats became one of the two most feared divisions on the Western Front. The other outfit was the fabulous 1st Armored.



The Hellcat Division came of age at Herfordheim. When the battle it never was stopped. Its strokes were swift. Lashed to Gen. George S. Patton, Jr., to break the Colmar pocket, the 12th became the "Mystery Division," spearhead for Third Army's sensational dash from Trier to the Rhine. On its return to Seventh Army, the division blazed a route through the Redoubt into Austria.

During its five months of combat, 12th Armored captured 70,166 German prisoners, seven times its own strength. Hellcat columns blasted through 3000 cities and towns. Airfields, factories, ammunition and supply dumps fell before the armor as it pierced deep into Germany. Many railroad supply trains were shot up or captured; thousands of enemy vehicles and weapons were destroyed.

The 12th was a blue chip division!



Sept. 15, 1942: The governors of Kentucky and Tennessee met at the newly-constructed Camp Campbell for the activation of the 12th Arm'd. Div. Although its postal address was Kentucky, the camp overlapped into both states between Hopkinsville, Ky., and Clarksville, Tenn.

A Kentuckian, Maj. Gen. Carlos Brewer, was the division's first commander, supervising its training until a few weeks before the Hellcats shipped to England two years later.

Recruits arrived from every state in the Union as reception centers responded to the call for more armor men. Training began Nov. 9, 1942, and continued at Camp Campbell until September, 1943, when the division went on maneuvers in Tennessee for three months.

Reorganization and streamlining followed maneuvers. Regiments were replaced by battalions to provide smaller, faster task forces as the 12th moved to Camp Barkeley, Tex., for additional training.

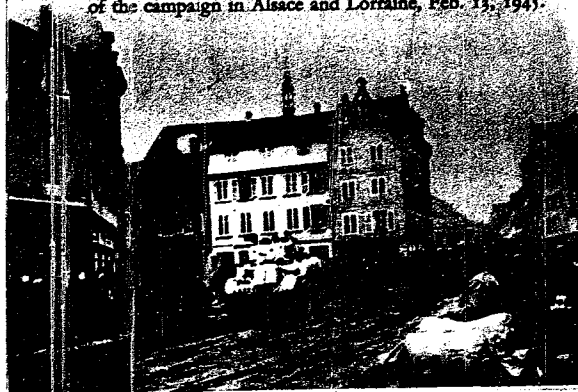
While at Camp Barkeley, the 44th Tank Bn. shipped to the Pacific Theater on a special mission, later distinguished itself as the first unit to enter Manila. Lt. Col. Tom Ross, battalion commander, was killed during the action. The 44th was replaced by the 714th Tank Bn., a former division unit.

The 12th staged at Camp Shanks, N.Y., and sailed for England Sept. 20, 1944, as Gen. Allen assumed command. Maj. Gen. Douglass Greene, formerly with

the 16th Armd. Div., commanded the division a few weeks prior to shipping.

Landing at Liverpool, Oct. 2, the division proceeded to Tidworth Barracks in southeastern England. Five weeks later, the 12th crossed the Channel, landed at Le Havre and went to an assembly area near Auffay, France. Originally it was assigned to Ninth Army, but orders were switched after advance parties departed and the 12th became part of Gen. Alexander M. Patch's Seventh U.S. Army.

Moving across France, Hellcats paused at Luneville to reassemble. The 572nd AAA (AW) Bn., which was to remain with the division throughout its combat operations, joined forces as did the 827th TD Bn., a Negro outfit which was relieved at the conclusion of the campaign in Alsace and Lorraine, Feb. 13, 1945.



HELLCATS *Sharpen Claws* AT HERRLISHEIM

DEC. 5, 1944: The 12th Armd. signalled its readiness when the No. 2 gun section of Btry. A, 493rd Armd. FA Bn., fired the first round near Weisslingen. The battery, commanded by Capt. William P. Wilson, Knoxville, Tenn., and the battalion supported the 44th Inf. Div.

The same day, the 12th was assigned to XV Corps and ordered to relieve the 4th Armd. Div. Under Brig. Gen. Riley F. Ennis, Combat Command A shoved off for Kirrberg and underwent a strafing attack for the first time but sustained no casualties. The entire division moved into the line Dec. 7 and launched its initial attack the next day.

Until the Germans were driven from Alsace and Lorraine, the 12th battled a bitter winter as well as a stubborn Nazi foe. Actually, the cold, icy weather and the resultant trench foot put more men out of action than did enemy bullets. A new chief of staff, Col. Wallace H. Barnes, joined the division Dec. 14.

Among the first casualties was Lt. Col. Montgomery C. Meigs, Annapolis, Md., 23rd Tank Bn. CO, who was killed while leading his attacking task force. Col. Meigs was awarded the Silver Star as were Capt. Carl J. Adams, Springfield, Mass., 23rd, also posthumously;

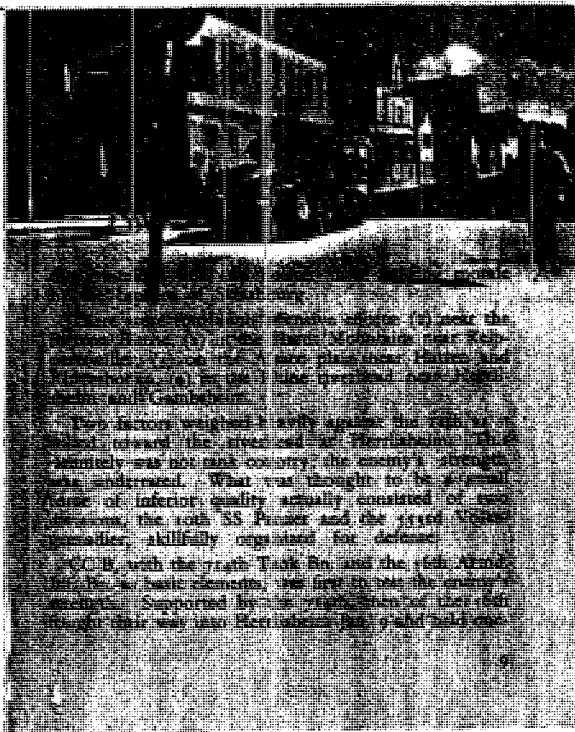
Sgt. Edward M. Madrack, Wilkes-Barre, Pa., 43rd Tank Bn.; Pfc Dave Hake, Kent, Wash., 23rd Tank Bn. Med. Det.

First/Sgt. Billy D. Hanover, Bryan, Tex., Hq. Co., 43rd Tank Bn., won the division's first battlefield commission. The first Purple Heart awards went to S/Sgt. William C. Gaines, 43rd; Sgt. John C. Maulden, Cpl. Frank L. Csenosits and Pfc Albert D. McElroy, 23rd; Pfc Floyd E. DuBois, Pfc Edward H. Roberts and Pvt. Mortimer Scharf, 17th Armd. Inf. Bn.

Throughout December, the 12th took every assigned objective as it cracked Maginot Line defenses. Rohrbach and Bettviller were among the many small towns liberated. Gen. Ennis was awarded the Bronze Star for his leadership in the initial attack while Lt. Col. Paul H. Wood's 134th Ord. Maint. Bn. received the Meritorious Service Unit Plaque.

The division captured its first German town Dec. 21 when Utweiler fell to the 56th Armd. Inf. Bn. and Troop C, 92nd Cav. Recon Sqdn., operating as part of Col. Charles V. Bromley's Combat Command B. Christmas Day, Hellcats ate turkey and opened packages from home, but with this the resemblance to the Yuletide ceased.

The new year, 1945, produced the bloodiest chapter in the 12th's combat story. The scene was Herrlisheim from Jan. 8 to Jan. 20. After the failure of von Rundstedt's offensive in the north, the Germans centered their attacks in the Alsatian sector, hoping to crack



Street scene in Herrlisheim, Alsace, after liberation by the 12th Armored Division, Dec. 21, 1944.

Two factors weighed heavily against the 12th as it moved toward the streets of Herrlisheim. The terrain was not tank country; the enemy's strength was underrated. What was thought to be a small force of inferior quality actually consisted of two divisions, the 10th SS Panzer and the 114th Volksgrenadier, skillfully organized for defense.

CC B, with the 74th Tank Bn. and the 14th Armd. Inf. Bn., as basic elements, was first to meet the enemy's onslaught. Supported by the 12th Armd. Inf. Bn., they fought their way into Herrlisheim Jan. 9 and held out.

third of the town until the next night when heavy fire and mounting casualties forced their withdrawal.

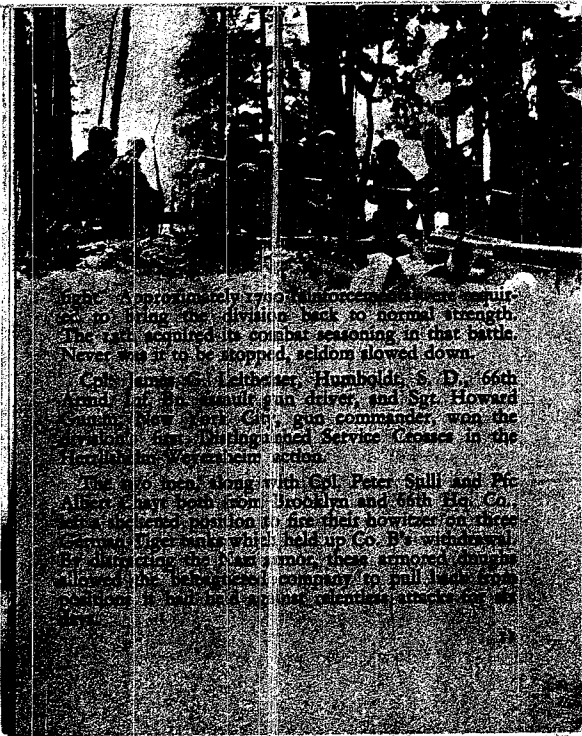
When the Germans' actual power was determined, the entire division was committed. CC B shifted to the vicinity of Rohrwiller to establish a bridgehead over the Zorn River, while CC A drove on Herrlisheim from the south.

Tankers of the 43rd Bn. and doughs of the 17th Bn. entered Herrlisheim from many directions, planning to hook up in the town's center. They never met. The well-placed enemy captured large groups of both battalions, including both COs, Lt. Col. Nicholas Novosel, Gary, Ind., 43rd, and Maj. James W. Logan, Centralia, Wash., 17th. Many men were killed. "Things are plenty hot," was the last report over Col. Novosel's radio.

Gen. Allen issued orders to attack the next day, Jan. 18. Cos. B of both the 23rd Tank Bn. and 66th Armd. Inf. Bn. attempted to relieve elements of the 17th still fighting in the town but were unable to crack German defenses.

Withdrawing to defensive positions, the 12th made preparations to repulse anticipated Nazi counter-thrusts as the enemy had shifted more crack troops to the riverhead area. The attacks came; wave after wave of infantry and tank combinations were flung at the Hellcats. But the assaults were hurled back. There was no breakthrough at Herrlisheim.

This was the Hellcat Division's toughest and costliest



Right: Approximately 1700 Hellcats were required to bring the division back to normal strength. The 12th acquired its combat seasoning in that battle. Never to be stopped, seldom slowed down.

Company commander, Humboldt, S. D., 66th Armd. Inf. Bn. assault gun driver, and Sgt. Howard Smith, New York City, gun commander, won the Medal of Honor and Distinguished Service Crosses in the Herrlisheim action.

On Jan. 10, along with Col. Peter Sull and Pfc. Albert Ray, both from Brooklyn and 66th Armd. Inf. Bn., he held position to fire their howitzer on three German Tiger tanks which held up Co. B's withdrawal. By destroying the tanks, these armored doughs allowed the 12th's company to pull back from positions it had held for several days.

Two direct hits silenced the assault gun, mortally wounded Gumm, Sulli and Chayt. Leitheiser made his way to safety after determining his buddies were beyond help. The crew was credited with saving the entire company from annihilation or capture. Sulli and Chayt were awarded the Silver Star posthumously.

THE 12th *Buttons Up* COLMAR POCKET

FOLLOWING Herrlisheim, the 12th Armd. played a major role in routing the Germans from their last stronghold in French territory — the Colmar pocket.

Aside from its political and economic significance to France, this pocket of resistance east of the Vosges Mountains was a strategic military stronghold. Heinrich Himmler had promised Strasbourg to Hitler and the German people as a Nazi party birthday gift. The attempt to take the city from the north had been frustrated. Now the enemy was making his final bid for the prize from the south.

Despite desperate Nazi resistance, Colmar was liberated by Allied troops Feb. 2. Next day, the 12th, operating under XXI Corps, was ordered to continue the attack south and east and effect a junction with French forces moving up from the south so that remaining Nazis in the Vosges Mountains could be sealed off.

With combat commands abreast, the division moved along the axis between the Ill River and the Vosges Mountains, coordinating its advance with the 12th Inf Div. Against sporadic resistance, the 12th continued southward. When a trail force commanded by Lt. Col. (then Maj.) Scott W. Hall, Hinkinsville, Ky., was sent into Colmar Feb. 2 and made contact with the French, a band of steel was snapped around the Colmar pocket.

In the lightning, three-day drive, the 12th killed an estimated 1,000 Germans, wounded 850, captured 100. The division lost 23 killed. Represented in the POW camps were remnants of the 12th German Army, LXXXIII and LXXXV Corps.

For its part in sealing the Colmar pocket, the 12th Armd. Div. was authorized to wear the Colmar Coat of Arms. The French presented Gen. Allen with the Legion of Honor and the Croix de Guerre with Palm. The Croix de Guerre was awarded to a dozen other officers and men of the division. Co. C, 66th Armd. Inf. Bn., represented the division in a parade at Colmar Feb. 5.



Among the awards within the division was a Bronze Star to Chaplain Robert E. Klewin, Sheboygan, Wis., (Capt.), 92nd Cav. Recon Sqdn., who exposed himself to enemy fire to comfort wounded at forward aid stations.

After the Colmar operation, the division withdrew to the St. Avold area for a well deserved rest. With the exception of the reconnaissance and artillery elements, which maintained a protective screen and furnished fire support to Seventh Army infantry divisions, battalions began rehabilitation of men and vehicles.

Division strength was augmented by the arrival of three Negro infantry companies, one assigned to each of the three armored infantry battalions as provisional companies. New medium tanks — Easy 8s — featuring 76mm guns arrived and weapons received maintenance. By mid-March, the 12th was ready to move.

ARMOR

Blazes Path TO THE RHINE

The "Mystery Division" of Gen. Patton's Third Army took the spotlight today by reaching the Upper Rhine, entering the important chemical city of Ludwigshafen and penetrating to within seven miles of the ancient cathedral city of Speyer, the chief community of the Bavarian Palatinate. It was a good day's work...

—N. Y. HERALD TRIBUNE, MARCH 1945

THE "Mystery Division" was the 12th Armd. Veiled in secrecy following transfer from Seventh to Third Army, the Hellcats were "another unnamed armored division" in press releases.

The order attaching 12th Armd. Div. to XX Corps, Third Army, was received March 17. The following morning the division jumped off near Trier, beginning a six-day operation that rivaled any mission in the ETO for speed and accomplishment. Germans threw everything they had into the battle in an effort to save their precious Rhineland, but the spearheading Hellcat Division couldn't be stopped. In less than three days, the 12th reached the Rhine; in three more, it occupied the important river cities of Ludwigshafen, Speyer and Germersheim.

Originally, the division was assigned the mission of passing through the 94th Inf. Div. and advancing towards the Rhine to secure crossings near Worms. At noon, March 19, the axis of advance was shifted southeast; the drive now pointed toward Ludwigshafen. Orders from XX Corps were: "Keep going. When you hit the Rhine, turn south and look for a bridge which is still intact in Ludwigshafen." If there were no bridges, the division was to proceed south as far as Germersheim.

En route to their objectives that first day, Hellcats captured an estimated 2500 prisoners, three ammunition dumps, a regimental supply train, 400 horses, 700 trucks and wagons in addition to an enemy hospital,

equipment and German patients. The bulk of prisoners and materiel was taken near Birkenfeld and Baumholder.

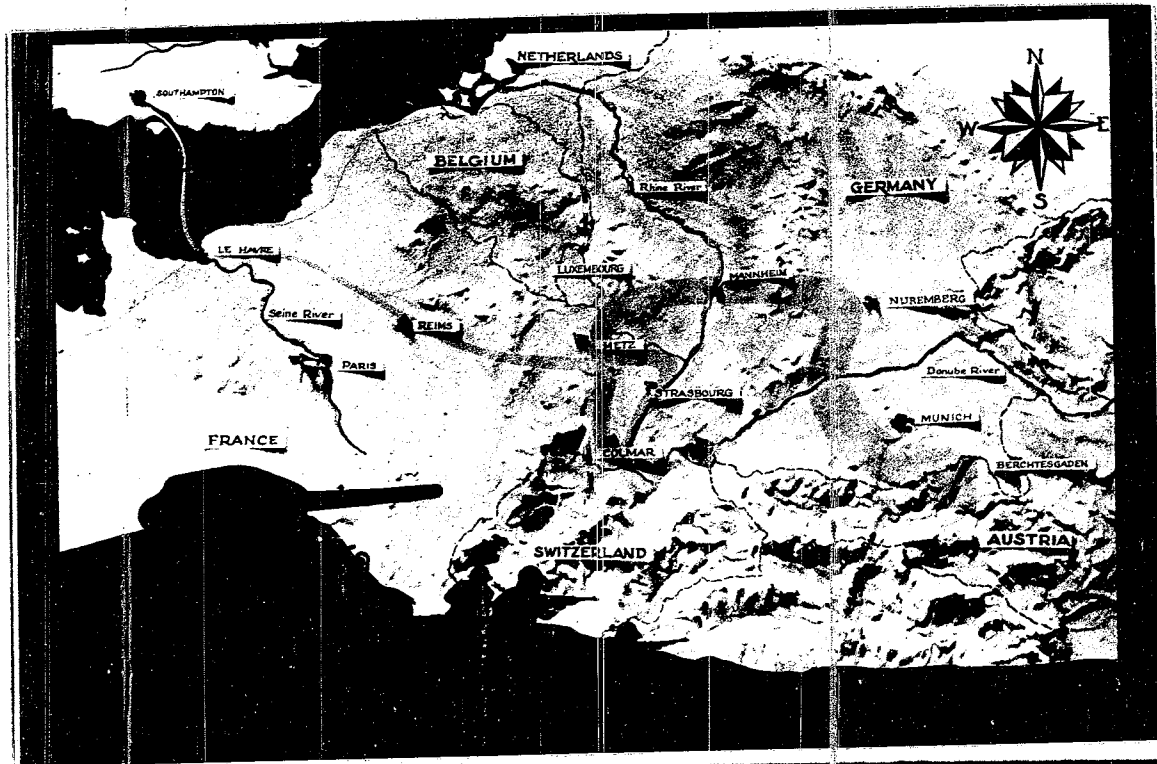
March 20 was another field day for the "Mystery Division." Shoving ahead from Birkenfeld to Ramen, the 12th scooped up another 2200 PWs, killed an estimated 1000 Nazis, destroyed a six-car train and blasted 20 tanks, 20 anti-aircraft guns, 15 artillery pieces and 50 wagons. Next day, 1000 more prisoners were taken, two enemy planes knocked down and 21 rocket guns captured.

Forward elements of the division reached the Rhine at 2330, March 20. First to approach the river was a platoon from Co. B, 56th Armd. Inf. Bn., led by Lt. Charles Peischl, Nazareth, Pa.

The following day CC A entered Ludwigshafen and, with a portion of the 94th Inf. Div. which had been mopping up in the Hellcats' wake, cleared the city. Climax of the drive came March 24 when CC B took Speyer, and CC R, commanded by Col. Richard A. Gordon, Fort Smith, Ark., entered Gernersheim. Simultaneously, the 92nd Cav., which had led the Hellcat thrust much of the way, contacted the 14th Armd. Div. driving up from Seventh Army territory to the south.

Efforts to secure a bridge over the Rhine were unsuccessful — all spans between Ludwigshafen and Gernersheim had been blown — but all other phases of the operation were outstanding achievements. The enemy was cleared from the Saar Palatinate, losing







Toward the
Bavarian Alps

more than 75 per cent of infantry elements in the 23 divisions which comprised the First and Seventh German Armies. A total of 7211 PWs went into the cages.

When Troop D, 92nd Cav. Recon, raced into one German town, all streets were blocked by enemy vehicles. Ordered not to fire unless fired upon, Lt. Roane C. Figg, Disputanta, Va., entered cafes and restaurants and ordered the beer drinking drivers to move their vehicles. Assuming their force had been captured, the surprised Germans obeyed. Troop D rolled through the town, leaving a bewildered enemy behind.

On another occasion, this same troop by-passed a retreating enemy column, which had been holding up its advance. The Germans waved gaily until they recognized the swift unit as American. Nazis crashed their vehicles into ditches in an effort to get out of the way.

Maintaining a blistering pace, the 12th caught the Krauts flat-footed all the way across the basin.

Hellcats crossed the Rhine early March 28, 1945. Four days previously the division had reverted to Seventh Army and now was to spearhead Gen. Patch's forces across southern Germany into the heart of the Nazis' vaunted National Redoubt. After reorganizing near Diedesheim, the 12th spanned Germany's principal river on two bridges erected at Worms. Operating under XV Corps and later under XXI

Corps, the Helcat Division pointed its guns towards Wurzburg and began another swift drive that swept aside all resistance.

Amorbach, Beerfelden, Tauberbischofsheim, Hettstadt, Oschenfurt were buttoned up. CC A, with the 222nd Regt., 42nd Inf. Div., attached, moved into Marienburg, across the Main River from the much-bombed Wurzburg.

Stoutly defended by infantry forces concealed in the ruined buildings, Wurzburg presented a formidable obstacle. Led by 1st Lt. Thomas F. Johnson, New York City, a platoon of light tanks from Co. D, 43rd Tank Bn., moved against the positions, shifting from one section of the city to another as needed. Tankers left piles of enemy dead throughout the city. One of the strongly defended areas was the Wurzburg cemetery.

Also aiding Rainbow Division doughs was Capt. Ivan D. Wood's medium tank company, 43rd Bn. The city was cleared after two days of fighting.



After CC A slipped through the city and swung north to clear the way for the 42nd Div., it assisted in the capture of Schweinfurt, German ball bearing manufacturing center. Meanwhile, other combat commands of the 12th moved south and east of Wurzburg, taking a bridge and airport at Kitzingen. Large enemy areas were surrounded and cleared by the fast moving task forces, supported by the 101st Cav. Group, now attached to the division.

The 12th's advance turned southeast towards historic Nuremberg, gateway to Bavaria, April 13. Enemy resistance stiffened as the division approached the Redoubt, although many towns surrendered without a fight to save their buildings from destruction by Helcat guns. The city of Neustadt surrendered to CC A's Task Force Scott only a few moments before the tanks were to open fire.

Because of a shift in Army boundaries, the 12th's mission was changed again April 17, and the division turned south toward Munich, birthplace of the Nazi party.

CC B entered Ansbach against moderate resistance while CC R cleared 16 towns to the south. CC A occupied Schwabach and Buchschwabach, south of Nuremberg, until relieved by XV Corps elements. Then it joined the other commands on the drive towards Munich.

Gen. Ennis' command trailed CC B and CC R to Feuchtwangen, passing through them at this point

and shoving ahead to Dinkelsbuhl. The stage was now set for this combat command's famous dash to the Danube to seize intact the bridge at Dillingen.

For the many American troops who later sped across the Dillingen Bridge there was this sign at the northern approach:

*You are crossing the beautiful blue Danube through
the courtesy of the 12th Armored Division.*

Speed **PAYS OFF AT DILLINGEN**

APRIL 22, 1945: Within 24 hours, CC A's Task Force 1 whipped 40 miles from Dinkelsbuhl to the Danube only to find the bridge at Lauingen destroyed. Meanwhile, Task Force 2, slightly to the east, streaked along a parallel route towards Dillingen.

Led by 1st Lt. Charles J. Ippolito's light tank platoon, the force swept into the town with guns blazing, routing more than 1000 disorganized defenders and shooting up a retreating mechanized column. Surging on to the bridge, the unit captured a handful of demolition men and drove other Nazis away with tank fire before the span could be blown.

First men on the bridge were Capt. William W. Riddell, Jr., Liberty, Mo., Co. C CO, 43rd Tank Bn.; S/Sgt. Robert E. Welch, Crosby, Tex., and Sgt. J. O. Huston, Spokane, Wash., Co. A, 66th Armd. Inf. Bn.;

Pvt. Robert L. Strothess, Wilkinsburg, Pa., Co. D, 43rd. They found the span wired for demolition. Strothess, with the forced aid of a German, cut the wires to the six 500-pound aerial bombs secured to the bridge.

While tanks of the 43rd held off the enemy, a squad from Co. A, 66th, raced across the bridge, dug in on the southern side. These doughs were Sgt. Lester R. Porter, Dublin, Ga.; Pfc Frank E. Zendell, Indianapolis; Pfc William W. Moore, Norfolk, Va.; Pfc Robert H. Compton, Chicago; Pvt. John D. Horn, Fair Water, Wis., and Pvt. Edward J. McGarr, Oyster Bay, N. Y.

So swiftly was the bridge taken that Krauts on the Danube's southern side weren't aware it no longer was theirs. Approaching German vehicles were easy targets for tanks. No sooner was the two-lane concrete span taken than other 12th Armd. Div. units poured across to secure the bridgehead. Task Force Hall, first to reach the river at Lauingen, and TF Fields were responsible for driving the enemy beyond easy artillery range of the prize target. But the heroes of Dillingen were the men who snared the coveted bridge, men in the task force of Lt. Col. Clayton W. Wells, Abilene, Tex., comprised of Hqs, Service, Cos. A and B, 66th Armd Inf.; Co. C and a platoon of Co. D, 43rd Tank Bn.

Nevertheless, the drive to the Danube was not one to give men of CC A a comfortable feeling. So swift was their march that all support trailed far behind. Enemy troops were on either flank; more Nazis remained to their rear.

The night after the bridgehead was secured, a blacked-out infantry column crept through Feuchtwangen, nearly 50 miles behind the CC A spearhead. Alert for enemy resistance, the officer leading the column halted a 12th Armd. man emerging from a building. After each had identified himself, the infantry officer asked:

"Where are the Krauts? Any in town?"

"I wouldn't think so," replied the Hellcat. "This is the 12th Armored Division's rear echelon!"

"Hell's bells!" exclaimed the infantryman, and led his column from the town.

The 12th held the concrete span across the Danube against repeated enemy attempts to destroy it with artillery and aircraft. One day alone, the 572nd's anti-aircraft guns blasted six German planes from the sky. After the veteran 3rd Inf. Div. arrived to take over the area south of the bridgehead, the Hellcat Division once more became Seventh Army's spearhead.



Nazis were on the run as the 12th slashed south and east. PW cages were swollen with a daily intake numbering thousands. Airfields, planes, war factories and huge warehouses bulging with war material were captured, left behind as the armor sliced ahead.

Elements of the 101st Cav. Group seized three bridges over the Wertach River and advanced to the Lech River. By-passing Augsburg, the division swung south, paused briefly while the 119th Engrs. built a treadway bridge across the Lech and constructed runways on a railroad span for armor to cross.

Shoving on to Landberg April 18, the division liberated 1300 Allied PWs from the prison where Adolf Hitler reputedly wrote *Mein Kampf*. At nearby Hurlach concentration camp, the men saw the bodies of 300 inmates, mostly Jews, who had been slain when their guards fled before the plunging Hellcat columns. Other prisoners were freed; 4000 others were herded deeper into the Redoubt by their Nazi captors in advance of the 12th's arrival.



Although the division's mission was to by-pass Munich and to help bottle up the German forces in Italy by moving into Innsbruck, Austria, cavalry elements of the 12th were met at Diesen, at the lower end of the Ammer Sea, by a committee of Munich citizens. This group offered to surrender the city to the 12th, reporting the withdrawal of all German troops. A small task force was sent toward Munich but returned to the division zone after encountering road blocks and artillery fire near the city.

The division hooked up with the 10th Armd. Div. along a narrow pass in the Bavarian Alps at Oberau. The movement to the south halted and the job of clearing the Nazis from the National Redoubt began.

More than 5000 Polish officers were freed at a large camp in Murnau, among them Gen. Juliusz Rommel, Warsaw's defender in 1939 and senior soldier of the Polish Army. Twenty-two other generals were in the group.

The division's 17th Armd. Inf. Bn. established what is believed to be a ground force record for movement through enemy territory when it traveled 59 miles in eight hours and 45 minutes May 2. The 17th was operating under CC R, whose mission was to proceed from Starnberg on the Wurm Sea to the Inn and clear the river valley on the south into Austria.

Supported by tanks from Co. C, 23rd Tank Bn., the 17th hopped off at 0645, trailed by the remainder of the combat command. At 1530, armored doughs

whose half-tracks raced two abreast along the Salzburg autobahn, halted their column near Pfraundorf, 59 miles from the starting point.

The 17th Armd. Inf. Bn. was alone in its spearhead position. Other elements of the combat command had been held up when SS engineers blew a bridge on the autobahn in the wake of the flying 17th. Later, the 23rd caught up with its companion task force, by-passed it, and crossed the Austrian border at Kufstein early May 3.

The division forward CP was set up at Redenfelden on the Inn River when the 12th was pulled out of the line two days later and transferred to the area the 12th was to police at the war's end.

The Hellcats -
READY FOR ALL COMERS!

LOOKING back over their rapid thrust across Germany — it took only 37 days to clear a path from the Rhine to Austria — men of the 12th could trace a trail of victory over which they had stormed against a mixture of weary Wehrmacht soldiers and fight-to-the-death SS troopers. In the short space of five months, they had seen their division transformed from a green, untested outfit into one of the most feared fighting machines on the Western Front.

The prisoner take was impressive during the final stages. Of the 70,166 PWs credited to the division, 63,013 were grabbed after the Rhine crossing. The count was 30,651 for the final week alone. Biggest one-day haul came May 3 when 12,035 Germans, including nine generals, passed into PW cages.

Nearly 8,500 Allied PWs, including 1,500 Americans, were liberated by the 12th Armd. In addition, approximately 20,000 non-military prisoners gained freedom when the division routed the Germans from the Redoubt stronghold.

Among these were 14 French notables, including two former premiers, Edouard Daladier and Paul Reynaud; Gen. Maxim Weygand and Gen. Maurice Gamelin, both former commanders of the French Armies; Jean Borotra, international tennis star; Michael Clemenceau, son of the World War I statesman; Gen. Charles de Gaulle's sister.

Held in an Alpine castle in Bavaria, they were snatched from death at the hands of SS troops by a group of tankers and armored doughs under Capt. John C. Lee, Jr., Co. B CO, 23rd Tank Bn., and turned over to the 36th Inf. Div., which assisted in the rescue.

There was little time to rest during the long march from the Maginot Line to Austria; the pace was too fast.

Combat engineers of the 119th Armd. Engr. Bn. did more than their customary job of building bridges for the tanks, removing demolition charges and clear-

ing mine fields. Often they laid aside their tools for weapons and fought as infantrymen.

The 82nd Armd. Med. Bn. won the Meritorious Service Unit Plaque for its outstanding job. Every combat man had a word of praise for the medics — the men who walked the front lines unarmed.



Problems of supply — in April alone division vehicles required more than 1,000,000 gallons of gasoline to keep moving — were solved smoothly by supply personnel operating under G-4. Not once were tanks stopped for lack of fuel.

The 134th Ord. Maint. Bn., which was awarded a star to its Meritorious Service Unit Plaque, leapfrogged its heavy equipment forward to make it accessible when tanks and guns needed repairs. The military police platoon, augmented in combat by the division band, had a full-time job handling prisoners. Yet, this was only one of its duties.



One of the most important constant communications channels was maintained by the division band, which was awarded the Meritorious Service Unit Plaque.

It was a good idea to have a band in the front lines, and the 134th Ord. Maint. Bn. was awarded the Meritorious Service Unit Plaque for its work in this regard.



The 12th Armd. was singled out for commendation from every Corps under which it operated, VI, XV, XX, XXI and II French. Typical of these commendations came from Maj. Gen. F. W. Milburn, XXI Corps commander, who wrote:

I wish to express commendation and appreciation for the spirit, aggressiveness and valor with which the 12th Armored Division so successfully performed its every combat mission while operationally attached to this headquarters from March 31, 1945, to May 5, 1945.

From your initial action in Forbach and Styring Wendel through the attack and capture of Wurzburg and Schweinsfurt where you gave magnificent assistance to the 42nd Infantry Division, the turn south, the capture

of Feuchtwangen, to the seizure of the bridge over the Danube at Dillingen, all tasks were accomplished with a dash and expertness that bespoke superlative leadership and initiative on the part of all. These qualities continued to be outstanding as you continued on to the east, effecting the crossings of the rivers Wertach, Lech, Isar and Inn.

These are accomplishments in which the entire 12th Armored Division may take deep pride and that always will reflect great honor upon the organization.

There was little celebration among the men of the Hellcat Division with the official announcement of Germany's unconditional surrender, May 8, 1945. Perhaps the division had seen the end approaching; perhaps the men were too tired. More likely, it was because they knew the job still was unfinished. Occupation of Germany and the defeat of Japan remained.



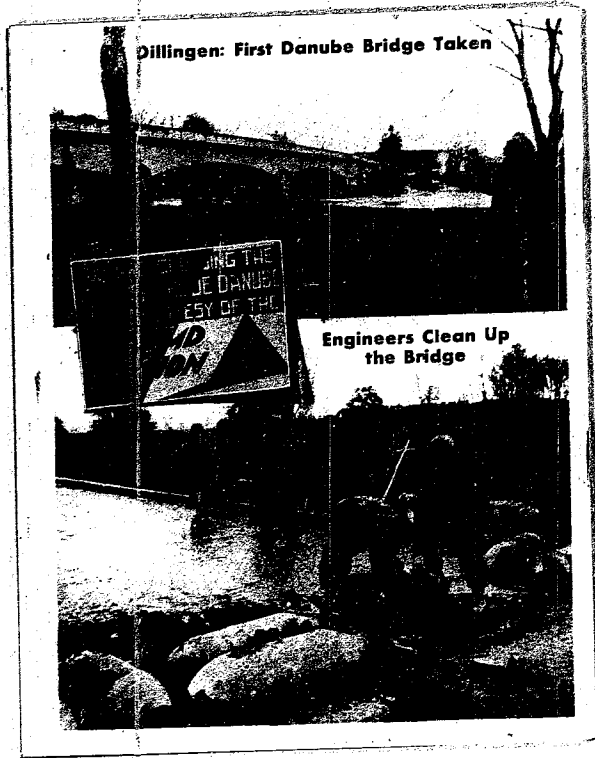
Men of the division didn't know what the future held for them, but it hardly mattered. The Hellcats were battle-tested, ready for all comers!



Assigned to _____
Training _____
Battle Actions _____
Citations _____

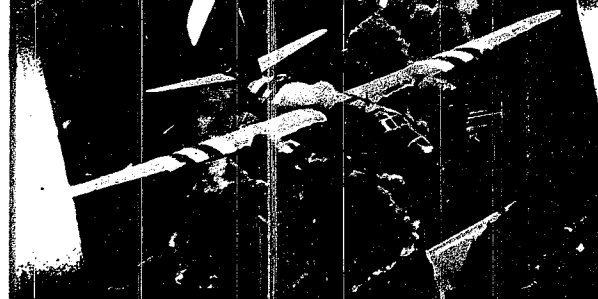
PASSED BY COMPANY

Dillingen: First Danube Bridge Taken

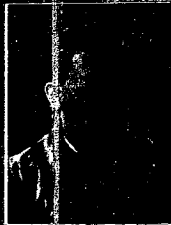


**Engineers Clean Up
the Bridge**

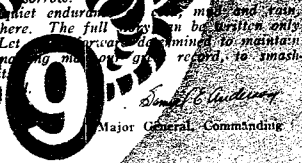
Time Over Targets



THE STORY OF
THE 9th BOMBARDMENT
DIVISION



It is with
 I foreword
 of the cover of
 Division (M). The
 and that of who
 and who lead it,
 were my salute. In
 The Ninth
 standards. I
 credit that
 to meet the
 your records
 by none.



Samuel E. Anderson
 Major General, Commanding

Name _____
 Date Enlisted _____
 Assigned to 9th _____
 Training _____
 CITED BY CENSOR FOR MAILING HOME _____

This is one of a series G.I. Stories of the Ground, Air and Service Forces in the European Theater of Operations, issued by the Stars and Stripes, a publication of the Information and Education Division, ETO/SA... Major General Samuel E. Anderson, commanding the 9th Bombardment Division (M), lent his cooperation to the preparation of the pamphlet, and basic material was supplied to the editors by his staff.

THE STORY OF THE 9th BOMBARDMENT DIVISION (M)

Capt. Edward M. Jensen, Breverton, Ore., led a base of Marauders behind a Pathfinder Dec. 23, 1944. The flash-damaged Pathfinder turned back, but Capt. Jensen headed for his rendezvous with fighter escort. None was there. He led his formation on to the target, sure of meeting enemy fighters. Flash was heavy. The bombardier failed to pick up his aiming point. Knowing the urgent ground situation, Capt. Jensen swung around for another try. Enemy fighters, twelve abreast and four deep, attacked furiously, but the bombs were true. Capt. Jensen's plane was on fire. Five of his Marauders were already hit. He knew help could not come for 15 minutes. The enemy attacked again. His plane started to burn, but he got away safely. The enemy's attack was repulsed and they retreated.

For days, fog held back bombers of 9th Bombardment Division on the ground, and kept this precise and powerful striking force from joining the battle.

Dec. 23 came—clear, blue, sparkling in the winter sun. In tents, eager flyers were briefed. From the line came the roar of engines—crew chiefs pre-fighting ships which ordnance men had bomb-loaded in the bitter cold of the night just ended.

Four hundred bombers rose from French bases to attack roads and railways that fed the growing bulge. This day was to be the greatest since D-Day. For a few moments the weather seemed partly wasted; several Groups could not contact their fighter escort.

Should they follow standard policy and turn back? They kept going. In the area of the targets, prowling enemy fighters spotted the Marauders and came in. Marauder gunners, some of whom had never seen an enemy fighter, gripped their guns for the most furious air battle in Division history. Men were wounded, but they kept fighting. They fired even as their planes fell burning from the sky.

That was not the only fight that day. Thirty-six bombers failed to return, but 21 of 100 Focke-Wulfs and Messerschmitts had been destroyed, five bridges and a railhead blown up or damaged. The remainder of the bombers returned, but not for the day. Ground crews waiting at hardstands rushed at the planes, repaired battle damage, tested, loaded bomb bays and fuel tanks. Flying crews paused for interrogation, grabbed coffee and sandwiches, then headed for another briefing.

Off again, back to the area of the morning's battle back to smash fortified communications centers.

The Division had joined in the Battle of the Bulge. Marauders, Invaders, Havocs—all had attacked Germans where it hurt.

Most supplies and men moving to the front. This sort of job had made the 9th famous.

For his gallant action Nov. 29, 1943, S/Sgt. William H. Norris, Chattanooga, Tenn., was awarded the Silver Star. While on the bomb run his Marauder was badly damaged by flak. Six enemy fighters bore in, shattering the top turret, disabling the waist gunner. From his tail position, Sgt. Norris shot down one fighter, was thrown by a violent lurch into the waist. Seizing the closest gun, he warded off two other enemy fighters. Then scrambling back and forth, firing one gun then the other, he defended the plane until it reached fighter cover.

In May, 1943, this powerful striking force was the 3rd Bombardment Wing of the Eighth Air Force. It had one Group of Marauders, trained and ready for low-level





operations. May 15, 14 planes took off to attack a power station at IJmuiden, Holland. They swept in from the North Sea, successfully delivered their first blow. May 17, 10 Marauders again roared over the sea to IJmuiden. None came back.

Low-level operations came to an abrupt halt. Future of the Wing and of the Marauder itself was in doubt. Some thought the Marauder was too hot, but the men who

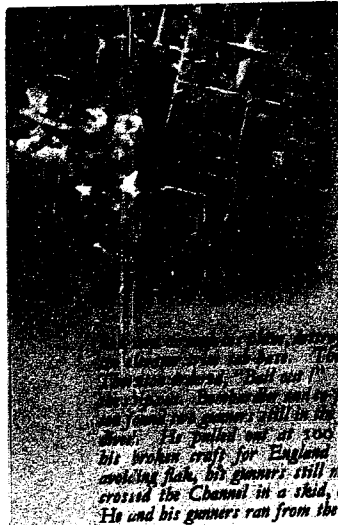
flew it were proud that only "men" could handle their plane.

The problem was, how could the plane best be used? An answer had to be found quickly. Other groups were training in the States for low-level operations; two were on their way to England. In June, Maj. Gen. (then Col.) Samuel E. Anderson, Greensboro, N. C., took command of the Wing. The Marauder was to be employed in medium-level operations. The new commander and his staff had to make the plan work. They were ready to try again July 16.

The incredibly tight Marauder formation crossed the Channel for the first time at medium level. The Abbeville marshalling yards were hit hard. The answer had been found. Medium level bombing had a valid future. By the end of August, four Groups were operational, and the Wing had engaged in its first major campaign.

Heavy bombers then were attacking targets in Germany, whittling down the Luftwaffe, tearing at the heart of German militarized industry. But to get there they had to cross a belt of fighter bases. The Wing was assigned the task of keeping those fields under attack. Woensdrecht, Beauvais, St. Omer, Gilze-Rijen were some of the targets, all studded with heavy flak defenses. None had a reputation like Amsterdam-Schipol. None was more important to the Luftwaffe. There, flak was buttermilk thick, and airmen had a healthy respect for German gunners. In a flyer's cartoon a gunner, being dragged to his plane, was shouting, "No—No—Not Schipol!"

By Dec. 13, the Wing was strong enough, clever enough,



...was enough to
...with all its
...Medlums paid
...their daring, but
...courage and skill
...the flyers left half
...field in ruins.

*First Lt. Rowland
G. Thornton, Jr., Sec-
ond Lt. ... received a
...the Disting-
... Flying Cross
... 1944. When
...the bomb ran,*

*...the plane, holding all the controls except
... The plane spun down. Lt.
... "Pull out!" At 1000 feet, he pulled
... Lt. Thorn-
... still in the plane. Again the plane
... At 500 feet, he beaded
... skillfully
... still manning their posts. He
... in a skid, crash-landed in England.
... before it exploded.*

The daring raid on Schiphol was the climax and nearly the end of the strategic offensive against airfields. Already a new name pointed to the Wing's future. In October the Wing became the IX Bomber Command, under the Ninth Air Force. Marauders were the nucleus of the great American invasion air force that was building for D-Day.

A Deadly WEAPON SHARPENED

THE IX Bomber Command had a splendid record in the Middle East where it helped force back Rommel, where it made famed raids like those on Ploesti and Rome. Leaving the planes in the Mediterranean Theater, Command Headquarters came to England to join the renamed Wing in building a tactical bomber force. The job: to work with ground forces as protection from enemy air power, to cut off battlefields from enemy supplies, reinforcements, and attacking troops.

Before that program could even begin, a tremendous threat had to be neutralized. The enemy had been building hundreds of V-1 bombs against England in a giant crescent from the Pas de Calais, menacing the invasion bomber operations. First job was to aid in destroying this danger.

It was a new Marauders. An old target of resistance was easy to find. But it was an ingeniously camouflaged

ed rocket site among woods and fields and villages of Pas de Calais is another matter, and to hit it—!

A blizzard of special maps, photographs, illustrations whirled through the Command, almost burying Intelligence officers and the crews, who were briefed repeatedly on these tiny white squares and oblongs that had to be hit from 12,000 feet.

First missions in November were successful. Targets were smashed. But the job became increasingly difficult. Day after day, reports read "No Change," "Serviceable," "Unknown." But bombing was becoming real pin-pointing now. Bomb craters crept closer and closer to vital buildings, and in February, reports more frequently read "Suspended."

Still, difficulties were enormous. Flak in Pas de Calais was among the worst in Europe, and it was heartbreaking to find, after the struggle through storms of it, that bombs had only straddled vital points and blasted craters in harmless earth. Finally in the spring came the day when five targets were knocked out in one mission.

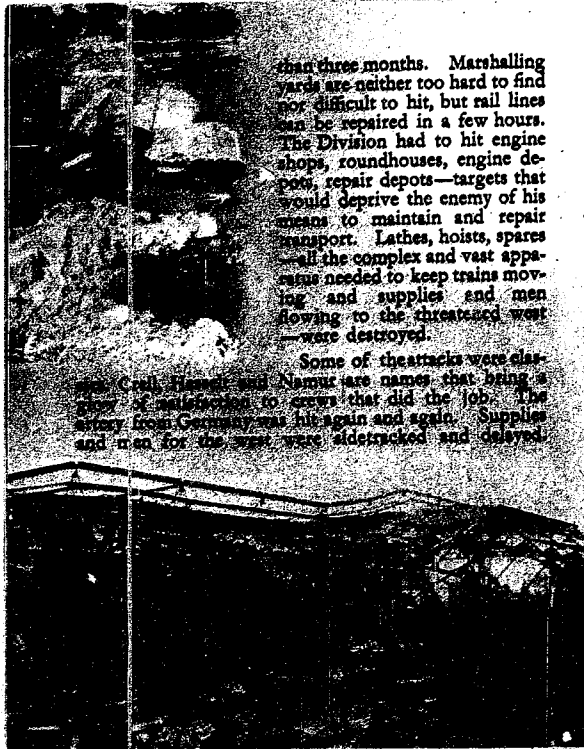
The Command now was a finished instrument, a scalpel handled by bombardiers as delicately and quickly as a surgeon's. When the program was finished and danger from those sites averted, the Commander of the Allied Expeditionary Air Forces, Sir Trafford Leigh-Mallory, wrote, "Of all Bomber Forces involved, those of the Ninth Air Force proved to be by far the most efficacious in knocking out these difficult and well-defended targets."

Second Lt. Tommie J. Simms, Hollis, Okla., won a Distinguished Service Cross May 27, 1944. As he

turned his Havoc into the run, flak struck to damage ship and pilot. The plane's right engine was knocked out. The lieutenant's left arm was broken and he was wounded in both thighs. Bleeding, in pain, Lt. Simms kept his plane in formation, dropped his bombs on the target. The craft lost speed and altitude, dropped behind the formation. Afraid of fainting, Lt. Simms ordered his crew to bail out. Alone, barely conscious, one arm useless, and the target of continuous flak, he kept his course to England. Too exhausted even to attempt lowering his wheels, and with a fused bomb in the bomb bay, he guided his plane safely to earth.

Now the Command was fully grown, with *Centaur*, the fast, light Havoc and twin-engine *Mustang*. But while still building, it had begun on the programs that were to contribute so much to the invasion success. First missions were against targets in northern France.

For nearly a century France and Belgium had been building a network of railroads over which troops and supplies now were flowing from Germany. This network was to be partitioned



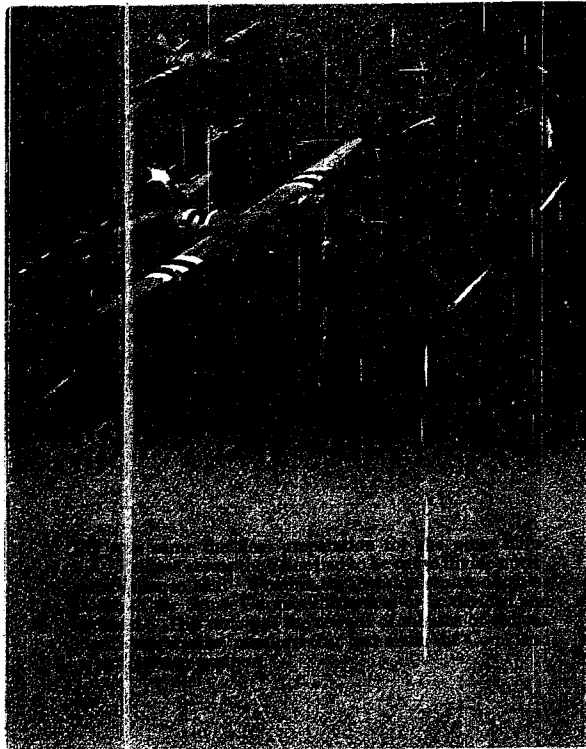
than three months. Marshalling yards are neither too hard to find nor difficult to hit, but rail lines can be repaired in a few hours. The Division had to hit engine shops, roundhouses, engine depots, repair depots—targets that would deprive the enemy of his means to maintain and repair transport. Lathes, hoists, spares—all the complex and vast apparatuses needed to keep trains moving and supplies and men flowing to the threatened west—were destroyed.

Some of the attacks were slanted. Creil, Hamont and Namus are names that bring a glow of satisfaction to crews that did the job. The artery from Germany was hit again and again. Supplies and men for the west were sidetracked and delayed.

There was a desperate yearning for the French coast, the Atlantic, the untried, but guns pointed waiting for an armada. To be allowed to be allowed before they could tiny targets in the sea picks along the Action day up. The of superb Marauder sped across twice a until the of the guns ed out. knowing construction



Time was spent on airfields. Chateau, Bismarck, the Eves, were only a few that had to be made useless. Later, the sure to come out in full force to repel the liberating forces. The Command hit the fields repeatedly. Later, personnel saw evidences of their success when they occupied and flew from some of these same fields.



Bridges sometimes are disheartening targets to hit. A perfect cluster of bombs, right on the target—yet the bridge still stands, a bit of superstructure gone, perhaps a hole in the flooring. Bridges are not all alike. Some are solid; others are a web of bracing. Many have thick supports that collapse when a bomb strikes; but others are built so lightly that a bomb can slip between the supports and burst harmlessly in the water. When the double ones are half-destroyed, the other half can be crossed. Only the right bombs with the right fuzes to explode the burst can do the most damage.

First attacks did little harm. The bridges were hit; still they stood. Airmen paused, reconsidered, carefully selected bombs and fuzes. Then they returned and the bridges fell before them, from Rouen to Paris: Bennecourt, Courcelles, Meulan, Poissy, Vernon, Conflans, Le Manoir, Le Mesnil, Maisons-Lafitte, Mantes-Gassicourt, Oissel. In the last three days, seven were cut.

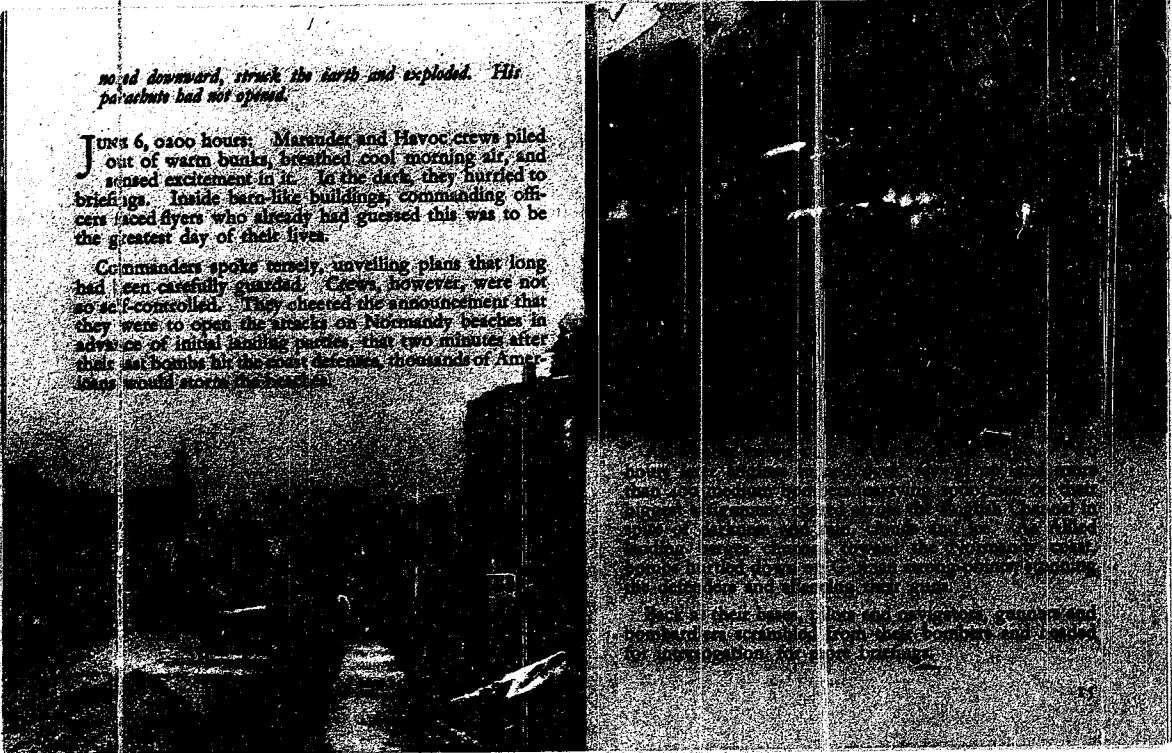
Now the battlefield was isolated; the Allies hurled themselves toward Normandy.

Maj. Paul J. Stach, Rosenberg, Texas, led his formation against a target at Caen D-Day. While approaching his bomb run at 2000 feet through intense light flak, his Marauder was hit by a series of bursts which knocked out his left engine. Nevertheless, he continued his bomb run. The left engine burst into flames. More flak started another fire in the bomb bays. Maj. Stach held his plane in formation until his bombs were away, enabling the remainder of his formation to bomb. He continued to hold his plane straight and level until his crew bailed out. He attempted to escape as the plane

...ed downward, struck the earth and exploded. His parachute had not opened.

JUNE 6, 0200 hours: Marsden and Havoc crews piled out of warm bunks, breathed cool morning air, and sensed excitement in it. In the dark, they hurried to briefings. Inside barn-like buildings, commanding officers faced flyers who already had guessed this was to be the greatest day of their lives.

Commanders spoke tersely, unveiling plans that long had been carefully guarded. Crews, however, were not so self-controlled. They cheered the announcement that they were to open the attack on Normandy beaches in advance of initial landing parties, that two minutes after their set bombs hit the coast, thousands of Americans would storm the beaches.

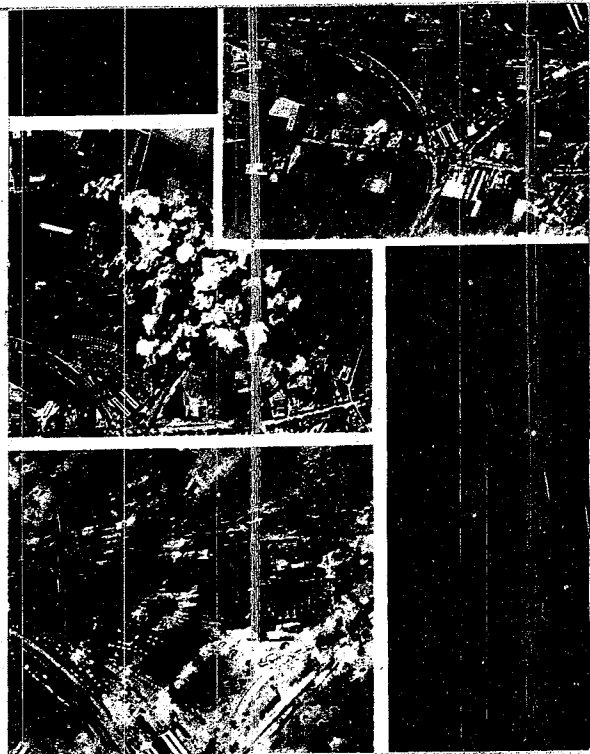


Meanwhile, Havocs were in the air, heading for the beaches. Just behind the lines they shattered road centers—Argentan, Valognes, Carentan, famous names. Now Marauders were out again, striking coastal batteries that were firing on the Navy, hitting bridges and road junctions at Caen, sweeping east to Amiens to make the Germans fear another landing.

Back in England, crews were clamoring for another chance. Before darkness, Marauders and Havocs were out again, bombing railway yards off the right flank of the German defense zone and a bridge at Caen. Flak defenses were the hottest yet, but the Havocs went down on the deck to slug it out with ground batteries.

At nightfall, Marauder and Havoc crews looked over their D-Day record. More than 1000 bombers had lifted from their bases; 4300 men had flown to France to drop 1400 tons of bombs. It was a great day in world history, the greatest day in the Command's.

Capt. Rollin D. Childress, Mascot, Tenn., won the Silver Star June 8, 1944. Piloting a Marauder, he assembled his three other planes in the midst of ominous clouds and gathering darkness. All Groups had been ordered back, but Capt. Childress did not hear the recall and continued toward the Foret de Grimbosecq, south of Caen. It was urgent that an ammunition and fuel dump be destroyed. Without fighter protection, flying at 2000 feet through murderous flak, Capt. Childress led his formation to bomb the target. Then, in ceiling zero weather, he led his planes back to their bases, despite one crippled plane. As a result of the attack, ground forces made advances that otherwise might have been difficult and costly.



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AIR POWER *Swings* THE BALANCE

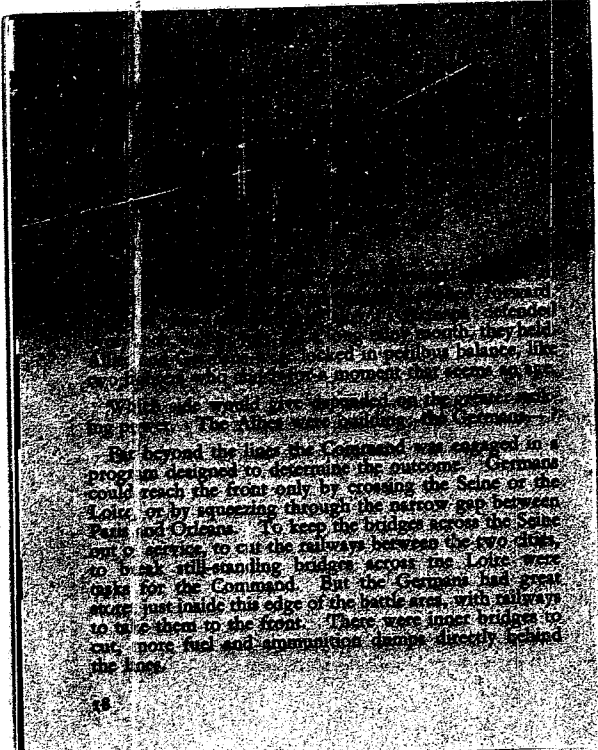
THE Germans, trying to force the Allies back into the sea, were bringing everything they could to the battle. They had to be stopped. First, Marauders and Havocs worked close behind the lines. Each little Norman town was a road center which could be blocked; supply lines at each bridge could be cut.

First job was to cut the enemy off close behind the front at Lessay, Tilly, Villers, Valognes, Littry. The sky was overcast. Pilots dived under the clouds, down to 3000 feet. German ammunition grew short. When Nazis had to dismount, planes hammered them.

The Allies kept building—men, guns, tanks. But they had to have a port; they struck for Cherbourg.

Direct support was another new job. Mediums bombed troops, strong-points, batteries. Then the ground forces stormed in. The Command hit the massive citadel dominating Cherbourg; the ground forces followed. Airmen attacked forts ringing the city. The Germans retreated to the Arsenal. The port commander surrendered. Cherbourg and its battered harbor were in Allied hands.

The Allies had breathing space now; they could strike



Ninth Bombardment went to work to help upset the balance Germans had achieved. Veteran crews ranged the length and width of the Seine-Loire wedge, breaking bridges, firing dumps, cutting German supply and reinforcement lines, strangling their armies, starving their artillery, their flak guns, even their small arms. Prisoners told how they walked 100 miles to reach battle exhausted. German tanks used up a third of their battle-lives because trains could not get past ruined bridges. Inexorably, German armies were being withered.

By the end of July the balance had been upset. Germans were not stronger but weaker; the Command's operations, more than any other single factor, had prepared their collapse in France. The full weight of Allied air-power was hurled at the Germans before Lt. Gen. George S. Patton's Third Army near St. Lo July 25. As the Command's part of the operation, Marauders and Havocs laid a carpet of fragmentation and high explosive bombs south, southwest, and west of the town. Third Army lunged south to Rennes, turned east to Le Mans, then north. The Germans were surrounded.

Through the rest of July and August, the Command continued to help strangle the enemy. Fuel and ammunition dumps were destroyed. Railways died. Finally, the enemy broke and fled—fled to the bridgeless Seine. Gathered in the great loop at Rouen, Germans jammed together, a mass of men, tanks and trucks. They concentrated their flak, but for two days the Command hit the ruined German armies. As crews flew away for the last time Aug. 27, they looked back on chaos and

despair, the wreck of German hopes for victory in France.

S/Sgt. John L. Wagner, Carbinville, Ill., was flying as tail-gunner of a Marauder on Dec. 2, 1944. A flak burst nearly split his plane in two; three spans and three feet of skin held the tail section to the fuselage. Preparing to jump, he discovered the radio-gunner lying at the edge of the hole, seriously wounded. He pulled the wounded man away, removed his own parachute, and began first aid, lashing down the delirious gunner.

He waited for a crash-landing with a full load of bombs, knowing that the landing might well hurl the tail hundreds of feet. Sgt. Wagner quietly packed both parachutes and all available clothing around his friend to cushion him from shock. The pilot made a miraculous landing. When the ambulance arrived, the wounded man was ready for immediate evacuation.

LATE in August, four Marauder Groups moved to Normandy. They were the first Allied bombers to operate from French bases. First Command mission was to help reduce Brest, greatest harbor on the Atlantic coast. The Allies had to have it. Day after day, the Command flung its forces at forts, bridges, gun emplace-


While the Brest attack continued, the Division was getting ready for a complete move to France. In September and early October, Groups came to their French bases. Often they moved to airfields they had bombed. Once, a squadron moved to an area where its own crewmen had been shot down. French villagers had rescued the bodies from shallow German graves and had buried them reverently in their own graveyard.

First Sunday after the Group arrived, Americans and

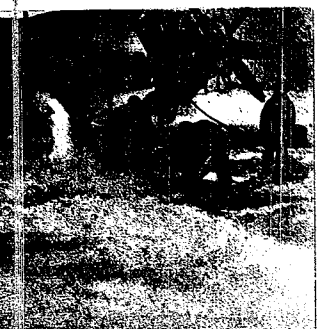
French held a memorial service. The FFI and French veterans laid wreaths on the graves, not the first flowers to be put there in gratitude and sorrow. Men of the Group, remembering what had been done, the cost, what they had still to do, paid soldierly honor to their fallen comrades.

Weather MAKES

DOUBLE-TROUBLE



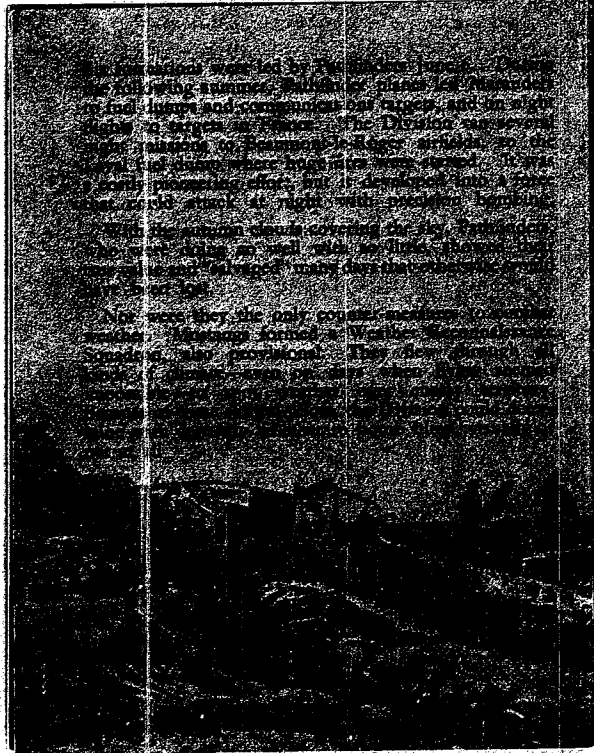
Then they turned to new tasks. Division bombers and ground forces in the drive into Germany. Division aircraft had first bombed the Reich at Merzig, attacking the famous Siegfried Line defenses. Now bombers were everywhere, pounding troop concentrations and forts near Metz, swinging north to attack bridges to Walcheren, working with British, Canadian, French, brother Americans. Everything was ready for a major serial offensive. Then the weather closed in.



From 1942 the weather had been as ugly as any in my as the Group had been but as early as January, 1944, the Division had been working on an antidote. A new method of bombing had been developed. First the Division had to make it work in practice. For the blind technique which was really very North European weather, the Division formed its Pathfinder Squadron, provisionally, and fought hard to make it a permanent unit. That could not be done, so the squadron embarked on a career of begging and borrowing to keep alive.

Months of practice, of trial missions, of intense study followed. Personnel had to be specially trained, ships had to be elaborately equipped. At one point the whole project hung in the balance. Should it continue? It was a drain on resources; there were so many things to be done. Then the latest results were determined, and it was clear that the Squadron, overcoming every difficulty, had triumphed. The Division had a new and priceless technique.

In May, Pathfinder planes were leading Division formations on successful attacks from above the clouds.



... had welded villages, stone and concrete, capable of vicious defense on every road to the Rhine. Mid-November, the Division bombed some of these towns for three days. But the Germans stuck.

The same thing was happening at the Roer River. To cross, ground forces had to control dams which the enemy defended fanatically. Again the Division worked directly with ground forces, bombing positions, trenches, emplacements. Again the Germans held.

At the same time, the Division worked on a new strangulation program, inspired by the Normandy success. Between the front and the Rhine stretched a great com-



that paralyzed air power while the Germans raged through the Ardennes toward the Meuse.

Second Lt. Arden D. Connick, Fortuna, Calif., piloting an Invader, bombed a concentration of vehicles, Jan. 23, 1945, then descended to tree-top level to destroy a machine gun nest and strafe a village. Returning, with a damaged rudder, he attacked a gun emplacement and then machine-gunned a half-track and two trucks. He attacked the target again. His left engine blazing, gasoline streaming out of a main tank, he destroyed the emplacement and inflicted heavy casualties on nearby troops. His right engine also on fire and tail hook shot out, Lt. Connick strafed two more trucks, then landed his damaged aircraft in a field. Rudder, left prop and rudder no longer working.

"Smash THE ENEMY UNTIL HE QUILTS"

DEC. 23, 1944: After days of anxiety, the Division was in the battle. The task: to keep advancing Germans from getting supplies and, when thrown in retreat, prevent their escape. Vital railway lines led into the German bases at their jump-off line. Bridges on each of these, from Euskirchen south to Kaiserslautern, were destroyed. Soon only one line was left open.

At the same time, the Division was attacking close to the front. Only two good roads led into the heart of the Ardennes—through towns like Laroche, St. Vith and Houffalize. Planes struck repeatedly, destroying these communications centers, filling roads with rubble and bomb craters.

This was attacking the enemy at his weakest point; the German had to have fuel for tanks and trucks to carry out his plans. In a matter of weeks ground forces attacking from the flanks and air forces attacking from the rear stopped him, turned him back. Now the enemy could think only of escape.

To get away, the Nazis had to cross the Our River on the Luxembourg-German border. They had no

choice. It was a small river, but its banks were high and steep, and they had to use the bridges.

At Dasburg Bridge, they had jammed the roads. Their vehicles were building up tremendous pressure, but only a thin line was trickling across the bridge. Fighter-bombers were there, shooting up a mass of transport. But too many German vehicles were getting away. The 9th Bombardment mediums came at 12,000 feet. Bomb bays opened. Bombardiers made precise, delicate adjustments. Tons of steel and high explosives plummeted earthward—bombs that blocked the Germans' only escape.

S/Sgt. Eugene F. Molloy, Nashua, N. H., was serving as engineer gunner on a Marauder Feb. 24. On the bomb run, intense and accurate flak hit the plane and severed the hydraulic line. Although anti-aircraft fire was thick, Sgt. Molloy took off his flak suit and parachute to search for the line cut. He found it in the nose wheel well. Fluid was escaping, and he knew that the fluid was necessary to make a safe landing. Despite the danger, the intense cold, his cramped position, he held the damaged line in his hand until the Marauder returned to make a normal landing.

IN the latter part of January and in February, 1945, the Division had one purpose: to disrupt the German defensive organization. Bombers swept incessantly over the area between the front and the Rhine. Beyond the river lay an area rich in opportunity but strong in flak. The day came when the 9th struck far east of the Rhine.

In January, the Red Army stormed across the Vistula, smashed towards Breslau and the Oder. To meet this threat, Hitler ordered divisions from the Western Front to the Eastern.

Between Cologne and Frankfurt run railway lines. Cutting these lines to the east would delay German movement, speed the advancing Reds. The Division was ordered to the attack and struck at four bridges on the vital railways.

Meanwhile, 9th Bombardment continued to hit bridges and communication centers in the west. The Germans were trying to shuffle their depleted divisions into a defensive line. They knew that it was only a matter of weeks before the Allies would begin a drive to the Rhine. Von Rundstedt had to send his troops north and south, east and west. But how could they move rapidly and efficiently with their railways cut, their road junctions destroyed, their stock of trucks smashed and smashed again when as far east of the Ruhr as Unna repair depots, precious tools and parts were shattered?

Again the Division was doing the job for which its accuracy and experience were so perfectly suited: strangling the enemy, starving him, destroying his communications, disorganizing his defenses, his roads, his railways.

At the same time, since December 1944, the Division had been secretly preparing an operation that was unparalleled in its history. In small huts and in tents, target officers were showing crewmen a daring plan which demanded intense study. Week after week, they concen-

trated on maps, on photographs of untouched targets deep in Germany. Fifty places had to be sorted out and assigned. All were to be attacked in a single operation. Flak-free routes had to be plotted. Navigators had to learn a dozen places to lead their formations. Almost every bombardier had his own target. There were 81 aiming points.

THEN came the order! Feb. 22, 1945, 500 Marauders, Invaders and Havocs rose from France, headed east. Five hundred bombers spread out over southwestern Germany, east to Wurzburg and Gottingen, north almost to Hanover, south nearly to Stuttgart. It was an enormous area, 200 miles from the nearest target in the west to the farthest in the east, 635 miles from the northernmost target to the target farthest south. Railroad bridges, marshalling yards, stations, railway junctions, roundhouses were listed for the attack.

Of the 50 different targets, bombs dropped on 45. This was skilled navigation and bombing, developed by training, coolness and courage. There was nothing left to luck or accident. It was the employment of a sharp weapon, slashing from the sky into the body of the Reich.

Results justified the effort. Railroad lines were cut at 48 places. One bridge, probably seven others were destroyed. Roundhouses, turntables, railway stations, a fuel dump, 21 warehouses, locomotives, hundreds of goods wagons were smashed, left burning, damaged or destroyed.

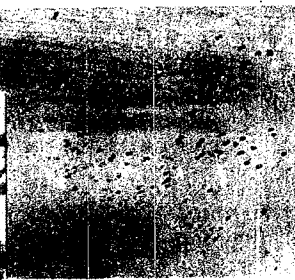
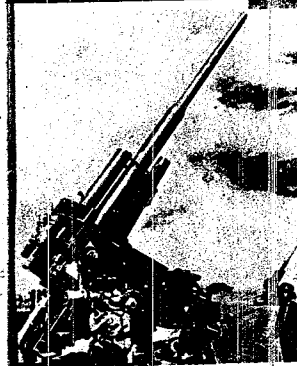
That was not all. From the normal altitude, two miles

up, planes dived to deck level. Invaders and Havocs had strafed recently, but not since May 17, 1943, had Marauders gone down to tree-tops. Hundreds of them accompanied by waves of Invaders and Havocs swept the Reich, cutting, stabbing German railways. All over southwest Germany strafing planes set afire, riddled and destroyed locomotives, a tank train, goods wagons, fuel tanks, warehouses, barracks, other buildings, barges, trucks and railway stations.

Skill and knowledge on the line, in shops, in offices, in operations rooms and at briefings lifted bombers into the skies. There, pilots and gunners, bombardiers and navigators, hurled their power at the Germans.

That is the story of men and bombardment, but it isn't complete. As General Anderson pointed out... The full story can be written only when victory is won.

Men of the Division are living the full story at this very minute—in the air, on the ground—to smash the enemy until he quits.









Plans and Progress

This is a story about the officers and enlisted men who have made our tactical air command one of the most powerful weapons in the Battle for Germany. Without their hard work, courage, loyalty and self-sacrifice, joint air-ground operations could not have achieved their present high degree of effectiveness.



The record of the XIX Tactical Air Command represents one of the greatest chapters in the History of Air Power and I am proud of and grateful to every individual in my command who helped this story come true.

O.P. Weyland

Major General, Commanding

The Story OF THE XIX TACTICAL AIR COMMAND

DECEMBER, 1944: Bastogne becomes the American rock of defense in Belgium as German forces in a great counter-attack lunge for the Meuse River. XIX TAC joins the 101st Airborne Division to form an unbreakable ring around the town. Enemy forces, under the impetus of their initial breakthrough, surge

46X135

forward many miles through thinly held American lines. But Bastogne never is taken.

Hovering constantly above the beleaguered town, XIX TAC Thunderbolts keep the desperate Germans at bay, abort attempts to infiltrate the Bastogne ring, burn fuel stores and supplies, take heavy toll of enemy troops and transportation.

Never have air and ground cooperated in such unison. For ten days the 101st holds the pivotal road center of Bastogne while German armored columns vainly try to crack through. Every large enemy effort is headed off and blunted by XIX TAC.

During the first days of the Battle of the Bulge, XIX TAC hangs a deadly net above the German spearheads. Roads are littered with wrecked equipment. Towns overrun by the Germans are bombed and set afire. When fog comes to shroud the battle area on Dec. 28, Von Rundstedt's drive has lost its momentum. Initiative passes to the Americans.

This is reiterated proof that close air-ground coordination pays off.

New Year's Day, Maj. Gen. Anthony G. McAullife, (then Brig. Gen.) Commander of the 101st's heroic stand at Bastogne, visits the XIX TAC "Raiders" group. To its new commander, Lt. Col. Leslie R. Bratton, of Hastings, Neb., he expresses his appreciation:

"If it had not been for your splendid cooperation we should never have been able to hold out." We were able to hold the vital road junction at Bastogne with your aid.

"I thought flak in Holland was bad, but the stuff your boys flew through here was much worse."

The next several weeks see Nazis being squeezed slowly from the salient and driven back towards the Siegfried Line, while XIX TAC chews away at German attempts to reinforce and resupply forward elements.

The crescendo of destruction is reached when XIX TAC again upsets the German cart on Jan. 22. Attempting a daylight withdrawal, Germans clog roads between Prum and Vianden and along the Our River. They stream eastward in ten mile-long columns, vehicles lined bumper to bumper.



Concentrations are spotted early in the day by an army liaison cub pilot. Relays of Thunderbolts race to hamstring the massed traffic. Diving through breaks in the clouds, Thunderbolts hammer long columns of trucks, tanks, self-propelled guns, horse-drawn vehicles.

For eight hours fighter-bombers punish German convoys. By nightfall destruction totals are greatest in XIX TAC history. Destroyed are 1179 motor vehicles; more than 500 others, damaged. Close behind rampaging fighter-bombers, advancing American troops move towards the Siegfried Line. Bastogne and "The Battle of the Bulge" are history.

Bastogne adds another bright chapter to the story of XIX TAC. Ahead are other chapters. XIX TAC also could look back on a story—a story of important and significant tasks well done.

PLANES

Protect

ARMY FLANK

AUGUST, 1944: Gen. Patton's crushing right hook opened the way toward Paris. Punching ahead 20 to 30 miles a day, the drive exposed and weakened his right flank. To XIX Tactical Air Command went the task of protecting a whole army's flank.

Successful execution of this bold plan was a vitally important tactical victory, underscored by the surrender

of 20,000 enemy troops. For the first time in history, an entire army capitulated to an air command as well as to a ground unit.

A resistant chain of air armor had been thrown above the Loire River bounding the long flank. To the command's tactical reconnaissance group fell the job of locating sizable concentrations. Attacks were snuffed out as soon as they were planned by thorough drubbings from the air. Gen. Erich Elster's hapless Huns, harried by French Forces of the Interior, finally were cut off from Germany by the junction of the Seventh and Third U.S. Armies.

With cessation of terrorizing air attacks as the primary condition of surrender, Gen. Elster threw in the towel to Maj. Gen. Robert C. Mason of the U.S. Ninth Army and to Maj. Gen. (then Brig. Gen.) O.P. Weyland of XIX TAC Sept. 16. This was concrete acknowledgement that an "idea"—close air-ground cooperation—had paid off.

Surrender to Gen. Weyland was the payoff of more than an idea—it was the logical conclusion of ceaseless training, of the will to win. It was the angry answer to an arrogant challenge. It was the reply of mechanics working in the winter with numbed hands on delicate engine changes, of tense, steel-nerved pilots who matched front-line GI Joe for guts, of paper shufflers in specialized office machinery, of responsibility-ridden CO's—all contributing, all necessary to the big show at the Loire.

Surrender was the highlight. Back of it was a victorious history. Each GI and officer contributed to a holocaust unequalled in aerial warfare history. They

were important parts of a new, powerful weapon. Destroyed in 10 months were 1351 enemy aircraft, 15,501 motor vehicles, 1743 tanks and armored vehicles, 1708 locomotives, 10,561 rail cars, 1642 horse-drawn vehicles, 1164 gun positions, 270 vessels and barges, 255 bridges, 116 fuel and ammunition dumps.

A Weapon COMES OF AGE

BACK in late 1943 (the "Mild and Bitter" era) the real significance of "tactical air command" was envisioned by only a few imaginative military men. The man in the street and the GI on the ground knew little of the paralyzing power of the air-ground machine. Yet now, one year later, the tactical air weapon has been developed to peak efficiency, is acknowledged as a vital factor in all large military operations.

Development of the weapon is not only the story of the tactical air commands of the Ninth Air Force alone. It symbolizes the entire Allied war effort. The effective character of the present organization is due to unprecedented inter-service cooperation, to adequate supplies and, above all, to imagination and foresight of frenzied

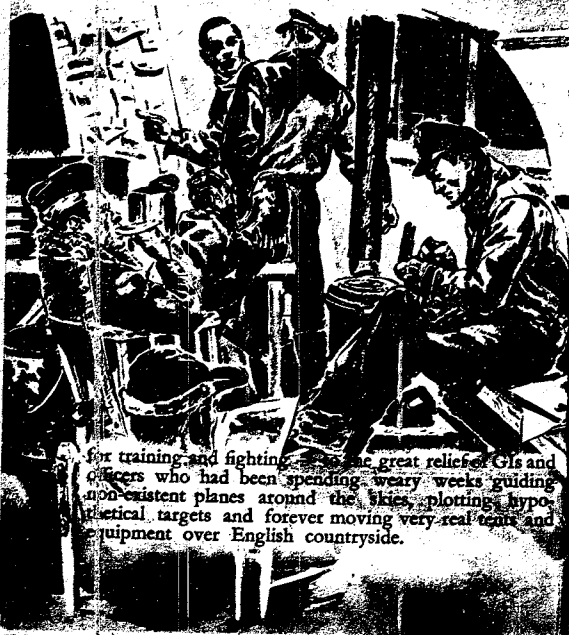
organization, speculation and experimentation during pre-invasion months.

A broad outline of the tactical air command "idea" was conceived and developed by top drawer Washington military planners in 1942 and 1943. It was practiced in maneuvers by units training in the States. Basic techniques were improved during the victorious North African campaign. Now, under the impact of battle experience, the form of the weapon still is changing. Early in the war its general pattern was hammered out, in many respects almost literally, for today's air-ground organization is the happy result of a well-balanced debate between the ardent disciples of Billy Mitchell and those of Hannibal.

A blueprint of the "idea" landed in the pre-invasion workshop that was England in 1943 where the welding and fusion began. The VIII Air Support Command's 1st Fighter Division (provisional), largely composed of 44th Bomb Wing personnel fresh from the States, began experimenting with air-ground tactics at Aldermaston Court, near Reading, Berkshire. Key personnel from the IX Fighter Command then emerged from the sands of North Africa to add battle experience to the testing ground.

Careful plans were laid for direct cooperation with an army in the field. Growing rapidly, the command soon split into two units: IX Fighter Command, which went to Middle Wallop, and IX Air Support Command, later the XIX Tactical Air Command, which returned to Aldermaston. IX Fighter Command continued and integrated the activities of the two tactical air commands until late July, 1944.

Gen. O.P. "Opie" Weyland took over the XIX Tactical Air Command Feb. 4, 1944. Not long after, the command was given two wings and seven groups



for training and fighting. To the great relief of GIs and officers who had been spending weary weeks guiding non-existent planes around the skies, plotting hypothetical targets and forever moving very real tents and equipment over English countryside.

Grueling cross-channel operations, which were to form such an important part of the softening-up process, began April 13, 1944, when seven fighter-bomber groups and their wings settled down at advanced bases in Kent. Four of the groups had been flying long-range bomber escort from bases in East Anglia, the other three were straight from the States. They played hell with enemy rail and motor transport, participated in semi-strategic bombing, helped with the planned isolation of the enemy south of the Seine River by bombing rail and road bridges. Their command of the air was demonstrated by the destruction of 176 enemy planes (115 in the air) during the Luftwaffe's periodic bursts of energy prior to D-Day.

YAWNING pilots climbed into their Mustangs and Thunderbolts each day when the first sunlight stretched across the channel, often flew three or four missions lasting until dark. Ground crews on hand to refuel, rearm and repair, sweated out each mission and worked late in blacked-out hangars to have every possible plane ready for action the following morning.

The phase was keynoted by "Liaison and Learning." EM and officers went to RAF operational centers to learn what the English had found out and to coordinate their activities with the greater overall invasion plan. Simultaneously, others trained and planned with ground officers of units later to be part of the air-ground team.

Reconnaissance planes of the command flew for months over the heaviest flak defenses in the world to photograph every detail of the invasion coast. The mission was as dangerous and as important as that of fighter-bombers.

"There is nothing more frustrating," said 1st Lt. Clyde B. East, of Chatham, Va., a recon pilot, "than riding over the stuff someone below you is throwing up and not being able to do more than take pictures of it. What I wouldn't have given for one big bomb!"

At last final plans were completed. The highest pitch of air blows reached, the time had come!

ANGRY
Eagles
CLAW FOE

EARLY the wet morning of June 6, fighter-bombers roared down runways while it still was so dark pilots could not see the control towers. They flew that day and during the next days of assault in continuous, successful beach patrols to keep Allied troops free from air attacks. Within a short time the angry eagles also were clawing enemy troops and transports with destructive armed reconnaissance missions.

The groups moved to the continent as soon as strips were prepared—often while possession of the field itself still was in violent debate. One Thunderbolt group,

commanded by Col. Morton D. Magoffin, of Deerwood, Minn., actually had to reverse its traffic pattern because of enemy flak positions. Weary pilots, along with everyone else at the base, spent unhappy nights diving into foxholes while Allied and German artillery exchanged blows. "Close air cooperation" probably never before had been so meaningful to the participants.

S/Sgt. Wade W. Frazee, of Oakland, Md., an armorer, had a narrow escape while on the job one afternoon:

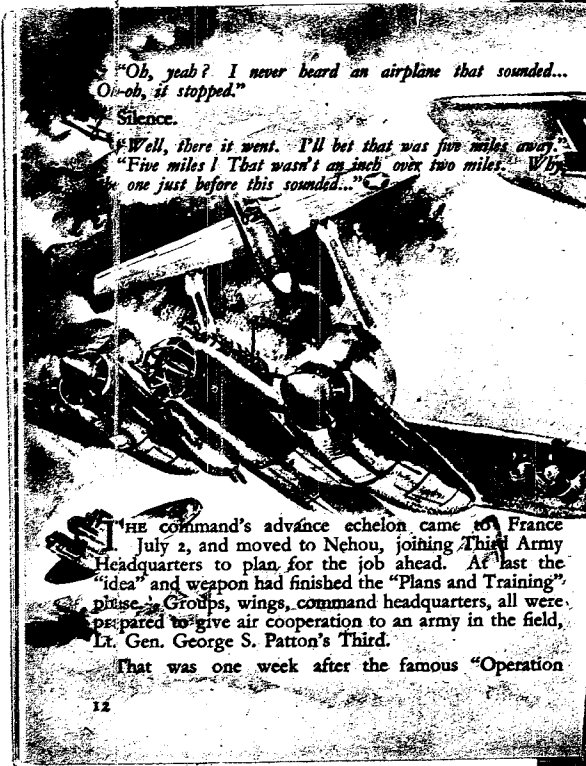
"I was on the wing of a P-47 loading ammunition when three ME-109s came down low and made a strafing pass. Ack-ack boys crippled one flying about 300 feet over me. It crashed down the runway. I just stood there on the wing until what was happening dawned on me. I hit the foxhole until it was all over, then went back to get the Thunderbolt ready for its next mission."

Incidents like this didn't prevent Sgt. Frazee from servicing his plane's guns so well they fired 23,290 rounds without a stoppage.

Units to come in later assault waves (July and August) had been given something other than warm beer and Piccadilly Circus to remember England: flying bombs. Many units were located just under the "main highway" for V-1's, and pilots gained grim satisfaction in destroying them while returning from missions.

Nightly bull sessions under canvas were something like this:

"Here comes another!"
"Hell, no! That's an airplane."



"Ob, yeah? I never heard an airplane that sounded...
Oh-ob, it stopped."

Silence.

"Well, there it went. I'll bet that was five miles away."
"Five miles! That wasn't an inch over two miles. Why
one just before this sounded..."

THE command's advance echelon came to France
July 2, and moved to Nehou, joining Third Army
Headquarters to plan for the job ahead. At last the
"idea" and weapon had finished the "Plans and Training"
phase. Groups, wings, command headquarters, all were
prepared to give air cooperation to an army in the field,
Lt. Gen. George S. Patton's Third.

That was one week after the famous "Operation

Cobra" in which a good portion of the whole Allied Air
Forces participated. American troops massed along
a line from St. Lô westward through Periers and Lessay
were being held up by a lack of maneuverability and by
terrain well adapted to defense. "Operation Cobra"
was an all-out air attack on enemy positions in one
small sector south of the Periers-St. Lô road followed
by an all-out infantry-armor drive. Heavies, mediums,
and fighter-bombers made their bomb-runs in waves.
Group pilots reported "planes at all possible levels."

"For a while," commented Lt. Col. Frank S. Perego,
of Canandaigua, N.Y., "it looked as if we would have to signal
with our arms in order to make a turn."

AIR blasting shook the Nazis down to their socks.
Rapid tank columns finished demolition of the tot-
tering hedgerow line. One week after the epoch-making
attack, Third Army and XIX TAC began the razzle-
dazzle end run that was to reach the enemy's ten-yard
line one month later.

As Gen. Patton's armor coiled south and east towards
Rennes, Nantes, and Laval, enemy air opposition was
so weak planes could fly 30 miles ahead of the armored
spearheads in search of targets. Often air activity
was halted by low rain clouds, but, weather permitting,
groups flew as many as five missions a day—some squad-
rons averaging as much as 11 hours and 45 minutes
aloft.

The Breton Peninsula overrun in a few days, the bulk
of the air and ground power wheeled and headed
towards Paris. Some units were assigned the job of

clearing out stubborn pockets in the ports. St. Malo surrendered Aug. 17. An ultimatum had been sent to the colonel in command, and while a squadron of Thunderbolts weighted with 500 pound bombs hovered menacingly overhead, he read "...the planes now over your forts will begin to dive-bomb."

The white flag was run up. P-47s and bombs went off to hit targets elsewhere.

Brest continued to hold out. Because of the call for air cooperation there and because of the advance on Paris, the command was forced to attack simultaneously on fronts 350 miles apart. Effective operations under these conditions demonstrated the flexibility of Allied air power. They were also a tribute to the harried operations sections in the command, wings, and groups.

In one of the attacks on Brest, a squadron of Thunderbolts led by Lt. Col. Joseph L. Laughlin, of Omaha, Neb., now commanding the group then under Col. Magoffin, spotted a concentration of enemy shipping in the harbor. Slipping through a small hole in the clouds, Col. Laughlin destroyed a light cruiser while other Thunderbolts damaged a destroyer and 14 additional ships. It was one of the few cases in which fighter-bombers have destroyed a warship of cruiser class.

Armored columns often raced so far ahead of the general advance that one of the important functions of fighter-bomber pilots was to report positions of our own armored spearheads. In this fluid situation Air Support Parties from XIX TAC attached to units of the Third Army proved indispensable in effecting the smooth cooperation between air and ground that was to become

classic. They rode close to the heads of columns to identify strongpoints that sometimes were only a few hundred feet away and then watched fighter-bombers pulverize them.

One Tactical Air Command GI was pinned down by German machine guns spitting fire from hedgerows on both sides. While bullets tore into his trailer he called to a squadron of Thunderbolts overhead. In a couple of minutes both sides of the field were "policed up" by 96 machine guns.

A patrol was completely cut off by a German counter-attack. A call for "all available aircraft" not only freed it but caused the complete rout of the enemy counterthrust.

COMBINED OPERATIONS

Pay Off

MANY complications of air cooperation could not have been anticipated. Gen. Patton's army drove so rapidly that XIX TAC sections in charge of operations had to get larger-scale maps to keep track of columns

that ran off more detailed maps. Pilots had to check their well-conditioned impulses to blow up every bridge. Wrecked bridges in this type of warfare only served to slow progress of the troops. Front lines and "bomb lines" moved so fast that greatly extended communications sometimes made keeping situation maps up to date impossible. Long planned systems for rapid identification of ground units from the air were put into effect.

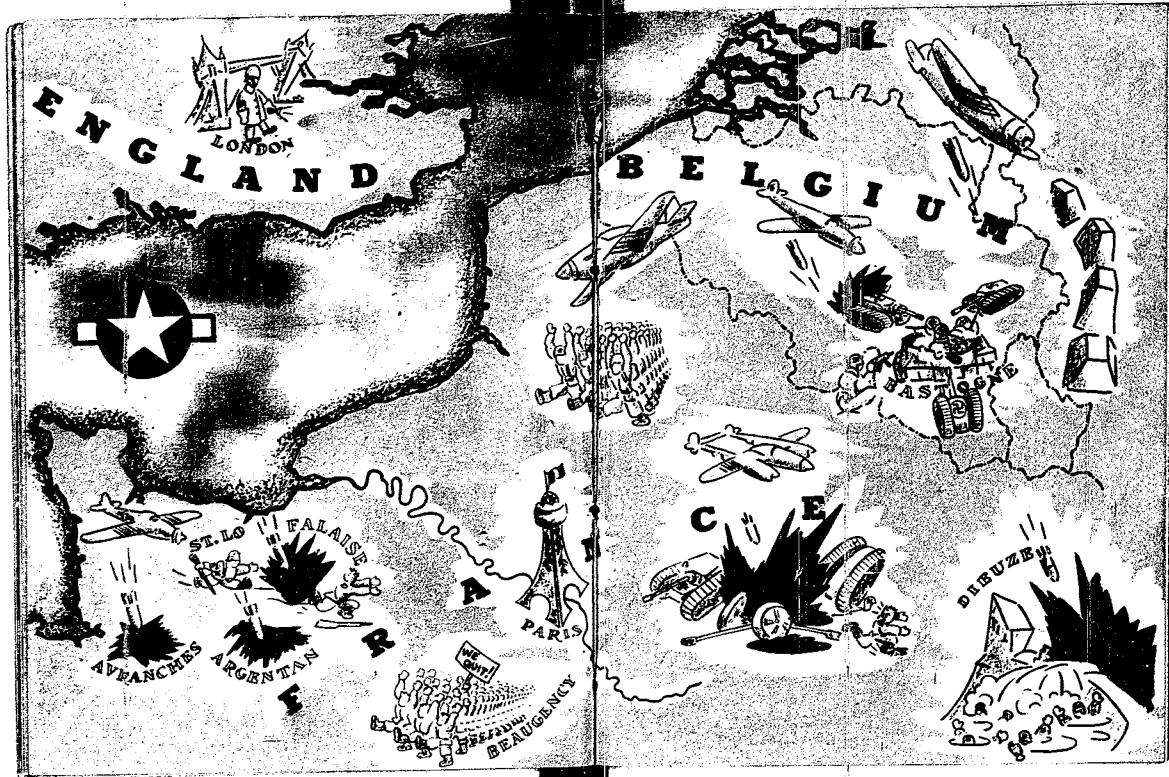
Capture of Gen. Elster's army climaxed the drive. Although credited as a great accomplishment it did not overshadow other fighters whose work all over the front vied with the river roundup in importance.

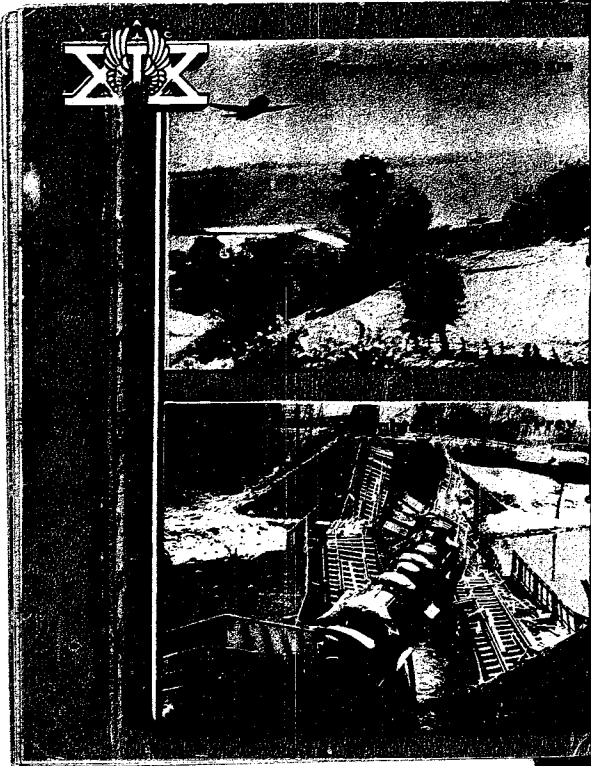
To the north fighter-bombers increased the destruction and congestion in the Argentan pocket where retreating German vehicles were jammed. Rocket-bearing fighters from Col. Anthony V. Grossetta's Thunderbolt group roared up and down the columns in search of tanks. In one mission they reported rockets blew open and destroyed 17 Tiger and medium tanks. Later in the day 13 more thick-skinned tanks were punctured and left burning by the same pilots.

In from a squadron mission which had destroyed hundreds of vehicles, 1st Lt. John A. McNeely, of Cleveland, Ohio, said, "It would have been hard to shoot at the road in any place and not hit a German car or truck. We followed the roads right down, over hills and around corners until we ran out of ammunition. When we looked back, fires were flickering all along the roads."

Spotting a few Germans in a field, another squadron of Thunderbolts from the group commanded by Col.







Robert L. Delashaw, of San Antonio, Tex., buzzed low for a strafing attack. Just before making their pass they saw nervous Nazis waving white flags. As the P-47s roared over their heads other jittery Germans joined the first few. In a matter of minutes there were about 400, all frantically waving white cloths. Guarded by relays of cocky Thunderbolts, they formed columns of fours on the road and trudged off to Allied lines. The pilots radioed the nearest fighter control station to pick up the prisoners.

Air opposition grew as TAC planes stabbed at numerous German airdromes ringing Paris. Occasionally Mustang and Thunderbolt pilots were diverted from dive-bombing and strafing attacks by formations of enemy fighters. But the enemy gained only temporary diversion by these attacks. Nazi losses invariably exceeded the number they shot down. The battle for Paris airfields was climaxed Aug. 25, 1944, when the crack Pioneer Mustang Group commanded by Col. George R. Bickell, of Nutley, N.J., shot down 36 fighters, destroyed 13 more on the ground.

The main show still was ground cooperation; the weapon worked more smoothly every day. Gen. Patton presented the Bronze Star to Gen. Weyland for meritorious service with this commendation:

"The superior efficiency and cooperation afforded this army by the forces under your command is the best example of the combined use of air and ground troops I have ever witnessed.

"Due to the tireless efforts of your flyers, large num-

bers of hostile vehicles and troop concentrations ahead of our advancing columns have been harassed or obliterated. The information passed directly to the head of the columns from the air has saved time and lives.

"I am voicing the opinion of all the officers and men in this army when I express to you our admiration and appreciation for your magnificent efforts."

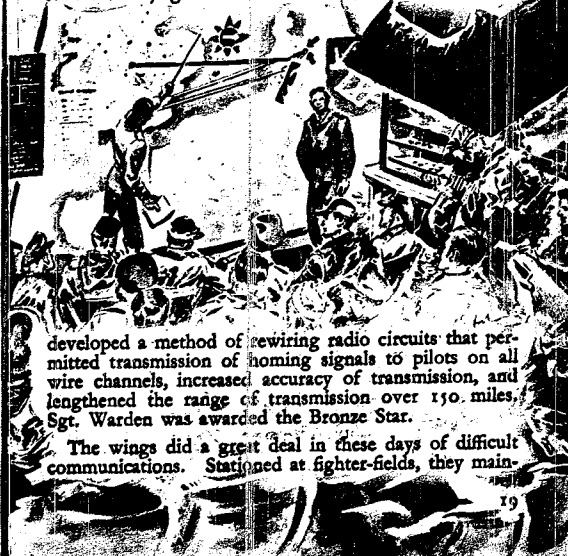
CLOSE liaison between army and air command kept XIX TAC headquarters on the move. Weary GIs packed and unpacked tons of maps, radios, papers, and miscellaneous equipment nine times in the trek across France. Harassed M/Sgt. Thomas F. Quealey, of Brookline, Mass., who had repeatedly pitched and struck numerous administrative tents and the large "circus tent" used for combined operations snapped, "We're not only mobile, we're portable!" Chaitroopers suspected that some day they would reach a town before Gen. Patton's armor.

Communications, strained to the breaking point by the rapidity of the advance, was one of the greatest problems. While each move of Army's headquarters brought it in closer contact to its elements, the contrary was true of XIX TAC. Demands for ground cooperation had scattered the groups over a large section of central France. In 30 days communications men networked all of Brittany, most of the area between Paris and the Loire River, and 140 miles beyond. Altogether, more than 500 miles of main trunk telephone lines were laid by the hard-working communications teams.

Crews stringing lines to Air Support Parties at the

front shared the misery of the infantry. They not only dodged shells and snipers but also took prisoners. When rapid communications were necessary, they worked 18 to 20 hours a day setting up new lines, repairing old ones.

Not content with merely doing their job, these men also devised new ways and means of improving communications. T/Sgt. Fred W. Warden, of Venice, Calif.,



developed a method of rewiring radio circuits that permitted transmission of homing signals to pilots on all wire channels, increased accuracy of transmission, and lengthened the range of transmission over 150 miles. Sgt. Warden was awarded the Bronze Star.

The wings did a great deal in these days of difficult communications. Stationed at fighter-fields, they main-

tained vital intergroup and ground-air coordination. The Army or Ground Liaison Officer also contributed much to their coordination. The GLO made certain that pilots always were well briefed on the latest positions of friendly troops.

Important functions were carried on through the wings: operations reports from groups to command headquarters, field orders from command to groups, the abundance of routine paper work that is one of the unromantic but essential functions of any large military unit.

Groups often moved onto airfields in the wake of evacuating Germans. Usually they spent more time repairing their own bomb damage than anything the fleeing Nazis had been able to destroy. Control towers were erected on the edge of bomb-pocked runways; complicated repairs were made in the open because hangars had been blown up: functions of personnel, intelligence, operations, plans and training and supply sections often had to be kept at the usual high level of efficiency in the midst of the most primitive field conditions. War-weary typewriters rattled out detailed reports by flashlight while persistent rains helped keep the situation fluid.

Airborne squadrons, normally the first Air Force units to reach an advanced landing strip, often performed near-miracles in speedily rearming and refueling fighter and recon aircraft and in repairing damaged planes. Little known even in the Air Force, they came into their own during the sweep across France. To them must go a large share of the credit for the mobility of XIX TAC groups.

G.I.s MAKE

Miracles

S.O.P.

THE offensive swept by Paris and stopped only when troops of the Third Army had occupied Nancy and had come within shelling distance of Metz. Here, the swollen Moselle River their moat, the ancient citadel of Metz their pivot, the Germans made a stand. During the next months Third Army consolidated, regrouped and resupplied for the drive into Germany itself. With XIX TAC it continued to polish that deadly weapon—well knit air-ground attack.

Continual overcast and rains prevented a bang-up overture for the "Twilight of the Gods," but given the slightest chance Thunderbolts and Mustangs pounded the concrete Maginot and Siegfried Lines. More important, they aided the attrition phase of the Battle of Germany.

Twice, during bitter fighting around Chateau-Salins, east of Nancy, squadrons took off under forbidding conditions to answer an Army call for help. Crushed were dangerous German tank counter-attacks.

Gen. Patton wrote to Gen. Weyland in part:

"...I feel that special emphasis should be placed on the truly heroic action of the 509th and 510th Fighter Bomber Squadrons which on Sept. 24, in support of the 4th Arm'd. Div., took off in unlyable weather, uncertain whether or not they could ever land. These units intervened at the critical moment of a tank battle, and by their skill and daring very materially assisted in the defeat and destruction of the enemy."

Sometimes unpredictable weather crossed pilots by closing in on emergency airfields all along the front where XIX TAC aircraft were scattered. Despite hostile elements, fighters went aloft tuned like Swiss watches. Skill, ingenuity, and mechanical craftsmanship of GI artisans of the flight line cannot be overrated. Working under arduous conditions ground crews made miracles S.O.P.

As groups leaped across France in nomadic fashion, even clearing cow pastures was necessary to set up airstrips as close as possible to the front lines.

THE sudden flood which lapped over the Pioneer Group was one of the special events staged by Mother Nature on the road to German frontiers. Swollen by weeks of steady rain, the Marne River and its adjacent canal broke cross-country and almost inundated the group. The resulting scene must have resembled the famed trek of George Rogers Clark and his men across the flooded Ohio plains in early American history.

The modern "pioneers" waded waist deep in swirling waters to recover equipment, paddled around in dinghies

and hastily improvised rafts, and finally navigated amphibious jeeps generously loaned by the ground forces.

Taking this amphibious operation in stride, a few days later, Dec. 1, the group knocked down three planes over Karlsruhe to celebrate its first anniversary of combat a year before it had been the first to see the new long-range P-51 B Mustang on escort duty with heavy bombers over Germany.

It was on one of these early long range escort missions that Col. James H. Howard, of St. Louis, Mo., then



a squadron commander and later the group's commander, won the Congressional Medal of Honor. Single-handedly he engaged a formation of more than 30 enemy fighters which swooped down on a box of Fortresses. Keeping them at bay by superb flying, he destroyed three and pre-

vented enemy fighters from getting at the bombers. Conservative Col. Howard, who was a "Flying Tiger" ace in China, claimed only three, but the heavy bomber crews thought the figure was closer to six.

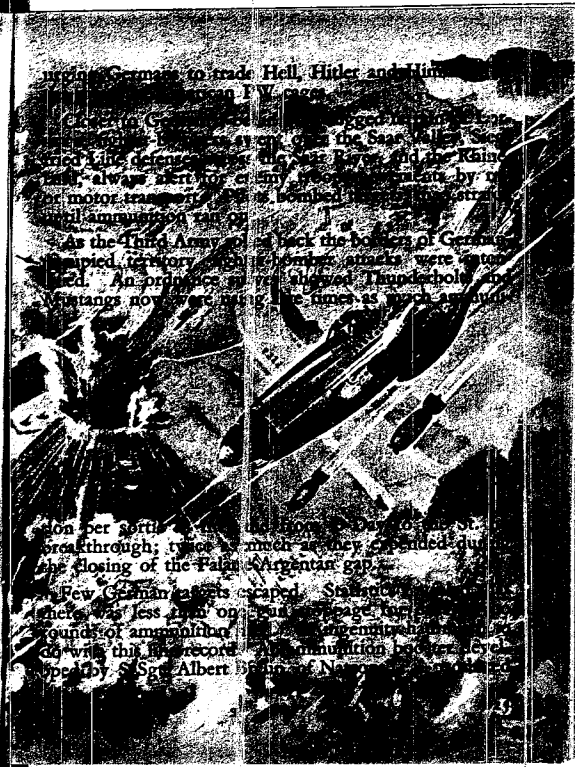
On Aug. 24 the Pioneer Group was awarded the Presidential Unit Citation "for outstanding performance in combat against the enemy," their efforts "being instrumental in the successful development and execution of long range protection of heavy bombers."

EXCEPT for local salients the Third Army front during October resembled an elongated S. Stretching from Thionville behind Metz, across the Moselle River, it curved several miles before Nancy to the Seventh Army front.

Ahead were Germans, entrenched in the commanding positions of the hills and ridges of Lorraine to set up house apparently for the winter. These well-chosen positions of vantage were ferreted out by vigilant recon planes, then accurately blasted by fighter-bombers.

Thunderbolts and Mustangs slipped down between the hills to jab at front line troops and artillery positions. Like angry bees they buzzed German soldiers into a perpetual foxhole to foxhole hop-skip-and-jump.

Mere sight of a plane was enough to send the enemy scrambling for his foxhole, but even these places of refuge were far from safe when fighter-bombers hit at almost vertical angles. Thousands of Psychological Warfare leaflets were released by Thunderbolts and Mustangs,



urgent Germans to trade Hell, Hitler and Himmler for American P.V. cases
The Third Army's fighter-bombers were always alert for enemy positions, especially by motor transport. They were bombed heavily in the strategic ammunition rail lines.
As the Third Army pushed back the borders of German-occupied territory, fighter-bomber attacks were intensified. An impressive record was achieved by Thunderbolts and Mustangs now flying the times as much ammunition

ion per sortie...
breakthrough; twice as much as they expended during the closing of the Falaise-Argentan gap.
Few German tanks escaped. Statistics showed that there was less than one tank per page for every 100 rounds of ammunition expended. The German tank record for this battle record was 100 rounds per sortie. Eye-witnessed by S. Sgt. Albert B. [Name] of New [Name]...

a record in his group of 6800 rounds fired per plane without a stoppage. Sgt. Braun's invention prevented gravitational pull from disrupting flow of ammunition to a plane's guns when the pilot pulled out of a steep dive. Braun, a veteran of 20 years' service in the Air Force, also is credited with modification of the gunsight now in use by his group. He was awarded the Bronze Star.

In October the P-61 Black Widow added "Intruder" missions to its nightly patrols. Prowling over Germany as soon as darkness fell, it seasoned with deadly spice the day's bill of fare provided by P-47s and P-51s.

These "fly by nights," powerful as medium bombers, equipped with radar devices, bristling with firepower, pounced on enemy rail and motor traffic. Germans who had heretofore ventured out under cover of night in comparative safety now were faced with unrelenting round-the-clock strafing attacks.

This day and night mauling gave the Germans "50-caliberitis." Occasionally they tipped their hands to Thunderbolt and Mustang pilots. One jittery German flak battery let fly at a flight overhead. Investigation disclosed a tank detraining point hidden by trees and a string of flat cars from which tanks were being driven off into the woods. Thunderbolts soon destroyed eight tanks, 20 freight cars, the locomotive and unloading ramp. As a gesture of gratitude, strafing and destruction of the ten flak positions along the tracks were saved for last.

Small wonder that German soldiers plodded into PW cages muttering "Jabos."

Air-Ground

— TEAM WITH A FUTURE

ENEMY air activity was sporadic and almost nil close to the front lines. The Luftwaffe usually was cautious and unaggressive, seldom seeking combat. The reluctance to fight was hard to explain. Once, more than 20 ME-109s circled above a flight of four Mustangs strafing rolling stock on the deck but showed no signs of wanting to break up the party.

Meanwhile, units of the Third Army had entered Fort Driant, most formidable of outposts guarding Metz. Thunderbolts, in what was termed by Third Army as "one of the closest air-ground missions of the war," bombed pillboxes and emplacements at the Fort's entrances to breach the way for infantry. Later that same day, Oct. 3, the versatile Thunderbolts scattered an incipient German counter-attack in the area.

Active all along the front, Third Army sometimes made unusual requests for air attack. Blowing of the Etang de Lindre Dam, east of Dieuze, was one of these. XII Corps had advanced past Nancy to the Seille River.

One division had made the crossing and was in danger of isolation from Corps if Germans loosed the Lindre Dam waters into the Seille River valley. To snatch this threat from German hands, XII Corps commander requested XIX TAC to breach the dam, the resulting flood to be controlled by front-line engineer battalions.

BECAUSE precise, pinpoint bombing was required, Thunderbolts supplanted medium and heavy bombers. For the first time in this Theater fighter-bombers were assigned such a mission.

On the afternoon of Oct. 20, Col. Joseph L. Laughlin led two especially briefed squadrons in the assault on the dam. Wheeling out of murky Lorraine skies at 7000 feet, Thunderbolts howled down to within 100 feet of the dam's surface to drop their 1000 pound bombs, then dived through the intense flak again to strafe enemy gun positions.

Later that afternoon another squadron returning to the dam found water pouring through a shallow 50-foot gap near the top. The Seille River had risen four feet. Two days later all but the center of Dieuze was under water, and the flood had gone 12 miles beyond the town.

A spokesman for XII Corps said the blowing of the Lindre Dam and preventive flooding of the Seille River contributed to the success of XII Corp's offensive launched two weeks later. So successful was the flooding that Corps was able to combine local offensive preparations against enemy lines where the Seille had inundated them in the vicinity of Dieuze. XII Corps was ready for the big offensive.

This was the beginning of the drive on Germany, launched Nov. 1.

Despite low clouds and icing conditions, fighter-bombers flew two and three missions that day punishing fields, marshaling areas, troop concentrations and artillery positions. Six Thunderbolts struck at the enemy's most vital nerve centers in the first air blows of the drive on Germany. CP's were destroyed or damaged.

Two miles east of Metz, Thunderbolt bombs hit the CP of an SS Panzer Grenadier Division, completely destroying the building housing the G-2 and G-3, killing most of their officers. Prisoners taken.



Ground units admitted the attack caused great confusion but as the American offensive was beginning to roll, pilots worked closely with ground controllers to clear troublesome enemy obstacles and on-the-spot targets. Reconnaissance planes scoured the area, calling out targets invisible to ground forces. As one Air Support Group pilot, Capt. Albert G. Kelly, of San Jose, Calif., put it: "When we needed air, it was there." This was probably the best description of air-ground coordination.

German troops and convoys withdrawing from Metz to avoid encirclement by Third Army pincers were pounded unmercifully by Thunderbolts. Bombs, rockets and bullets poured into Nazi columns from Metz east to the Rhine. Fighter-bombers ran up great totals of destruction.

First Lt. Arnold Mullins, of Big Shoals, Ky., flying with the group commanded by Lt. Col. J. Garrett Jackson, of Altus, Okla., commented, "*There's as much stuff on the road as there was at Avranches only here it's not packed as tight as it was there. At the end of the day I could see fires scattered all the way from the front back to the Rhine.*"

Thunderbolts and Mustangs destroyed 570 motor vehicles, 141 locomotives, and 630 railroad cars, besides 21 enemy aircraft in the air and on the ground, during Nov. 17, 18, and 19.

This was the tempo of XIX TAC's activities in November. Planes were sent aloft on 18 days, 13 more than the weatherman would have settled for at the beginning of the month.

Taking off from rain-soaked fields, often so muddy it seemed impossible for fighters to wrench their 1000 and 2000 pound bomb loads from the ground, pilots flew through heavy clouds, rain, snow, and with "just enough visibility to see the flak."

Some pilots forsook available leaves to visit front lines. First Lt. Richard H. Parker, of Portland, Ore., and 1st Lt. Francis "Buzz" Norr, of Tremonton, Utah, examined the wreckage in a wooded area they had bombed and strafed the day before. They talked things over with

tankers and doughfeet they had supported all the way across France. They found that there certainly was a basis for "mutual admiration societies."

As December rolled around XIX TAC fighter-bomber and recon groups moved closer to the German border. Third Army broke through the Maginot Line and entered the Saar Valley to assault Siegfried Line defenses across the Saar River.

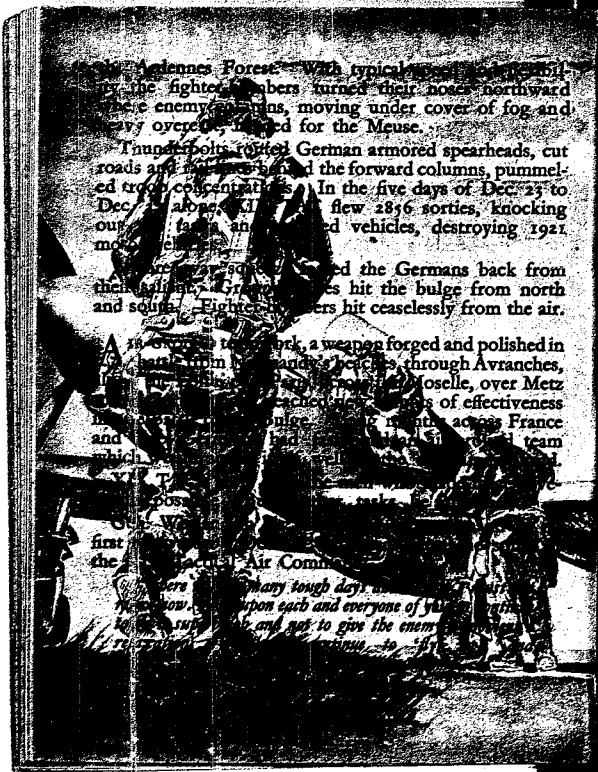
Fighter-bombers of XIX TAC spearheaded the advancing infantry and armor ranging ahead of front lines to batter German positions and potential counter-thrusts. In a message to Gen. Weyland, Maj. Gen. Manton S. Eddy, XII Corps commander, said:

"I wish again to express my appreciation for the outstanding part contributed by units of your command in supporting the successful attack of the XII Corps on the Maginot Line."

Two Thunderbolt groups, commanded by Col. Laughlin and Lt. Col. Jackson, were singled out for particular praise. Col. Jackson's group attacked enemy gun and troop emplacements holding up the 26th Division on the far side of the Saar River. This attack enabled the 26th materially to enlarge its bridgehead.

Later in the day, Col. Laughlin's "Maulers" took timely action on a strong counter-attack on the 35th Division. The "Maulers" aided the 35th in stopping the German tanks dead in their tracks.

Even as XIX TAC fighter-bombers tore into Siegfried Line defenses along the Saar River, Field Marshal Gerd von Rundstedt launched his counter-offensive through



the Ardennes Forest. With typical German familiarity the fighter bombers turned their noses northward where enemy airplanes, moving under cover of fog and heavy overcast, headed for the Meuse.

Thunderbolts routed German armored spearheads, cut roads and rail lines behind the forward columns, pummeled troop concentrations. In the five days of Dec. 23 to Dec. 27 alone, the 487th flew 2856 sorties, knocking out 10 tanks and 100 vehicles, destroying 1927 motor vehicles.

Thunderbolts drove the Germans back from their ill-fated Greif attacks. Fighters hit the bulge from north and south. Eighteen fighters hit ceaselessly from the air.

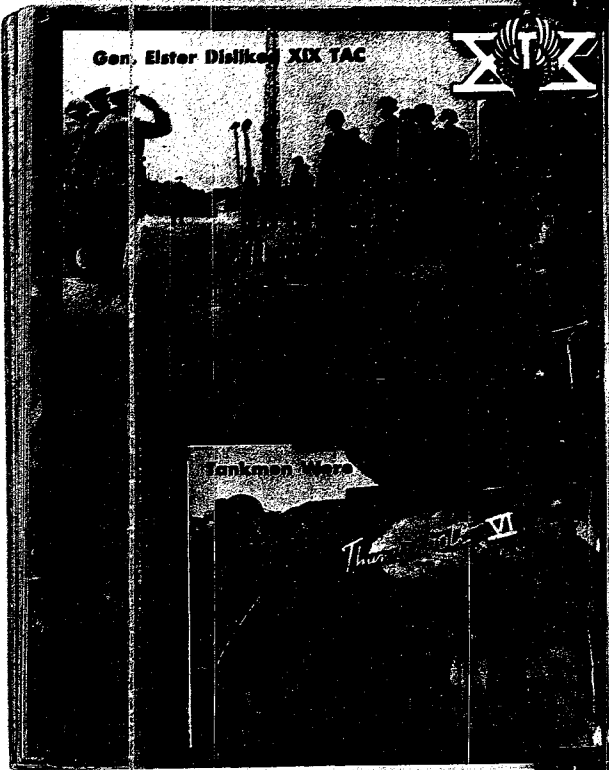
A 28th Group's task, a weapon forged and polished in battle from the beaches through Avranches, in the Moselle valley, across the Moselle, over Metz and the Saar, was executed with degrees of effectiveness in the bulge. The 28th Group's missions across France and Germany had been a team effort.

...the first the Air Command

...many tough days upon each and everyone of you and not to give the enemy any respite.



The Team

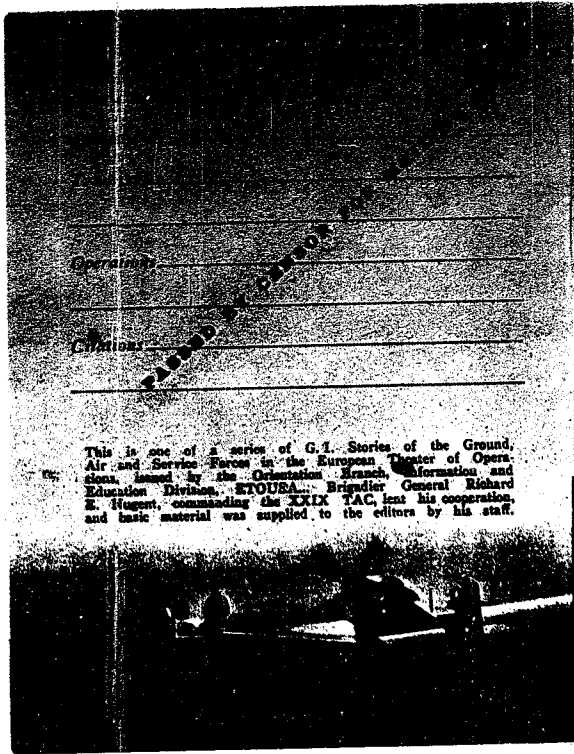


MISSION

Accomplished



THE STORY OF THE XXIX TAC



Operations

Citations

This is one of a series of G.I. Stories of the Ground, Air and Service Forces in the European Theater of Operations, issued by the Orientation Branch, Information and Education Division, STOUA. Brigadier General Richard E. Nugent, commanding the XXIX TAC, lent his cooperation, and basic material was supplied to the editors by his staff.



The chapters of this booklet were made possible by men who actually wrote the history of XXIX TAC indelibly in the skies over Germany—men who defied death and sometimes met it in the pursuit of a dream which, today, with the end of hostilities in Europe, comes true for the living. It is a coincidence that this dedication should be written on V-E Day. It enables me to look back on a mission, a campaign, a whole war, ably conducted and brilliantly concluded and to express my gratitude and appreciation to the officers and enlisted men whose faith in the potentialities of Tactical Air Power and whose devotion to duty have contributed to the deeds and accomplishments inscribed on these pages.

Brigadier General, Commanding

The Story OF THE XXIX TACTICAL AIR COMMAND

DEC. 3, 1944: "Come on up and bring a pilot. We've got to crack this nut or crack with it," telephoned Maj. Gen. Charles H. Gerhardt, 29th Inf. Div. Commander, to Lt. Col. Horace B. Wetherell, XXIX TAC Air Cooperation Officer.

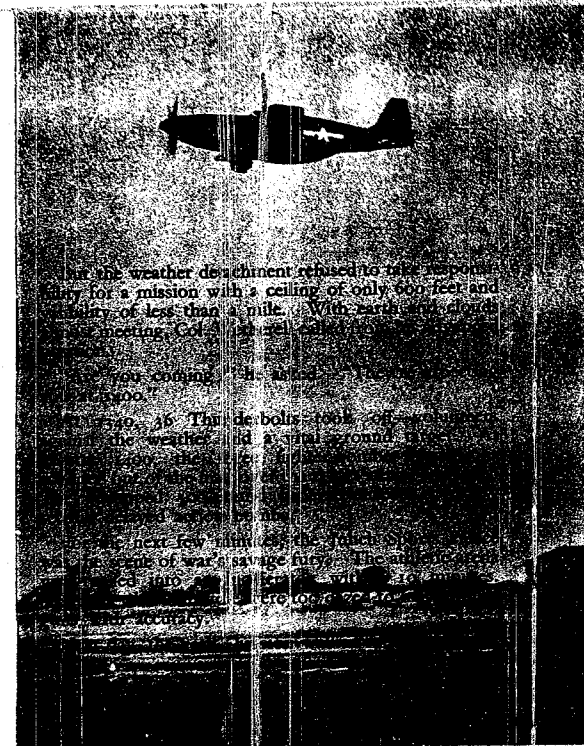
The urgent call came from Julich where the infantry division was being held up. Specifically, the doughs were being stopped cold in front of the Julich Sports Palace, converted into a bristling fortress guarding the last bridge over the Roer. This was the key to the entire German defense in the area. And this fortress blocked the entire Operations Q program which called for infantrymen to cross the Roer and race onwards to the Rhine. For seven days, the 29th Division had tossed its weight at the Sports Palace, against a defense that refused to give way.

Col. Wetherell and Capt. Wilson G. Hall, Roseboro, N. C., a Thunderbolt pilot, hurried to the ground headquarters, deciding that the job could be done from the air. They spent the remainder of the afternoon eyeing the target from the footsloggers' vantage point.

OPERATION Q held its breath along the Roer-River front as Capt. Hall flew back to XXIX TAC headquarters in a Cub. A two-hour briefing followed.

Dec. 6 produced the acme of inclement weather. The TAC's weather detachment had predicted only four to 10 flyable days for the month. This definitely wasn't one of them. All groups were grounded. Flying was out of the question, but Capt. Hall refused to let the question drop completely and the morning was consumed by one long argument.

"The ground needs the air; they're crying for air. If tactical support works, it's got to work now—when it's needed, ceiling or no ceiling!" he said.



the objective. The last barrier west of the Roer had been liquidated. Julich, and the Rhine beyond, could be reinstated on the schedule of Operations Q. Gen. Gerhard's commendation stated: "...one of the most brilliant examples of air-ground cooperation it is possible to imagine."

XXIX TAC's air power did not win the battle for the Julich Sports Palace, but the Thunderbolt attacks did save both lives and time—had turned an inevitable success into a shorter and less horrible ordeal. Air-ground cooperation clicked Dec. 6, 1944.

The only civilian counterpart to close ground cooperation by tactical air power is a fire department. Neither smoke-eaters nor XXIX TAC knows from what on the next three-alarm emergency will come.



"Boy, HOW WE LOVE YOU GUYS!"

A week before the capture of Cologne, Gen. Eisenhower arrived at 2nd Armd. Div. headquarters. Units of the division were making a wild dash to take the Rhine bridge at Uerdingen. So fast was their advance that they captured German soldiers in the railroad station at Krefeld, waiting to go on furlough.

But the 2nd Armored's flank was exposed and the Wehrmacht saw its opportunity. German panzers, supported by infantry, broke out of Neuss and threatened the east flank of the division at a point where a battalion had to put cooks and supply clerks into the line to fill the gaps. Lt. Col. Joseph G. Focht, Reading, Pa., Air-Ground Cooperation Officer, called XXIX TAC Operations.

If enemy armor cut through this thin opposition and linked up with the 130th Panzer Lehr Div. on the opposite flank, the Supreme Allied Commander would be among those cut off.

But Gen. Eisenhower never had occasion to learn of his predicament. Six P-47 Thunderbolt squadrons from the 406th Fighter Group were over the Krefeld area within an hour. Seven tanks spearheading the Nazi prong were completely destroyed, the attack

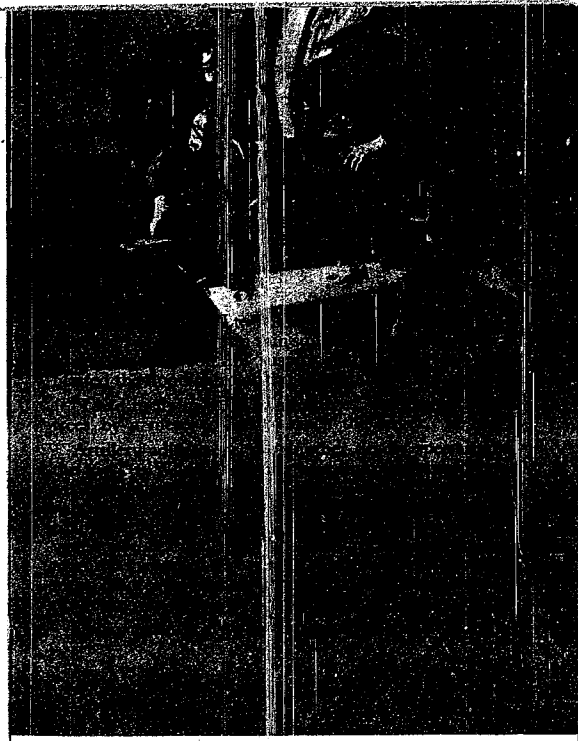
broken up. As the pilots headed for home the voice of a ground officer broke in over the air-ground radio: "Boy, how we love you guys."

Germans actually surrendered to XXIX TAC at Hildesheim where 2nd Armored had been held up in its blitz run from the Rhine to the Elbe. On the second day of the siege, Thunderbolts and Mustangs from the 405th, 406th, 370th, 373rd and 366th Groups roared over the town like a swarm of angry buzzards.

The unexpected happened. A white flag was hoisted on the highest steeple in the city. A delegation was sent to the tankers with these terms: "The city of Hildesheim will surrender. Just take those planes away." XXIX TAC remained overhead during the transaction, circled while soldiers trudged into the town. Hildesheim had thrown in the towel—had given up at the mere thought of the dynamite packed by the tactical air arm supporting ground action.

WHILE Thunderbolts wreaked havoc on enemy ground troops and gave explosive meaning to XXIX TAC's application of the new term "air cover" and "air-ground cooperation," Mustang and Lightning reconnaissance pilots beat the brush, photographed targets, led P-47s to many lush targets.

The work of Col. James M. Smelley's 363rd Tactical Reconnaissance Group exemplified the meaning of air-ground teamwork. On Feb. 9, 1945, when the abnormal rise of the Roer River flooded large areas of the



four miles west of Dusseldorf earned the Distinguished Flying Cross for 1st Lt. Paul I. Sparer, Winthrop, Mass., 363rd pilot. Lt. Sparer experienced difficulty in pointing out the target to Thunderbolt pilots and dropped to a dangerously low altitude where he was fired on from guns protecting the train. The Mustang pilot left the train blazing with fire from his guns.

In a neat on-the-spot artillery adjustment mission near Dinslaken, 1st Lt. David R. Measell, Pontiac, Mich., directed howitzer fire on eight heavy German guns zeroed in on a road along which an American tank column approached. In the nick of time, he contacted artillery on the west bank of the Rhine which "lobbed 50 shells right into the gun pits." The tanks rumbled along, unmolested.

The "Ramblin' Recces," as the 363rd Group was dubbed, turned in one of the outstanding aerial photography jobs in the history of air-ground team work.

On Feb. 22, Col. Smelley led a 13-plane Lightning flight through the heart of the flak-infested Ruhr Valley. Purpose: to provide Ninth Army strategists, plotting the encirclement of this area, with a panoramic picture of terrain problems. Result: within 15 minutes, less time than it takes to sit for a portrait, 1200 square miles of Germany's maze of factories, highways and railroads in the Ruhr, had been photographed. This flight was heralded by some as the most successful single photo recon mission in the history of the 9th Air Force.

Pilots participating in the mission were Capt. T. A.

AIR-GROUND COOPERATION

Pays OFF

As the pattern of air-ground cooperation with the Ninth Army took shape, the most recurrent event in XXIX TAC's daily performances was the disruption of enemy counter-attacks before they could develop.

On Nov. 28, Thunderbolt pilots of Lt. Col. Leo C. Moon's 404th Group broke up a German panzer threat against a unit of Maj. Gen. E. N. Harmon's 2nd Armd. Div. In a letter of commendation, Gen. Harmon disclosed that enemy tank losses were double the claim XXIX TAC had made from air observation. Wrote the general:

The courage and flying ability displayed were in the highest traditions of the military service. The assistance rendered the ground forces constitutes a splendid example of cooperation between forces of the service.

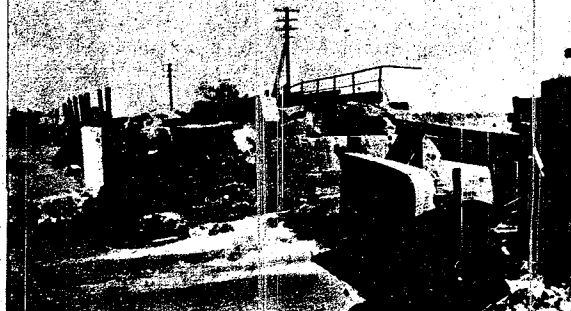
After Ninth Army had reached the Roer on a general front a few days following the fighter-bombers' assault at Julich, Lt. Gen. William H. Simpson, basing his praise on numerous counter-attacks smashed by XXIX TAC planes, addressed the following commendation to Brig. Gen. Richard F. Nugent:

I wish to commend the officers and men of the XXIX

TAC for excellent close support afforded the Ninth Army on Nov. 16, the initial day of the current offensive. The support afforded by your command, executed as it was under difficult conditions, contributed materially to the initial success of the ground troops. I desire also to make record of my appreciation of the splendid cooperation existent between ground and air troops which has been especially exemplified during the progress of the present campaign.

Dusty, dazed Germans also "desired to make record" of their ideas on close ground support as practiced Nov. 16 by XXIX TAC.

Said one Nazi non-com, soldier of nine years' experience and a member of the 330th Volksgrenadier Regt.: "I never saw anything like it. My men didn't even dare





stick their heads over the horizon. It was lucky for us that your ground troops didn't make contact with us until the next day. I couldn't have done anything with my boys that day."

American doughs looked skyward with the grateful eyes of men who expect and receive blessings from heaven. A 175th Inf. Regt. platoon leader summarized: "We didn't have any trouble at all after they came over. No artillery, no mortars, no nothing. The Krauts are beat when we take them after an attack."

Said a sergeant: "We can just walk right in there after the P-47s strafe. Why can't they keep about three of 'em over us all the time when we're attacking?"

A corporal: "Lots of times we can't move an inch and then the P-47s come over and we just walk in without a shot, like yesterday. They're a lifesaver."

Other counter-attacks were being planned by the Wehrmacht and by the time they were broken up, German tankers must have wondered why their guns were made to shoot horizontally instead of vertically.

THUNDERBOLTS from Col. Harold N. Holt's 366th Fighter Group got a hurry call from XIII Corps in the Braunschweig area April 19, 1945. A large tank force was advancing against the Americans. After doughs had been pulled back to allow a safe bombing margin, Col. Holt's "Hun Hunters" pounced on the tanks, setting the leader afire, upsetting several others and routing the entire column. Survivors fled to the woods. Shortly afterwards, XIII Corps closed in and captured the tattered Wehrmacht remnants.

A commendation from Maj. Gen. Alvan C. Gillem to Col. Holt read:

The close cooperation given in this afternoon's attack by squadrons of your group to the armor of my Corps established a new high in air-ground cooperation. Your bombing was so accurate, the ground troops were able to close effectively with the Krauts.

Ground support is a continuous emergency operation. The unpredictableness of the next call, the necessary mobility and the ever readiness of an air arm alerted as trouble-shooters make any story of such operations a



...tion of isolated events. Only ultimately can these lightning, synchronized blows be pieced together into patterns that can shape the outcome of a campaign.

P-47s flying 26 missions for the 30th Inf. Div. in its drive through the Siegfried Line Oct. 7, 1944, received

a commendation from Maj. Gen. L. S. Hobbs, Division Commander:

All of the air missions have been very close to the front lines, some of them as near as 200 or 300 yards in front of our troops. The close cooperation and the superior way in which these missions were carried out contributed largely to the success of this division in driving through the Siegfried Line.

Fighter-bomber pilots developed a new bombing technique in breaking up an enemy armored counter-attack near Kirchberg, Nov. 26. In order to combat a low ceiling, the squadron flight leader dropped incen-



diary bombs to light the target. The trick subsequently was used in the squall-ridden XXIX TAC area.

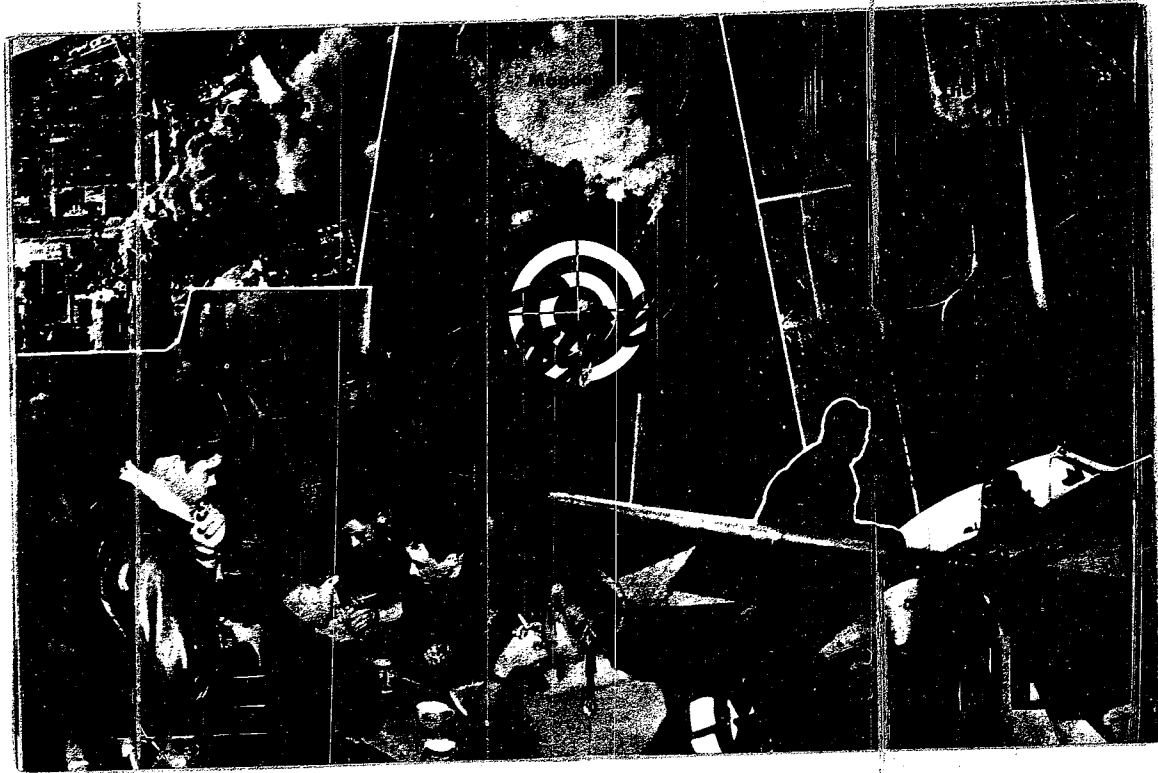
In what probably will stand as the fastest response to a ground call for air assistance, three Thunderbolt fighters dropped their first bombs on target just three minutes after the call. Lt. Col. Horace B. Wetherell, XXIX TAC's air-ground officer with the XIX Corps, asked for immediate help against the "Citadel," German non-com school at Julich, Dec. 12. The request came as the plane's original mission was cancelled and the aircraft were circling near the town.

On Jan. 30, 1945, four volunteer Thunderbolt pilots flew cover for a 5th Armd. Div. column in the XIX Corps area, making an unexpected appearance in a snow and sleet storm. The target, a road bridge at Dedernborn marked by smoke by ground artillery, was destroyed. Later in the day, the division praised the command for its rescue flight in "unflyable" weather.

ENEMY armor was attacked on request of the ground cooperation officer, Feb. 26. The birds were walking that day, ducks were swimming on land. Pilots groped their way to the invisible target at Pesch, dropped their bombs, then heard their radios report: "Right where we wanted 'em!"

A squadron of Thunderbolts threw their weight into a tank battle between Shermans and 16 German Tigers near Wald, Feb. 28. When the battle was over, the unexpected air scourge had knocked out six tanks, caused the others to flee.







BORN AND BAPTIZED

Under Fire

THREE weeks before it began unloading misery on the enemy, XXIX TAC, youngest of the 9th Air Force commands, did not even exist. On D-Day, it was not even a blueprint on the beachhead. Its only background is its record—a record not only of brilliantly fulfilling its missions but also of speed in formation and activation.

The XXIX was born and baptized under fire, packed its practice training into a hectic four-day capsule period in Northern France, and took its place in combat beside other TACs—a babe, and yet an expert, in arms.

In the first days of the Ninth Army's breakthrough in Brittany, it was doubted whether Lt. Gen. William H. Simpson's Army would be moved up to the Siegfried Line front. But progress surpassed expectations, and the Ninth went into the line between the First and Third Armies in the Luxembourg area. The appearance of Gen. Simpson's forces as a part of the steamroller pushing back the Germans toward the Fatherland necessitated the formation of a new air arm to provide air cover.

For commanding officer of the new XXIX TAC, 9th Air Force chose Brig. Gen. Richard E. Nugent, Garden City, L. I., former Deputy Commanding General

for Operations, 9th Air Force, combat pilot and tank expert. Brig. Gen. Burton M. Hovey, Jr., San Antonio, Tex., commanding officer of the 303rd Fighter Wing, became Deputy Commander for Administration.

On Sept. 12, 1944, Gen. Nugent reported the formation of the Ninth's new air adjunct to Gen. Simpson. Activated at St. Quentin, France, Sept. 15, 1944, from a merger of the 303rd and 84th Fighter Wings, the new and untried command began its feverish preparations for commitment by Oct. 3. In two weeks the two wings would have to fly as one, be knit together by a still non-existent administration and over-all operations organization.

Col. Dyke F. Meyer, Kirkwood, Mo., who commanded the first fighter-bomber group to operate



against the Krauts and later directed operations for IX TAC, arrived to whip the wings into shape. What followed was equivalent to last-minute cramming for exams. Administration sections had to be organized, personnel procured, fighter control squadrons formed, control centers set up, mobile equipment assembled and constructed.

Col. Meyer insisted on duplication of every item of equipment to endow the TAC with greater mobility and allow it to be split in two for advanced echelon movements. Four days were set aside for operations. Pilots were briefed for imaginary missions; weather detachment LL provided actual weather predictions; the air was filled with artificial target conferences and telephone calls from simulated air-ground cooperation officers. Enlisted men scooped up red map pins and stuck them into all the Shangri-La's in the ETO. The XXIX TAC was operational—on a blank cartridge diet.

By Oct. 3, the short windups stopped and the pitching began for keeps. The threefold mission of the command in support of the Ninth Army embodied the precepts of Tactical Air Power: (1) knock the enemy out of the air; (2) isolate the battlefield by cutting rails and bridges and destroying his motor transportation; (3) give direct support to the Army by hitting strong-points, tanks and gun positions.

Weather statistics showed that the last three months of the year in XXIX TAC's northern rain-favored-area would yield only four to five flyable days per month.

...by Dec 21, 1944, the ...
...XXIX ...
...Thunderbolt ...
...All but ...

Then two weeks of tactical ...
Gen Simpson also ...
Every ...
Roer—Julich, Linnich, ...
received the 500-pound treatment. Every main rail
line from supply bases in the Ruhr to Wehrmacht troops
in the Aachen-Gellenkirchen front was severed, time
and again.

By Jan. 1, the blight of Gen. Nugent's tactical
campaign against the ...
troops in ...

...the first ...
...1450 railroad cars smashed ...
...27 railroad bridges bombed out and 62 ...

Solar plexus for the complex web of railroads uniting
German troops in the Julich-Linnich area with their
hinterland was Neuss, where rolling stock began
clogging-marshalling yards. Destruction of bridges
east and west of the town by mauling fighter-pilots
bottle-necked traffic into one of the neatest box car
concentrations ever spotted from the air.

With Neuss isolated by previous attack, P-47 Thunder-
bolts from Col. James C. McGehee's 373rd Fighter
Group hammered between 500 and 1000 rail cars at
Neuss and adjacent marshalling yards Jan. 21. When
harried score keepers finished tallying the day's de-
struction they claimed: 490 freight cars smashed, eight
locomotives destroyed, 43 railcuts registered, 39 build-
ings wiped out, 26 damaged, and 10 tanks put out of
action.

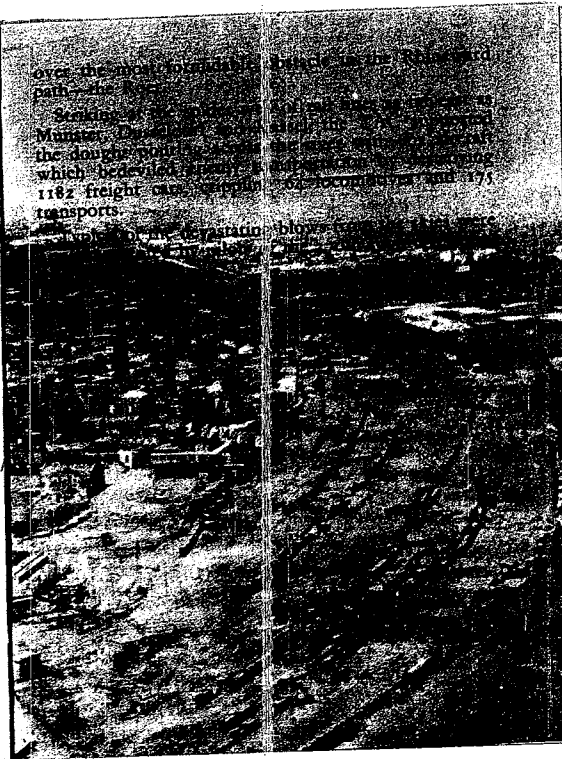
On March 1, after the last tactical bombing attack

against Neuss, War Correspondent John Folliard's dispatch to *The Washington Post* read:

Air power may not have knocked Germany out of the war, but it certainly has knocked a lot of war out of Germany. Thanks to dive bombing attacks of Gen. Nugent's Thunderbolts, the railroad yards of Neuss are a shambles and hundreds of freight cars are out of commission. The result was that it was impossible for Neuss to send out goods or bring in raw materials needed in the production of these goods. The last attack on Neuss was on March 1 when Thunderbolts of the XXIX TAC roared in to blast German positions in buildings and tanks parked in the town. Next morning troops of the 83rd Division came in shooting and the war was over for Neuss.

Pouring Ruin ON THE RUHR

GEN. Nugent's attacks against the German rail system mounted in February when the XXIX TAC acquired additional groups and became a full-fledged fighting machine. The two former wings now boasted five fighter groups and one TAC recon. Attainment of full strength coincided, on Feb. 23, with five days of near-perfect weather and the Ninth Army's push-off



obtained during the battle of the Roer, Lt. Gen. Hoyt S. Vandenberg, CG 9th Air Force, wrote:

The results obtained in your close cooperation with attacking ground units and the destructive blows dealt the enemy movements in the rear areas reflect great credit on the training, technique of operations and superior leadership throughout your command.

NEXT stop was the Rhine and as far as the Germans were concerned it was to be a permanent stop—for the Allies. By crossing it, Ninth Army would completely isolate the Ruhr, Germany's richest industrial area. Nullification of the Ruhr's potential output has been termed one of the outstanding achievements of the Allied Air Forces, ranking in importance with the defeat of the Luftwaffe and neutralization of the Reich's fuel production as a leading factor in Germany's total collapse.

The XXIX TAC was assigned the tactical mission in this colossal task of isolation. To chronicle its contributions in cooperation with the 8th Air Force and the RAF would require several books the size of this volume. Names of new cities appeared on daily target briefings. Recklinghausen, Dortmund, Essen, Dorsten, Hamm, Soest, Paderborn had their collective faces lifted by pitiless plastering from the air. Rolling stock destruction ran into thousands of tons per week. Ruhr factories became islands of smokestacks producing stockpiles of material that never could be shipped anywhere.

By March 12, 1945, sorties against rolling stock in the Ruhr were flown from German soil itself. On that day, XXIX TAC became the first Tactical Air Command to fly a mission complete from briefing to interrogation from the "sacred soil" of the Fatherland, which Goering had guaranteed would never know the tread of American troops, much less the tread of U. S. airplane tires. Col. McGehee's 373rd Fighter Group operated from a German airfield, built in 1941 by Dutch slave labor, just one week after its capture by American armor.

PROBABLY the toughest single obstacle to crack in isolating the Ruhr was the destruction of the Herford Bridge. A single span, single track rail bridge across the Werre River at Herford, the line was important because when Nazis' main routes became harried they turned to secondary lines. Eight fighter-bomber squadrons from Col. Harold N. Holt's 366th Group attacked the bridge from early morning until dusk. A TAC recon pilot reported that the last attack had knocked the western edge of the bridge into the Werre.

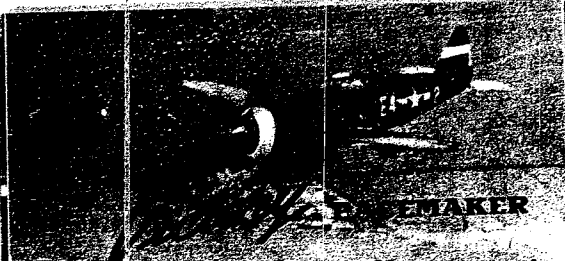
As the zero hour for the American do-or-die assault on the Rhine approached on the afternoon of March 23, three pilots, returning from their last mission over the Ruhr before the Army attack, told of the physical and psychological paralysis that gripped Germany's pulverized production area.

First Lt. Edward B. Edwards, Lansdale, Pa.: "The most unusual feature of our mission was the failure of

the German air force
Valkyrie

Germany
impossible to see

Maj. Chester
over the Ruhr



THE MAKER

MARCH 23, 0200: Americans did some traveling of their own—crossing the Rhine in one minute flat.

The fact that on the day Ninth Army doughs who crossed the Rhine and established the Wesel-Orsoy bridgehead to the heart of Germany could ask, "Where is the Luftwaffe?" proved that Gen. Nugent had done a good job on the first premise of tactical air power: destruction of the enemy's planes in the sky and on the ground. The decimation of the Luftwaffe in the air and on the ground progressed simultaneously with the accomplishment of XXXIX TAC's other two missions of close cooperation and isolation of the battlefield.

Absence of the Luftwaffe over the Wesel-Orsoy bridgehead meant more than freedom from aircraft for infantrymen pouring across the Rhine. It meant preservation of hastily thrown pontoon bridges, the life artery for the march beyond the Rhine. The Luftwaffe was barred in the West by its own lack of aircraft and checked over the West air bases and airfields.

rampant Thunderbolts, or scattered over the face of Germany after coming face-to-face with fighter pilots in the air. In eight days preceding the U. S. Army's greatest amphibious action since D-Day, Gen. Nugent's planes immobilized 423 German aircraft in a series of concerted raids on Nazis bases—bases the Luftwaffe planned to use in halting the crossings.

On March 20, one group alone, Col. McGehee's 373rd, destroyed or damaged 119 enemy aircraft on the ground without losing a single plane. At the end of the day's operations, the colonel said; "Our boys got tired of waiting for the Krauts to come up and fight so they went down and got the Boche on the ground."

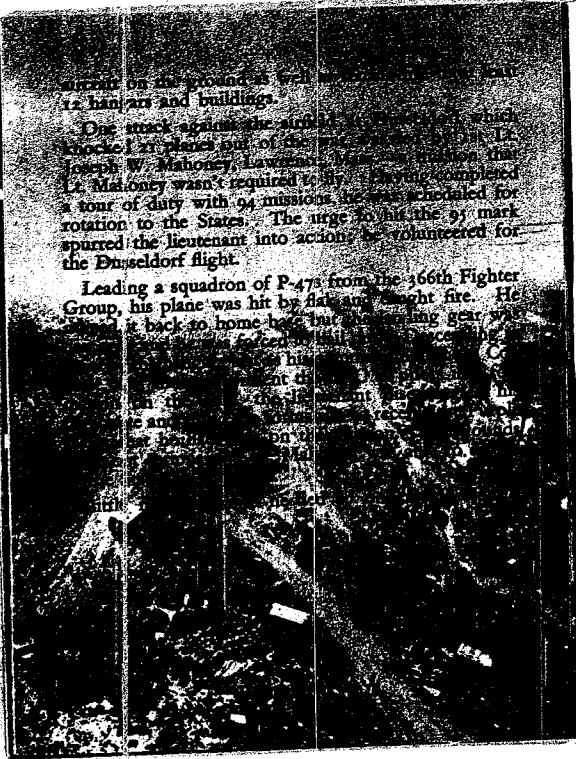
A star performer of the day was Lt. Edwards, who destroyed three JU-88s and damaged nine ME-109s, dropping two 500-pounders and making a dozen strafing passes. Lt. Edwards had previously destroyed a ME-109 and FW-190 in the air and two ME-410s on the ground. Lt. Daniel D. A. Duncan, New Iberia, La., destroyed two ME-109s and a FW-190 with his bomb, then damaged three Messerschmitts on as many strafing passes. When the 373rd's squadrons returned from their outings over the airfields in the Hamm-Paderborn areas their additional claims included pulverized hangars, taxi strips, runways and flak emplacements.

In five lightning attacks against Luftwaffe bases at Gutersloh, Paderborn and Lippstadt the same day, P-47 Thunderbolts of Col. Anthony V. Grosetta's 406th Fighter Group knocked out more than 25 enemy

aircraft on the ground as well as 12 hangars and buildings.

One attack against the aircraft knocked 27 planes out of the air. Lt. Joseph W. Mahoney, Lawrence, Mass., was the pilot. Lt. Mahoney wasn't required to fly. Having completed a tour of duty with 94 missions, he was scheduled for rotation to the States. The urge to hit the 97 mark spurred the lieutenant into action; he volunteered for the Dusseldorf flight.

Leading a squadron of P-47s from the 366th Fighter Group, his plane was hit by flak and caught fire. He



fighter-bomber rampage that can destroy more than 400 planes in eight days can help take the sting out of a whole air force in five months of steady attrition. What happened to the Luftwaffe late in March was catastrophic. But it was preceded by a long series of weekly fiascos and petty calamities inflicted by routine tactical air attacks dating from the activation of the TAC until the last German airfield in the Ninth Army area had been overrun by ground troops near the Elbe.

During the confused days of von Rundstedt's swansong offensive, the Germans threw everything they had into the air. On Dec. 17, the TAC's first significant encounter with Nazi fighters coincided with the launching of the enemy's stern ground bid. In a gigantic air battle over the Bonn area, TAC fighter pilots shot down 23 aircraft and damaged two of the attacking force of more than 50 planes. Four TAC planes did not return. By Dec. 23, XXIX TAC was a name to be feared by retiring Luftwaffe pilots. Thunderbolts and Lightnings had destroyed 69 enemy planes in six flyable days since Dec. 17.

THE full story of XXIX TAC's successes in air engagements would entail an eyewitness account of the courage and skill that typified every dog fight since the beginning at Arlon. Near the end of the campaign, TAC fighter-bomber pilots had to identify most of their opposition from tail characteristics rather than frontal views. And towards the end, the Luftwaffe's sole purpose was to taunt the dive-bombers

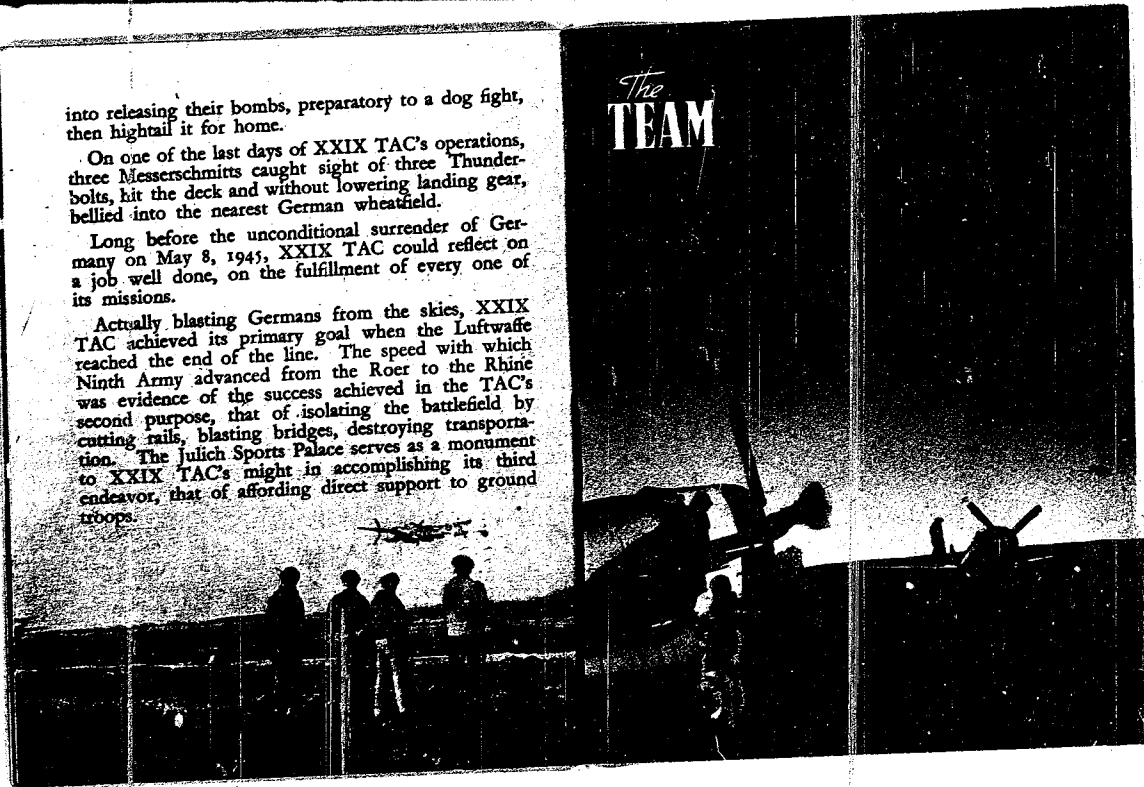
into releasing their bombs, preparatory to a dog fight, then hightail it for home.

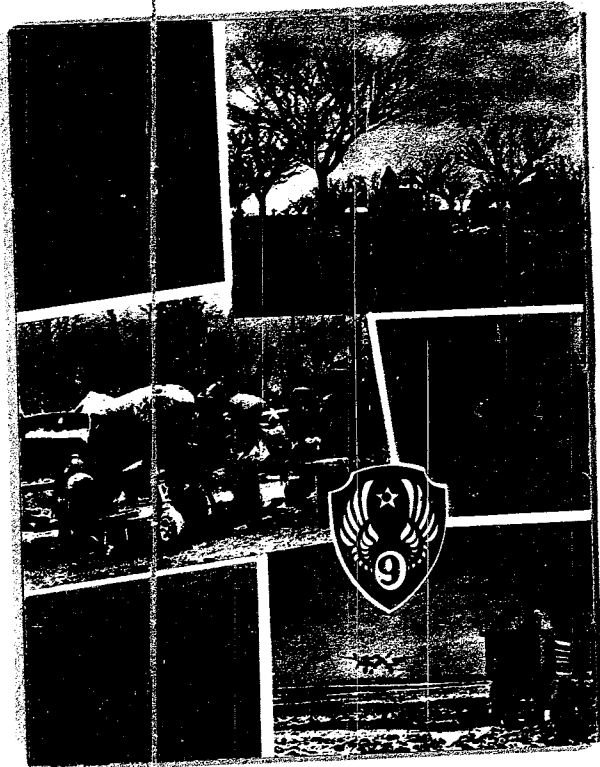
On one of the last days of XXIX TAC's operations, three Messerschmitts caught sight of three Thunderbolts, hit the deck and without lowering landing gear, bellied into the nearest German wheatfield.

Long before the unconditional surrender of Germany on May 8, 1945, XXIX TAC could reflect on a job well done, on the fulfillment of every one of its missions.

Actually blasting Germans from the skies, XXIX TAC achieved its primary goal when the Luftwaffe reached the end of the line. The speed with which Ninth Army advanced from the Roer to the Rhine was evidence of the success achieved in the TAC's second purpose, that of isolating the battlefield by cutting rails, blasting bridges, destroying transportation. The Jülich Sports Palace serves as a monument to XXIX TAC's might in accomplishing its third endeavor, that of affording direct support to ground troops.

The TEAM







THE STORY OF THE
50th TROOP

The development of Troop Carrier from a
 novel scheme on paper to a significant
 factor in Allied strategy has been in no small
 measure the story of the 50th Wing. The
 growth from a unit with but a score of non-
 transport aircraft to the highly skilled, tacti-
 cally-important legions of our present organi-
 zation has been achieved only through the
 constant effort and perseverance of every man
 of the wing—pilot or clerk, airplane me-
 chanic or supply helper. All are part of the team which has deliv-
 ered supplies defiant of flak and weather—when and
 where it hurt the enemy most. No matter what commitments
 the future may bring, the slogan of the Fightin' Fiftieth
 stands. "It will be flown by us!"



Julian M. Clapp
 Brigadier General, Commanding

THE 50TH

TROOP CARRIER

...when ... Leader Col
 ... the switch ...
 ... the
 ... seaborne
 ... months
 ... machine

ready for the job ahead, months of maneuver in the States and in England, months of endless planning, training, waiting now were going to pay off.

Detailed plans had been checked and rechecked, the target had been studied and studied, the target had been studied and studied, the target had been studied and studied.

There was a small hall and so many tracers flying around and so many places in the air it seemed impossible for any of us to be missed.

Hamm, Baraboo, Wis. And I was scared, very scared, but I was only a rough idea lower in the air and I was only a rough idea lower in the air.

Only once had I seen a more challenging and more exciting and more exciting and more exciting and more exciting and more exciting and more exciting.

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"As we crossed the still, peaceful invasion coast, visibility dropped already," recalled pilot, Lt. Col. Stephen McColl, S. C. "We were flying in formation in cloud banks—flying in formation in cloud banks—flying in formation in cloud banks."

Breaking out at 700 feet, now only miles from the target, the "Flying Cobble" was the heavens alive with red and green tracers arching towards them in thin, finger-like searchlight beams.

There was a small hall and so many tracers flying around and so many places in the air it seemed impossible for any of us to be missed.

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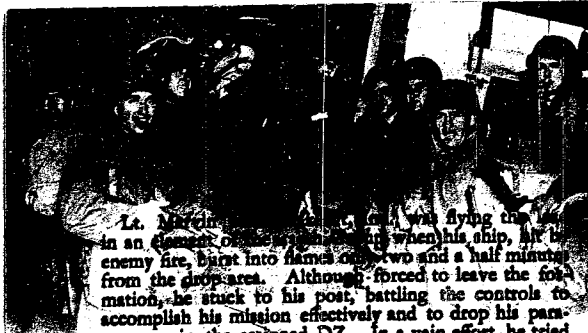
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Lt. Muir was flying the plane in an element of the 441st Group when his ship, hit by enemy fire, burst into flames only two and a half minutes from the drop area. Although forced to leave the formation, he stuck to his post, battling the controls to accomplish his mission effectively and to drop his paratroopers in the assigned DZ. In a vain effort, he tried to crash-land the flaming plane hoping to save the trapped crew. To Lt. Muir went a posthumous Distinguished Service Cross for extraordinary heroism in action. "His devotion to duty, heroism, and service above self reflect great credit upon himself and the armed forces of the United States."

Maj. Lloyd G. Neblett, Texarkana, Tex., nearly missed the big show when mechanical difficulty forced him to drop out at the start, but his crew chief, Sgt. Willie Brown, Asheville, N.C., did a rush job.

The Major took off again, cut corners at full speed, caught the formation just short of the objective. But his troubles weren't over—a heavy supply bundle from another ship landed squarely on his right wing. Struggling with the controls, he and Co-Pilot Lt. Thomas O'Brien, St. Paul, Minn., kept the plane from stalling

while paratroopers were discharged; from 600 feet the aircraft fell out of control through a flak barrage that sheared eight feet off the wing and a third of the aileron. The plane's fall finally was checked at house-top level, and flying alone, returned safely to 441st Group base.

Hearing the bail-out bell, Crew Chief John J. O'Conner, Mosinee, Wisc., dived after the last trooper, only to watch his plane fly on, unharmed. After two weeks' fighting with the Airborne and being captured at an advanced air station, the Sergeant returned to his squadron to learn the "abandon ship" order was just a case of the wrong switch.



Capt. Russell Hennick (then Lt.), Los Vegas, Nev., made his run-in and return to an English base on a single engine. "He never could get more than three feet over the Channel all the way back," reported Sgt. John Brown, Ajo, Ariz., crew chief of another C-47 in the 440th Group. "His crew threw out everything and anything to keep the ship in the air." After his own plane, *Al's It Awful*, wobbled in on one wheel, Brown commented, "Yeah, but it could have been a lot worse."

Lt. John Prince, Cherokee, Iowa, didn't have even one engine left in his plane; he was forced to land "deadstick" in the darkness of Normandy's tree-lined hedgerows. The Lieutenant's cool skill set the crew down safely, got

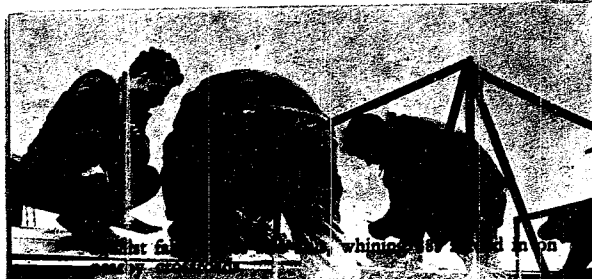
them away with enough emergency supplies to return to friendly lines.

Krauts agreed with the name of Lt. Col. (then Maj.) Kenneth L. Glassburn's ship *You Can't Miss It*. They knocked out an engine and set the plane afire. Flames spread rapidly, but rather than risk capture by being



son commander from Turlock, Calif., flew the base aircraft to the Normandy coast, ditched in the Channel. When his report was received at the base, his first sergeant, Harold McGrath, told him to get on the morning report as soon as possible, remarking to his reluctant "I dreamed of this." Ten minutes after the plane arrived in England.

The plane was damaged and the engine was out of commission. McGrath and his crew were forced to ditch in the Channel. McGrath's first sergeant, Harold McGrath, told him to get on the morning report as soon as possible, remarking to his reluctant "I dreamed of this." Ten minutes after the plane arrived in England.



Most amazing thing I saw," said 2nd Lt. (then P/O) Norman J. Thompson, San Antonio, Tex., on his return from Normandy, "was a good-looking girl nonchalantly riding a bicycle down the middle of the road as I coasted in with my CG. Maybe that was Hitler's second son."

Although there were several casualties during the landings, 100 soldiers were committed and many were in the landing zone. "Congratulations poured in" from Troop Carrier Command and other headquarters. Most appreciated expression was heard in a London pub several weeks later. A stocky Airborne sergeant wearing a new Purple Heart stopped one of the Wing's GPs to say, "Lemme shake your hand. You guys got guts."

The invasion was spearheaded successfully with Troop Carrier, the 10th at the fore, but much remained to be done. Isolated airborne units still had to be supplied; even after a complete link-up, priority items would have to go by air.

On 10 June, the 10th Airborne Division was alerted to move to the 10th Airborne Division's base in the UK.

After various trials and tribulations, the 10th Airborne Division was finally able to make its way to the front lines. The division was made up of several regiments, each with its own unique characteristics.

After various trials and tribulations, the 10th Airborne Division was finally able to make its way to the front lines. The division was made up of several regiments, each with its own unique characteristics.

By June 10th, the 10th Airborne Division was finally able to make its way to the front lines. The division was made up of several regiments, each with its own unique characteristics.

Ground called for more shells and more shells. The 10th Airborne Division responded. By June 12, 1944, more than 1,000,000 shells of munition were



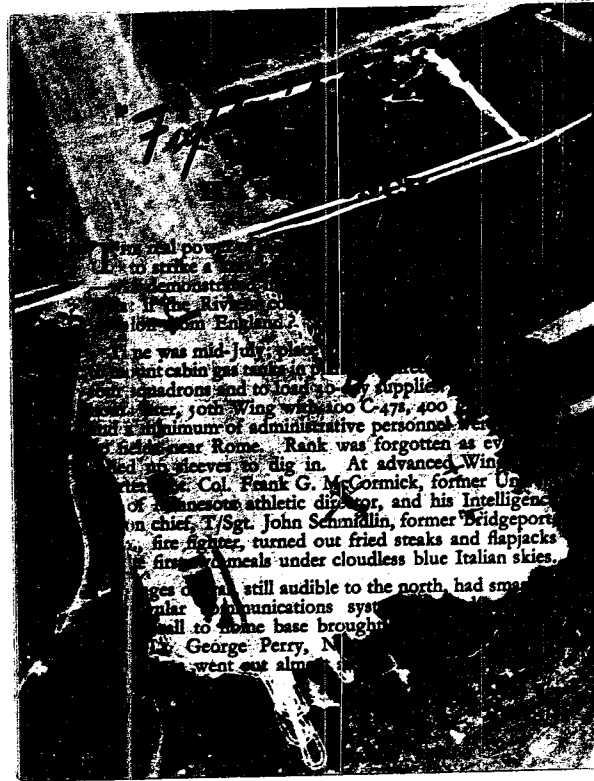
On 10 June, the 10th Airborne Division was alerted to move to the 10th Airborne Division's base in the UK.

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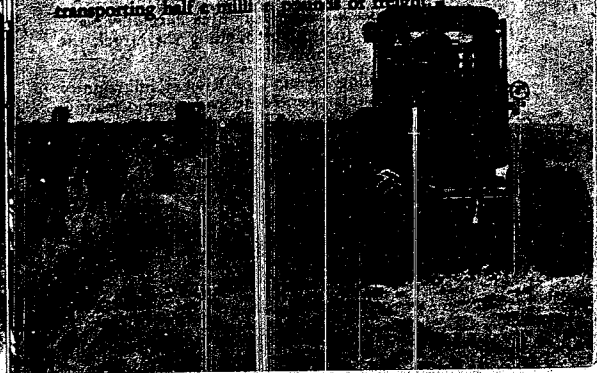
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...on chief, T/Sgt. John Schmidlin, former Bridgeport
...fire fighter, turned out fried steaks and flapjacks
...first two meals under cloudless blue Italian skies.
...ges of ... still audible to the north, had smar
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... George Perry, N
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labeled. Civilian sabotage was one reason. Linemen who "backpeddled" coils of wire for their own lines was another. At nearly all contact between Groups was by radio. A small landing strip was constructed hastily near Wing headquarters at Orbetello, and an L-3 liaison plane was pressed into service as courier among the several units.

At the week's end, evacuation and supply flights were being flown within Italy, and all units were declared ready for paradrops. Gliders, carried in from assembly stations near Naples were maintained and repaired by pilots in the absence of crew chiefs left in England.

The King of England and high Allied army officers were given a salute at the month's end by a Wing assembly of 133 planes. Even then, remaining aircraft were on evacuation missions, flying some of the 1600 patients carried in Italy by 10 Wing planes in addition to transporting half a million pounds of freight.



NAVIGATORS carried the ball during the first half of the Wing's second combat mission Aug. 17 when an overcast blotted out check points. Stick after stick of troopers was released "blind" over the target area near La Mue to break out, in most cases, within a mile or two of the briefed area.

The plane of Crew Chief T/Sgt. Mario V. Pissaro, White Plains, N.Y., caught fire on the take-off and crash-landed at the field's edge. With a leg broken, the sergeant opened the cargo door to free paratroopers and crew from certain death. The aircraft also was carrying a heavy load of ammunition and land mines.

C-47 work-horses returned to the eternal dust cloud hanging over unsurfaced fields and reloaded to fly the second phase of the operation. Behind each trailed a cargo glider laden with jeeps and other heavy equipment to take loose parachute troops.

A pall of dense black smoke from fires started by Navy salvos hung above forests surrounding the target, the Argens Valley, 20 miles inland.

The "gentle rolling terrain" of Riviera hill-country turned out to be a series of steep canyons; as in Normandy, many of the landing zones "blocked" by the enemy. Most loads were damaged or damaged from the crash-landed "Hedycans."

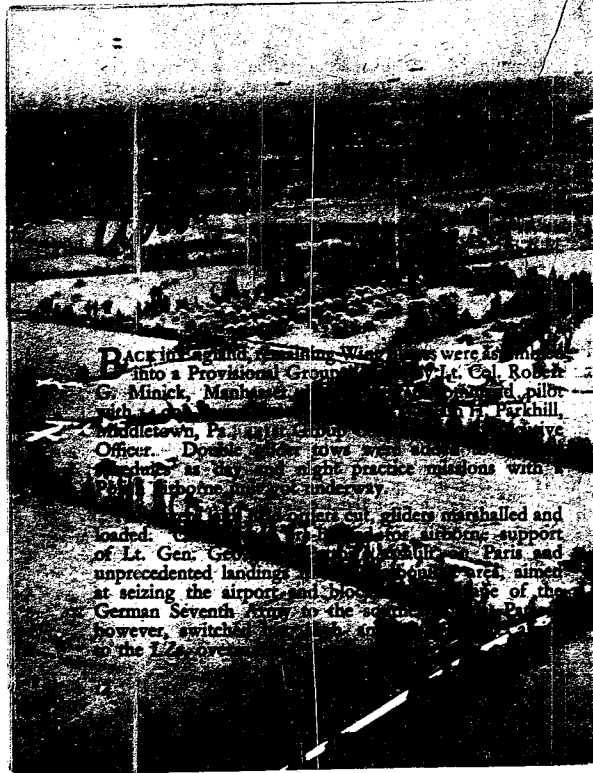


Summing up the overall mission, Lt. Gen. Ira C. Baker, commanding the Mediterranean Air Force, said: "You Troop Carrier people put up a grand show." Maj. Gen. Paul L. Williams added his tribute to all the personnel in the drive—administrative and tactical, pilot and file clerk, all part of the team—which made the mission possible in these words:

Results ... surpass even our most optimistic expectation ... You have spearheaded another thrust at the heart of the enemy which has brought the free peoples of the world one step closer to total victory ... My congratulations and appreciation to each member of your command regardless of their role, for it has required a one hundred percent effort to achieve today's success.

One glider and tow-plane from the 440th Group made a solo trip into the southern France LZ. When the tow-rope broke, Lt. Marion L. Clum, Barnsdall, Okla., made a forced landing a few miles after take-off; a truck from the field immediately retrieved both personnel and equipment, returned them to the air-strip shortly after the tow-plane landed. With frantic effort, a spare glider was wheeled into position, loaded, hooked up with a new cable. Although the formation already was over the LZ, the glider, towed by Lt. Arthur Douglass, New Orleans, took off for France alone. When he returned hours behind the others, the Lieutenant reported the glider safely landed in the proper location.





BACK in England, consisting Wing were assigned into a Provisional Group. Lt. Col. Robert G. Minick, Manhattan, N.Y., was assigned pilot with 1st Lt. Robert H. Parkhill, Middletown, Pa., as Chief. Double engine aircraft were used as they were night practice missions with 1st Lt. Parkhill in command.

When the gliders cut, gliders marshalled and loaded. Complete support for airborne support of Lt. Gen. George Patton's 1st Army in Paris and unprecedented landings. The operation aimed at seizing the airport and blocking the escape of the German Seventh Army to the south. However, however, switched to the south. The operation was the LZ's.



To the 50th Army rolling was a tremendous job. Seven hundred tons of gasoline, rations and 105mm ammunition were flown to advanced air-strips just behind the front. The freight haul total for August was boosted to almost 4,000,000 pounds. In addition, more than 11,000 battle casualties and 2500 other patients were flown by Wing aircraft and attended by nurses and non-coms of the 50th's two Medical Air Evacuation Squadrons.

Much credit for these startling figures goes to air-strip control parties operated under Lt. Col. Minick and Capt. Sidney Kay, Cottageville, W.Va., Wing Chemical Officer. Complete radio facilities were taken in by gliders under the supervision of M/Sgt. Frank Swiadek, Long Island City, N.Y. Lt. Karl Gantert, Rialto, Calif., went along to handle message encoding and decoding.

Radio Operator Sgt. Robert T. Hood, Glendale, Calif.,

has vivid memories of the assignment that took him into France by glider on the heels of advancing American armor.

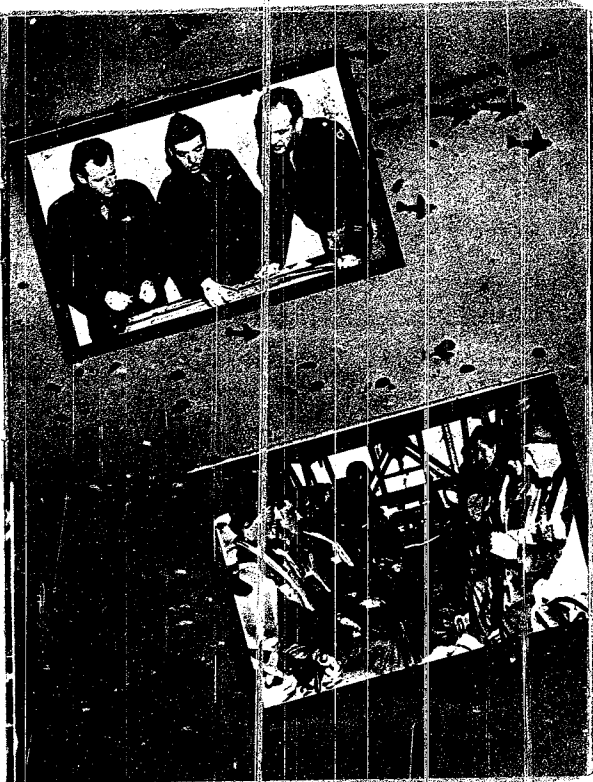
I had about two hours to throw my gear together and get to the take-off field. We hardly got there when we were put on an already overloaded glider sagging at the seams. All the way over I felt like a blood brother to all the guys who made the one-way trip to the guillotine.

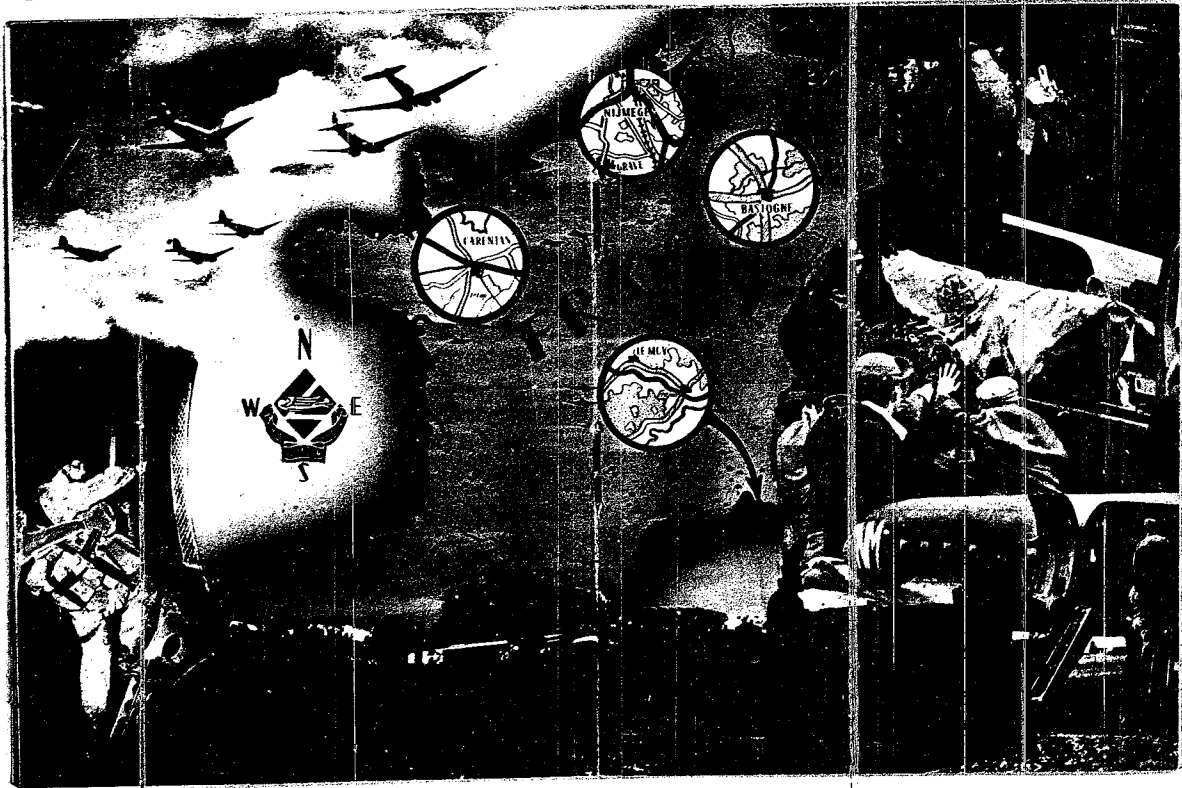
The German lines were about two miles from the field where we set up, and the field was lousy with shell and bomb craters. We banded rations and other gear out of the glider so the Krauts couldn't put us completely out of business if they zeroed in on it. Then we set up an air-ground control and a long range station to England.

Shifts were anything up to 24 hours a day. Booby traps and unexploded bombs were everywhere. Meals were K rations or what could be scrounged. There were constant interruptions as wounded wandered in for treatment. Still, messages got through, furnishing constant liaison between delivery parties up front and supply fields in the rear.

September found the air echelon returning from Italy to England and limbering up for another spearheading drive. Target was the Calais area. But again the target was overrun — this time by armored forces of the First Canadian Army.

This dry run finished, Wing headquarters and groups started for France, but, before they could settle, air





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echelons were back in British Midlands to join the initial operation of Lt. Gen. Lewis H. Brereton's new First Allied Airborne Army.

AIRBORNE invasion of Holland began a new era in warfare. In Normandy and southern France, Troop Carrier helped spearhead attacks by dropping troops with enough supplies to hinder enemy moves during and after the crucial beach landings. Holland, however, saw the first direct support of an advancing army—Lt. Gen. Miles C. Dempsey's British Second—by securing major objectives along the path and linking these centers into a friendly corridor through enemy forces.

When orders came for this largest of operations, elements of the Wing and its units were in France, tents pitched, mess and communications operating, crews and supplies either on the continent or enroute, refueling units waterborne. Nevertheless, the attack began on schedule.

We carried paratroopers the first day, recalled Lt. Kenneth McKim, twin-engine pilot from Hackensack, N. J. It hardly seemed a war was going on as we crossed Belgium where farmers waved to us from fields below. Some were pitching hay while others tried to herd the cattle which ran around like mad as hundred after hundred of C-47s and pursuit escorts roared overhead.

The first I knew of enemy attack was when the lead plane of the formation ahead of us burst into flames in mid-air and spiraled downward. We could see the

Drop Zone then, but it seemed as though we would never reach it. After an eternity we hit the DZ and dropped our sticks of paratroops.

Direct ack-ack hits knocked off two parack bundles, set both gas tanks aflame as Flight Leader Capt. Melvin J. Parker, Blackwell, Okla., approached the target area. Pilots on both sides advised that the fire was spreading, suggested that he drop his troops short of the objective and abandon ship. But he held his position in formation, made the drop over the DZ. He remained at the controls while his crew bailed out, then crash-landed the burning craft. Rather than drop the men in the midst of the enemy Capt. Parker sacrificed his life to fulfill his mission.

When both engines were knocked out after dropping his troops, Lt. Albino Dell'Antonia, Allentown, Pa., was forced to land. But he was accustomed to landing without power. He had learned to fly in one of Mussolini's glider schools as a student in Italy from 1935 to 1939.

Unprecedented numbers of gliders followed into the Nijmegen and Elbe areas, as the 'chute soldiers,

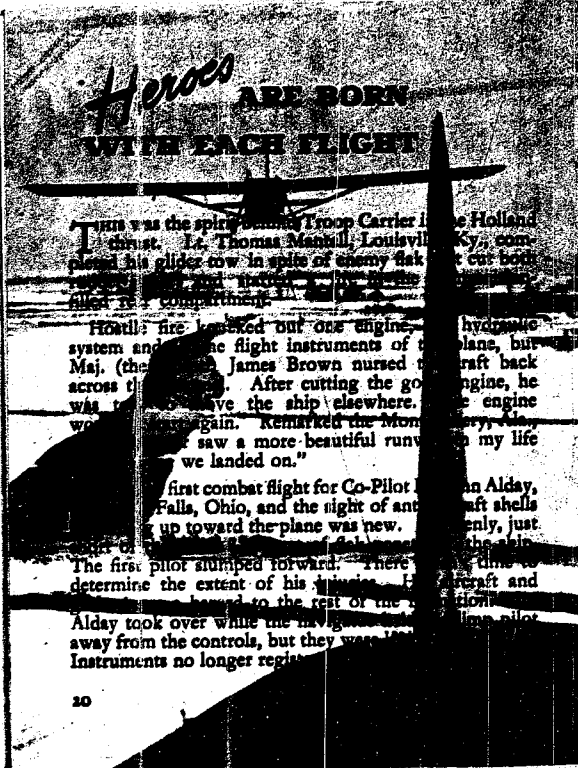


new enemy air attacks, and unpredictable weather from the onset of mist across the area. Heights more than 1000 feet higher than the present LZ. These any momentary breaks permitted hasty orientation. For pilots each day was a valuable classroom in weather.

With tight formation flying a near impossibility, individual navigators assumed a new value. One of these, Lt. Paul McPherson, Sigonara, Iowa, carried on although a piece of shrapnel had pierced his leg. The painful wound hastily dressed by emergency first aid, he continued to navigate from a prone position.

"I'm going to find that LZ if I run out of gas looking," said Lt. Vincent Ruby, Rome, N. Y., as he started for Holland, towing a glider. The glider load shifted in mid-air following take-off on schedule, and Lt. Ruby returned to the field. After the load was readjusted and secured in place, he took to the air again but couldn't catch up to his formation. Finding the landing area, he released his glider safely over the target but was wounded by intense AA fire on the return trip. Plane and crew eventually were flown to the home base.

Heroes ARE BORN WITH EACH FLIGHT

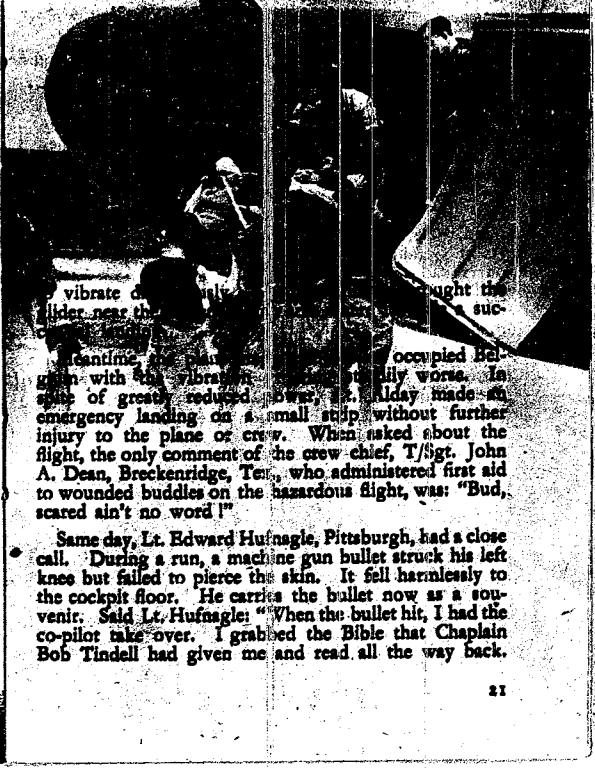


This was the spirit of the Troop Carrier in the Holland thrust. Lt. Thomas Mansell, Louisville, Ky., completed his glider tow in spite of enemy attack. The car body was damaged and the engine compartment filled with enemy fire.

Hostile fire knocked out one engine, hydraulic system and the flight instruments of the plane, but Maj. (then Capt.) James Brown nursed the craft back across the channel. After cutting the glider engine, he was to leave the ship elsewhere. The engine worked again. Remarked the Major: "I saw a more beautiful runway in my life we landed on."

First combat flight for Co-Pilot Bud Alday, Falls, Ohio, and the sight of anti-aircraft shells flying up toward the plane was new.

The first pilot slumped forward. There was time to determine the extent of his injuries. He was handed to the rest of the crew. Alday took over while the navigator was taken away from the controls, but they were instruments no longer registered.



vibrate down the glider, near the cockpit.

Meantime the plane occupied Belgium with the vibration steadily worse. In spite of greatly reduced power, Lt. Alday made an emergency landing on a small strip without further injury to the plane or crew. When asked about the flight, the only comment of the crew chief, T/Sgt. John A. Dean, Breckenridge, Tenn., who administered first aid to wounded buddies on the hazardous flight, was: "Bud, scared ain't no word!"

Same day, Lt. Edward Hufnagle, Pittsburgh, had a close call. During a run, a machine gun bullet struck his left knee but failed to pierce the skin. It fell harmlessly to the cockpit floor. He carries the bullet now as a souvenir. Said Lt. Hufnagle: "When the bullet hit, I had the co-pilot take over. I grabbed the Bible that Chaplain Bob Tindell had given me and read all the way back."

I prayed all the while I was in that corridor of risk and feel our safety was a result of prayers."

This day was the worst with ceiling and visibility and a short way out. Not all kept formation that day, nor did all hit the I.Z. Some flew individually unescorted and unattached to complete missions. Some attached themselves to other formations. Some hit the deck trying to find better visibility near the water. Others tried to fly above the overcast — but all had in mind the importance of visibility to glider navigation. As Lt. Gerald Arons, Peoria, Ill., noted: "I think most of our squadron had more sympathy and concern for the glider pilots they were tagging than for themselves. All they thought about was keeping the glider boys in the clear."

Most flew from 20 to 75 feet above water all the way across the Channel. Flying above an overcast meant glider pilots would be tagged. One pilot was shot down and killed. Most were top level tags.



Over Arons' shoulder, the man in the center of the photograph was looking towards the camera. He had a serious expression. The text on the page describes the experiences of the glider pilots and the challenges they faced during the operation.

On the ground the situation was bitterly contested, and Wing GPs guarded prisoners, acted as liaison officers and guides, spotted artillery fire. One glider pilot joined a mortar crew comprising a colonel, a major and a private.

Most of the Wing's "glider builders" hastily organized into a ground unit under Maj. Hugh J. Nevins, Kansas City, Mo., their senior officer, to enter the lines near Grave when an infantry company was withdrawn for use in another sector.

THE desperate German attempt to split the ever-pressing Allied armies had been stalled, December, 1944, but the valiant 101st Airborne Division was sur-

rounded at Bastogne by a ring of Tiger tanks and mobile German guns. Ammunition and medical stocks were depleting fast. Only supply channel left open was Troop Carrier—and 10th Wing pilots were anxious to get through to ground brothers who had shared the stage with them six months before in "The Drama of D-Day."

Target was a three-mile circle obscured by the smoke of pitched battle and burning vehicles. Briefing was necessarily hurried, based on sketchy information. Enemy flak guns were constantly moving. Choice of routes was little better than a guess. Sometimes the urgency of the situation allowed no time for cover, except for stray fighter-bombers that might be in the area.

But this was an emergency, and supplies had to get through! Paratrucks were fitted and loaded with precious ammunition. Door bundles were packed—to be kicked out the open doorway over the drop area. Life lines were established.

Sixty CG-4 cargo gliders, straining under loads of 155mm shells and gasoline, staggered off runways behind groaning C-47 tow-planes and turned toward beleaguered Bastogne.

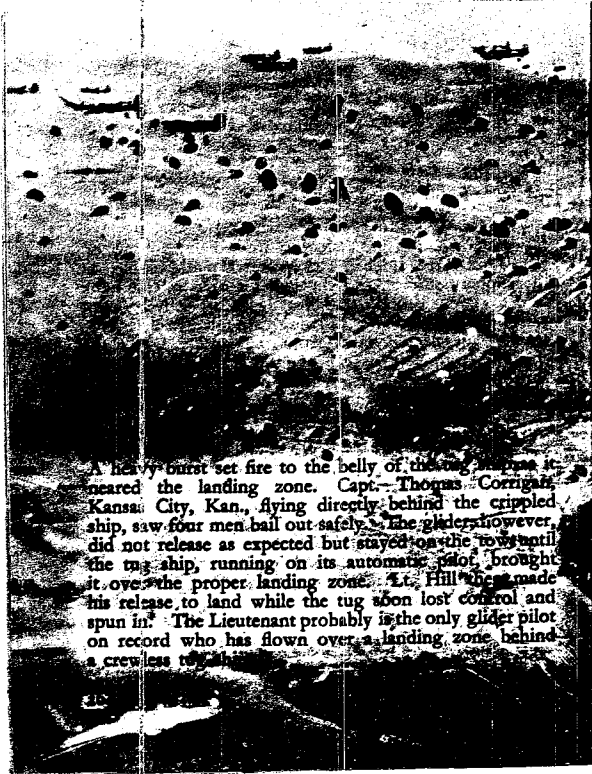
Second Lt. Mack Striplin, McKinney, Tex., 49th Group glider pilot, took a load of shells "special delivery." Mack hit his tail and wing just before he reached



the runway surface, and the glider soared off the bank into a 75-foot drop. "Landing again, I finally brought glider to a stop after plowing through a steel fence—and myself ten yards from the battery where the shells were to have been brought. When I landed they had only 20 shells left. Within five minutes the ammunition was being unloaded. In another minute, it was being fired."

More doctors were needed to handle heavy casualties streaming into the 101st aid station, so 2nd Lt. Charlton W. Corwin, Normandy, Mo., of the 440th, flew a lone CG into the Airborne's bastion with nine volunteer doctors, medical non-coms and more than a ton of surgical needs. His glider and its faithful tug were escorted by a welcome quartet of Thunderbolt fighters to insure safe arrival of the unarmed and unarmored Douglas Skytrain with its vital cargo. The escorting P-47s kept enemy guns in respectful silence.

Second Lt. James Hill, Abilene, Tex., was flying a glider behind a C-47 when heavy flak was encountered.



A heavy burst set fire to the belly of the tug as it neared the landing zone. Capt. Thomas Corrigan, Kansas City, Kan., flying directly behind the crippled ship, saw four men bail out safely. The glider, however, did not release as expected but stayed on the tow until the tug ship, running on its automatic pilot, brought it over the proper landing zone. Lt. Hill then made his release to land while the tug soon lost control and spun in. The Lieutenant probably is the only glider pilot on record who has flown over a landing zone behind a crewless tug ship.

A FANTASTIC SCHEME

The saga of Troop Carrier virtually is the story of the "fightin' yoth." In the not so distant past, when the Axis ruled the skies of Europe, invasions spearheaded by airborne troops were only fantastic schemes of men who had either read or seen Wright Field. Despite the fact that the carrier was activated there Jan. 1, 1945, it was not until three years since that the service would equal the entire Army presence in the

Experiments were performed at various locations and the carrier phase was active in 1945 with the formation of a permanent unit, the 102nd Troop Carrier Group.

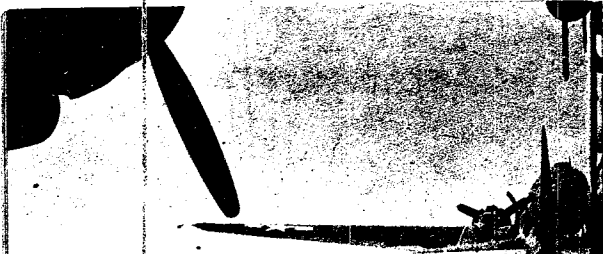
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The 102nd Troop Carrier Group was activated in 1945 and its problems were solved by the formation of two groups, the 102nd and the 103rd.

102nd Troop Carrier Group

103rd Troop Carrier Group

104th Troop Carrier Group



Drills with which the Wing was to work together during future European assaults. The mock was progressed from the sandy Carolina pinelands to the hills of Kentucky and Tennessee, new techniques constantly being added to Airborne-Troop Carrier operations.

Shots, dogtag checks, designations of beneficiary, insurance, equipment checks and markings, physicals, security lectures, mental exams, packing and re-packing, and then it was goodbye to maneuvers in the States and hello POB.

For Act II the props are slightly different—"mild and bitter" or a spot of gin instead of keg-lined cans or bourbon. Early winter the 10th Headquarters settled at a "Mudlands" base while many Troop Carrier Groups new to the ETO were processed before being passed along to other Wings.

First overseas exercise in preparation for the initial blow took place in December and January with Maj. Gen. William Lee's 101st. Staged in southern England, these maneuvers long will remain in the memory of many

a 10th Wingman as the "Misery Campaign." Reason: insufferable cold, freezing rain, inches-deep mud.

As Groups added precision to formations, constant modifications were being incorporated to make C-47 Skytrains readier for tasks ahead. At one base, M/Sgt. James Case, Chicago, improvised a complete mobile workshop from scrap metal—later augmented by additions from captured German equipment.

But the men of the 10th always were ready to do a little more than duty required, often far afield from their Army specialties. During the initial Normandy mission, the first aid of Crew Chief T/Sgt. Donovan Cavanaugh, Muskegan Heights, Mich., brought a paratrooper wounded over the DZ safely back to base. Two excellent jobs of navigation to Bastogne were turned in by F/Os Roderick MacDougall, West Aston, Miss., and Charles Long, Jr., Mule Shoe, Tex. These two glider pilots had picked up training on their own time between missions.

Sgt. Allan N. Saltzman, New York City, was a radar mechanic without air crew experience. Because of the large number of planes for the Holland mission, radio operators were at a premium. Sgt. Saltzman volunteered to accompany the flight as radio operator, successfully handling his ship's communications. He was awarded the Air Medal.

Superb judgment and quick thinking saved many situations. When the instrument panel was completely wrecked in the Bastogne run, Crew Chief Sgt. Hunter Lohr, Pittsburgh, made a quick estimate, recommended an immediate landing in an open area below. A check upon landing also revealed virtually no gas in riddled tanks.

Flown BY US

In pace with the forward march of the Allied armies and to keep supplies rolling in spite of Channel fogs, the 50th moved to France. Col. Charles Young, 439th Group CQ, found hangars and buildings on his new field completely demolished, later discovered his younger brother in the 8th Air Force was operations officer of the B-17 Group that had done most of the damage.

Rain and mud added to the already sorry state of most French fields. A hurry call brought an airborne engineering battalion. These veterans were old hands at keeping runways fit. The same unit had built the largest airfield then in France as well as the first strip for night fighters and medium bombers.

With the Wing also went an airborne weather unit; all its equipment transported by air to operate entirely by radio, anywhere, anytime, independent of everyone else.

Even before the Wing settled down, orders came through to move vital supplies to the front. In the four weeks alone starting Sept. 24 more than 17,000,000 pounds of freight were hauled.

But volume isn't always the best standard—ability of Troop Carrier to respond immediately to a hurry call is more often a criterion. When a sudden cold wave struck in mid-October, 30th Wing aircraft flew anti-freeze to the front.

When heavy fighting for Metz left many American wounded, overflowing front line hospitals, Troop Carrier relieved the pressing situation by rapid evacuation to England. According to ETO Chief Surgeon, Maj. Gen. Paul Hawley, the action "saved many lives and prevented an enormous amount of suffering during this emergency."

Spirit of the Wing's airmen is well demonstrated by the way they carried on when inadequate numbers of ground force troops were on hand to help unload. An army group supply officer commending the men said:

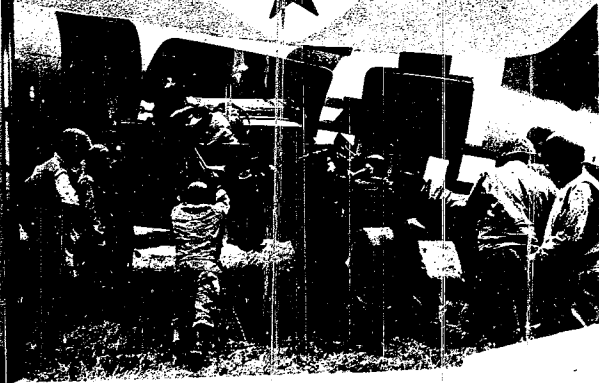
Pilots and crews, waiving all formalities regarding their place in this particular supply picture, dug in most cheerfully and furnished much of the labor of unloading planes. On two days, your air crew personnel did 100 percent of the work of teams.



work on the part of pilots and crews in your command is highly gratifying. May I ... thank and commend them.

This spirit isn't confined to any one class, but it moves all the way up and down the line, among file clerks and mail orderlies—the last being usually the most harried characters of their units. One squadron of the 50th says Mailman Pfc Thomas Olex, Moundsville, W. Va., stands alone. Any hour, day or night, he will cheerfully tell what letters have come in, when the last letter came, help cuss out the post office, sympathize when there is a lack of mail. He, too, is typical of the team, doing his part of any task which may fall to the "Fightin' 50th."

This is the first chapter of the 50th Troop Carrier Wing story. It is the development of a venture from the unknown to a proven weapon of modern warfare—a vital link in the choking chain Allied might has clamped around the Axis. The future of the 50th Wing is yet to be written. But the spirit of its men as recorded by their pioneering exploits has assured the future's events. Whatever the task, whatever the job, "it will be flown by us."

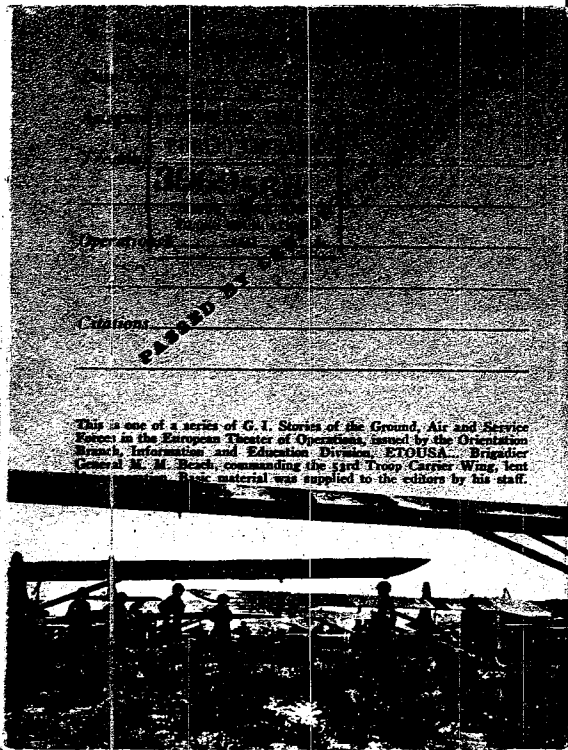






THE 53rd TROOP CARRIER WING

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This is one of a series of G. I. Stories of the Ground, Air and Service Forces in the European Theater of Operations, issued by the Orientation Branch, Information and Education Division, ETUSA. Brigadier General M. M. Beach, commanding the 53rd Troop Carrier Wing, lent the material. Basic material was supplied to the editors by his staff.



U.S. Army European Theater of Operations

As Commanding General of the 53rd Troop Carrier Wing, I take great pride in the record and achievements attained by the organization. Only through the hard work, sweat and untiring devotion to duty and "just plain guts" of every man has this record been made possible. We must never forget the part played by our comrades who made the supreme sacrifices. So knowing every man and officer has done his utmost in the past, I am positive that, in the future, our combined efforts will bring us speedy victory and keep the 53rd EVER FIRST!

M. M. Beach

Brigadier General, Commanding

THE STORY OF THE 53rd TROOP CARRIER WING

MARCH 24, 1945: The string of 53rd Troop Carrier Wing C-47s seemingly stretched into infinity, becoming lost against the early Spring sun. Occasionally, a Skytrain's wings would tilt, catch the sun's rays and cast a glistening reflection on the craft which followed. Two gliders in dual-tow bucked and strained at nylon ropes as cross-wind and prop-wash tossed them from side to side.

45X1080

craft were staggered down the line, in position with the CG-4As they were to haul in the first dual glider-tow in combat history.

At the 436th Group base, lead tow-planes and gliders, out of necessity, took off on only 2500 feet of runway.

Glider take-off time was 0823. Fields of France now were far behind. Col. Donald J. French, Astoria, Ore., 437th Group Commander, and pilot of the lead tow-plane, instructed his radio operator, S/Sgt. Harold L. Atkins, Danville, Va., to flash the red aldis lamp 10-minute warning signal to Maj. Willis T. Evans, Pitcairn, Pa., and 1st Lt. George R. Burris, Pueblo, Colo., pilots of the first gliders to land in Germany.

TEN minutes to go... A lifetime... Minutes dwindled to six... to five... and there it was! Flak... A stream of tracer bullets cut across Maj. Evans' glider... A mile to go now... LZ Germany... Shrouded by a blanket of smoke and haze from flak bursts. The major later said: "We released at the predetermined point, our craft landing in our group's portion of the LZ with no damage to glider personnel." Maj. Evans fought his way through enemy emplacements for two hours before he reached the regimental CP where he took charge of Wing glider pilots.



...mission returned to... machine gun bullets striking the front of his glider.

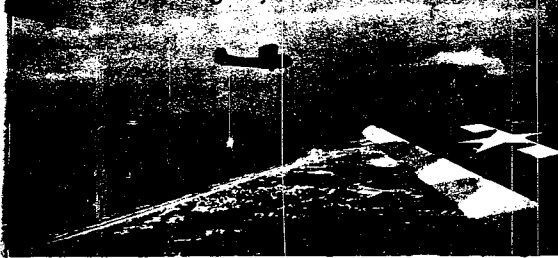
After cutting across my front, the bullets zipped into the side of my pilot through the open part of his flak suit. "It's all yours," he said. And that's when I got scared. Just behind me, an airborne boy had his kneecap shot away. I put the nose of the glider down and headed for the ground, landing safely. After we got some sort of cover, I talked with an airborne colonel who had been one of my passengers and he congratulated me on the landing. I told him I hadn't thought it wise to tell him before, but this was the first time I had ever landed a glider alone!

For the first time in airborne operations, glider pilots of the 53rd Wing organized to perform definite tactical missions—holding certain crossroads northwest of Wesel. Not only did they successfully accomplish this mission in the "Battle of Burp Gun Corner," but they also repelled a German counter-attack the night of

March 24. Although outnumbered, the glider pilots—ground soldiers pro-tem—beat off a company of approximately 140 Germans whose attack was preceded by two medium tanks, each towing a 20mm dual purpose gun. Flight Officer Elbert D. Jella, Rolla, Mo., firing a bazooka for the first time, scored a direct hit on one tank, forcing it to wheel about and retreat.

Second Lt. Sven B. Berg, Milwaukee, Wis., turned medic when every man in his glider except himself was hit while landing or shortly after. The lieutenant, who had gained the shelter of a water tank, crawled back to the wounded glidermen to give them first aid. Spotting several airborne troopers, Lt. Berg signalled and three came over to help. In attempting to rush a house concealing snipers, two troopers were killed, the third wounded—another patient for the officer who crept to the glider to rescue two men pinned in the wreckage while a 75mm howitzer blasted the house. While Lt. Berg was bandaging one of the trapped men, snipers, who later were silenced by the howitzer, fired at him.

Capt. Eugene R. Poe, Cape Girardeau, Mo., was recording the flight by movie camera when he was



forced to bail out after his C-47 was raked by flak. After gaining his balance in mid-air, Capt. Poe photographed the remainder of his descent. Captured while landing by a German patrol, the captain was released when the 53rd's glider company pounced on the patrol a short time later.

While glider pilots and bailed-out power pilots fought it out with enemy forces, the first serials of C-47s returned to home bases in France, sweeping low over the fields, making short approaches and coming in to land against a sharp crosswind. Squadron intelligence personnel checked the planes rolling down the runway into dispersal areas.

It had been a long trip—longest in Troop Carrier history—a round trip of more than 500 miles requiring about five hours of flying time at the rate prescribed by field orders. Towing a glider at little more than 100 miles per hour made gasoline consumption a major problem. One Skytrain returned to base with only nine gallons of fuel left from an original tank-load of 700. Others landed at emergency fields. Pilots radioed for permission to come straight in without following traffic patterns. One plane crash-landed 500 yards from the runway of its home field.

But the operation was a success and 53rd Wing had accomplished what previously had seemed impossible—a long distance dual-tow of gliders into combat, climaxing a string of tactical achievements which had mounted on the records since D-Day in Normandy.



D-Day

MAKING AVIATION HISTORY

JUNE 5, 1944: "The eyes of the world are on you tonight," the general said as a dull overcast shrouded the C-47s lining the broad runway of an airdrome in Southern England.

Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower glanced at his watch. It was 2:55, less than a quarter of an hour before the lead plane would take off for Normandy laden with airborne troops in the spearhead of the long-awaited invasion of Europe. The Supreme Allied Commander turned, exchanged a few words with grease-painted, smudge-faced paratroopers, entered his sedan and departed for another base several miles away.

Meanwhile, Lt. Gen. Lewis H. Brereton, then commander of the Ninth Air Force—the invasion air force—had arrived at 53rd Wing headquarters in Berkshire, England, and watched the first Troop Carrier plane, *Belle of Birmingham*, with Col. John M. Donalson and Lt. Col. David E. Daniel at the pilot and co-pilot con-

trols, lumber down the runway at 2248, lift into the air and circle the field before finally heading for the Channel.

From Wing Headquarters base, the Air Chief went to another 53rd station to watch the first glider serials take off, departing for his CP at 0200, June 6, with the knowledge that the invasion was launched by 53rd Wing's main-column attack, led by 438th Group's two serials totaling 81 planes, airborne at two-second intervals.

Navigators bent over small tables and checked their reckonings many times. Months of navigational and radar training now paid off. Crew chief of the lead paraplane, Sgt. Harry D. Chalfant, Pittsburgh, glanced



down at the English Channel and noted, "It was packed with every type of ship imaginable—a solid bridge of vessels from England to Normandy."

First German anti-aircraft fire came up over the coast of Normandy. From there to the drop zone, ack-ack continued relentlessly. As the No. 1 plane slipped into the drop zone, S/Sgt. Woodrow Wilson, Selma, Ala., was wounded slightly by flying shrapnel, but remained at the controls of his radio to keep contact with other planes in the formation.

Some way, somehow and despite ground fire, each plane homed-in on the correct area. Airborne pathfinders had set up ground signals and tense paratroopers edged towards open doors of C-47s.

Geronimo!

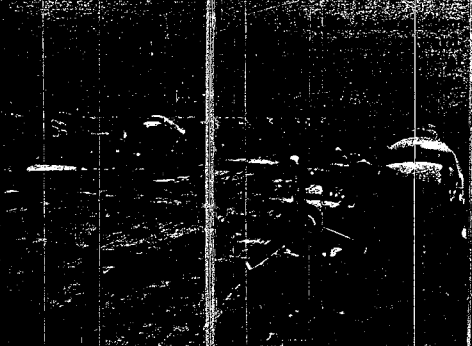
THE sticks were out! By 0050 the 53rd Wing's black-and-white striped Skytrains wheeled about and pointed for home, meeting aircraft of other Wings of Ninth Troop Carrier Command.

Maj. Gen. Maxwell Taylor, 101st Airborne Division Commander, later reported he landed within 10 feet of his pre-designated command post. But it took superb airmanship by Gen. Taylor's pilot to accomplish it. "We're on single engine," Col. Frank J. MacNees, St. Paul, Minn., 435th Group CO, told Crew Chief S/Sgt. Michael Borish, Homestead, Pa., after a short whine developed in the port engine of his C-47 as he whirled away from the DZ. Col. MacNees nosed the plane

upward, climbed to 3000 feet, continued the journey across the Channel on one engine.

It was 0119. In the darkness preceding the dawn of D-Day, Gen. Brereton's eyes followed a tug-ship down the runway. A nylon rope jerked taut and a glider was pulled into the air as the 434th took off with the first glider serial of the Normandy operation. Piloting the lead aircraft was Group Commander Col. William B. Whitacre, Western Springs, Ill., while Brig. Gen. (then Col.) M. M. Beach, Detroit, Wing CO, was command pilot for the C-47 armada which roared down the strips on the way to France.

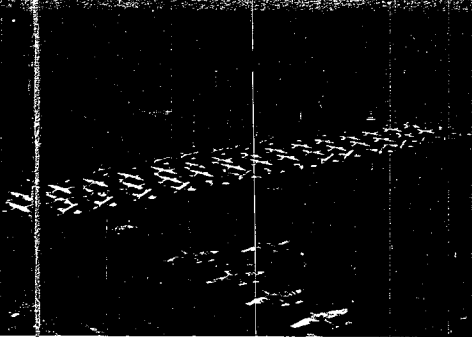
Long, sloping streams of deadly flak swam up at planes and gliders as the Normandy coast was reached. The 53rd Wing was the first to land. The 101st Airborne followed. The 82nd Airborne was next. The 4th Infantry Division was last to land. The 101st Airborne was the first to be surrounded by the enemy. The 82nd Airborne was the first to be surrounded by the enemy. The 4th Infantry Division was the first to be surrounded by the enemy.



fighting men and their equipment. Once over German lines, Lt. Col. Mike Murphy, Lafayette, Ind., pilot of the lead glider—*The Fighting Falcon*, presented to the AAF by students of Greenville, Mich.—cut loose from his tug and dived downward, making the first scheduled glider landing on a postage-stamp field near Ste. Mere Eglise, Normandy.

Surrounded by hedgerows much bigger than were anticipated, the landing zones not only were short but also protected by intensive ground fire and obstacle poles planted in the ground by the enemy to insure glider landing crashes.

Although *The Fighting Falcon* was the first glider scheduled to land in Normandy, it was not the only one. William J. Adams, Dormont, Pa., was captured, then helped talk 156 Germans into surrendering to airborne troops. Flight Officer Robert Fowler, Betheny, Conn., killed nine Nazis before being taken prisoner, survived an American strafing attack while being held by the enemy and wiped out two more Krauts, including a colonel, before he escaped.



before we neared the LZ, and we landed while the lead group was still in the air!"

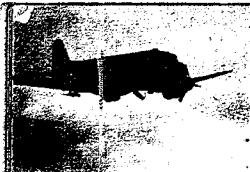
The pair also claims to be the first glider pilots returned to England after D-Day by glider and the first GPs to carry mail in a glider in the ETO.

Hundreds of glider infantrymen and thousands of pounds of their equipment poured from the aircraft which dotted pasture areas of Normandy as small arms and mortar fire tore and ripped the gliders.

GLIDER pilots who fought side by side with ground soldiers had countless experiences. Maj. (then Capt.) William J. Adams, Dormont, Pa., was captured, then helped talk 156 Germans into surrendering to airborne troops. Flight Officer Robert Fowler, Betheny, Conn., killed nine Nazis before being taken prisoner, survived an American strafing attack while being held by the enemy and wiped out two more Krauts, including a colonel, before he escaped.

Particularly commending 53rd Wing personnel for outstanding achievements in the glider operations over Normandy, Maj. Gen. Matthew B. Ridgway, Commanding General of the 82nd Airborne Division, congratulated the unit for its D-Day success. "I know it will interest you to learn that within the first few hours the Division secured and held its initial objectives, inflicting heavy losses on enemy ground troops while under heavy attack," he said.

Aboard more than one 53rd aircraft, quick thinking



saved the day. Returning from the drop zone, one C-47 was hit by flak just after its stick of paratroops had jumped. With 100-octane gasoline gushing from its

fuel lines under the steel flooring, the plane in which T/Sgt. Joe Porto, Riverside, N. J., was crew chief became a potential torch. Crawling under the floor, Sgt. Porto linked the torn strands of the tangled fuel lines with his bare hands, securing the flow of the highly volatile fluid to the devouring engines. Although his fingers turned waxy-white from the cold, he held them in a pipe-like position from France, across the English Channel, and over England, until the Skytrain landed at an emergency airstrip. This display of heroism earned for Sgt. Porto the first Distinguished Flying Cross to be awarded by Ninth Troop Carrier Command headquarters to an enlisted man.

To repair a broken control cable during his plane's flight, T/Sgt. Jurgen D.A. Rasmussen, Alameda, Calif., spliced a wrench into the break.

THIS was the initial D-Day operation, postponed 24 hours from the originally scheduled time. Weather was poor enough to catch the Germans unaware, good enough to allow airplanes to fly.

Still young in age as a tactical unit, the 532d overnight became a veteran in achievement, successfully executing one of the most dramatic and most difficult assignments

in a vast territory—pre-empting the invasion of Europe.

Flying low, often at tree-top level, and braving ack-ack guns blazing below, 629 unarmed and unarmored 53rd Wing Skytrains and 412 gliders were dispatched to Normandy between June 5-7, carrying nearly 6000 airborne troops, 256 jeeps, 107 pieces of artillery, 230 gallons of gasoline to refuel jeeps, 308,786 pounds of ammunition, 14,204 pounds of rations and nearly 2,000,000 pounds of other equipment. All but three tow-craft and three gliders completed their missions.

One week after successfully flying at the head of his group over the fields of Normandy, Col. Cedric E. Hudgens, CO, 437th, died suddenly at Ramsbury, England.



TWO MISSIONS:

99% Perfect

JULY 18, 1944: At a 53rd Wing base, M/Sgt. Harold W. Beck, Ventura, Calif., and the weary engineering section of his group finished installing bolero fuel tanks in the cabins of the huge Skytrains. C-47s were ready for a long-distance flight which was to extend from England to Africa to Italy's west coast.

Late in the day, hundreds of flying personnel boarded planes, along with a minimum of administrative personnel, and approximately half of 53rd Wing's aircraft roared down the runway and headed seaward.

Less than 48 hours later, the aircraft touched down on mountain strips in Western Italy, where preparations immediately were begun for the invasion of Southern France. Tents were pitched for living quarters and offices; personnel changed uniforms from olive drab to khaki; faces became sunburned in a few hours.

Swimming in the Tyrrhenian Sea was a far cry from slogging in England's mud. But all was not pleasure during those early days along the seaside. Intelligence personnel labored indefatigably with map overlays, plotting appropriate drop and landing zones.

Operations sections drew up schedules to determine who would fly in the various elements of the combat lifts. Supply men requisitioned personal equipment

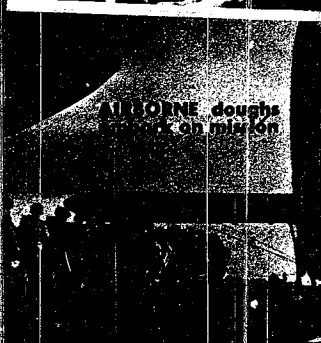


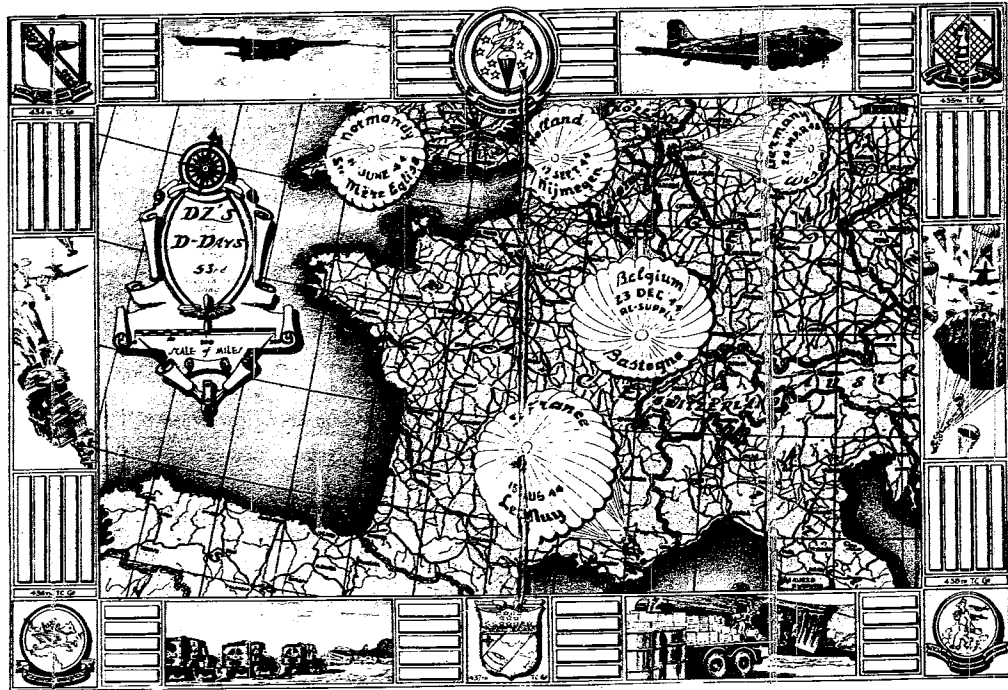
ALLIED LEADERS CONFER:
Lt. Gen. Brereton, Brig.
Gen. Beach, Air Marshal
Leigh Mallory, Maj. Gen.
Williams

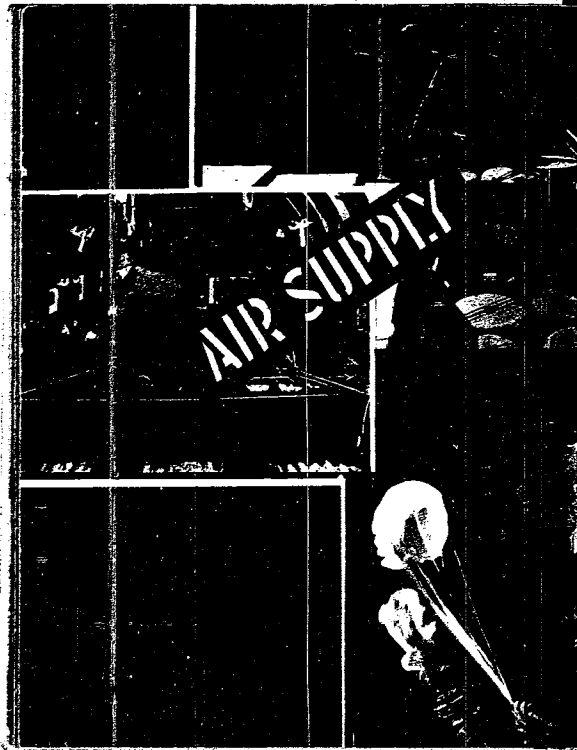
**AIRMEN are
briefed from
control tower**



**AIRBORNE dough
nuts on mission**







for the fliers, engineering mechanics overhauled aircraft, and personnel chiefs worked on records. This was the 53rd Wing's ground echelon in action preparing the flying component for the job ahead.

An order passed down to the groups. Maj. (then Capt.) Harold E. Mott, Ft. Smith, Ark., combat intelligence officer, reported to his group commander: "The base is sealed sir." An over-all restriction had taken place. To keep strangers from learning anything about the operation, civilians were to be kept off the base, military personnel kept on the base. But even as the major spoke, an old farmer, driving a herd of cattle, came through the gate. The base was sealed, but Italian farmers and Italian cattle didn't know the meaning of American operational restrictions!

Several times, German observation aircraft spotted Wing bases. Flights of bombers passed over but none of the bases was hit.

Col. Donald J. French was airborne with the Wing's first paraplane at 0110 Aug. 15. Nine hours and 28 minutes later, Col. Frank J. MacNeese, 435th Group Commander, was off with the first glider-tow.

Despite a heavy blanket of fog which shrouded the invasion coast, the 53rd dispatched 385 powered aircraft and 125 gliders to drop and landing zones near Le Muy on the French Riviera. Only three C-47s and three gliders failed to complete their missions; no airplanes or air crews were lost in flight.

bullet-riddled C-47 before he had a chance to don a parachute. T/Sgt. Bela E. Benko, Detroit, descended safely by looping the chute over his arms and holding his hands to his side. "By doing this, I managed to pull the ripcord and keep from dropping out of the harness," he explained later.

Radio Operator S/Sgt. Lewis H. Pierard, Cherry, Ill., rendered first aid to an injured air crew after its Skytrain was shot down.

Sgt. James N. Quinn, Jr., West Hanover, Mass., forced to parachute from a burning craft, landed safely. Seeing little activity, he paused to light a cigarette only to discover he had no matches. "Hey, bud," he called to a passing American. "Got a match?" Gen. Brecken smiled and obliged.

After the Holland operation, Maj. Dan Elam, Duncan, Okla., group operations officer, was posthumously awarded the Distinguished Service Cross,



highest decoration yet received by a member of the 53rd Wing. With the left engine of his plane on fire, the tail structure partially shot away, and the entire left side of the plane in flames, Maj. Elam continued in formation. The fire had spread rapidly by the time the drop zone had been reached. After the paratroopers had jumped, the major ordered his crew to bail out. The plane nosed into a wooded area on a crash-land attempt and exploded.

SCORES of incidents of individual courage and quick-thinking occurred during three days of combat sorties over Holland. Cpl. Walter Holderer, Long Island, N. Y., grabbed a fire extinguisher and plugged a bullet hole in the fuel tank with the nozzle, preventing flames from spreading while the extinguisher put out the fire.

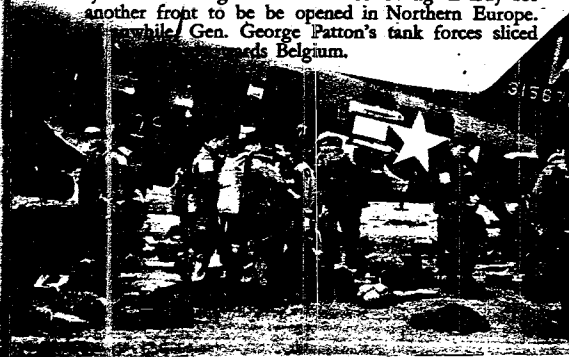
Radio Operator S/Sgt. Reginald P. O'Connor, Needham, Mass., jumped with the paratroopers after his C-47 caught fire. "As I descended, I watched the plane streaking for the ground, nothing but one huge mass of flames!" Sgt. O'Connor landed on his knees but was able to proceed to a nearby woods with the airborne men. Troopers were clothed and fed by village partisans who later aided Americans in rounding up collaborators.

A glider pilot, Flight Officer George E. Law, Clear Lake, Ia., was listed as "Missing in Action" in the Holland raid but returned to tell of experiences as a substitute member of an airborne anti-tank gun team. He had stayed with the airborne crew for a month—

This achievement gave the Wing an average better than 99 percent fulfillment of missions in its first two combat operations—a record difficult to equal. The 53rd's score card on the invasion of Southern France spoke for itself.

In the wake of the French Riviera invasion came a reorganization in England which placed the 53rd Troop Carrier Wing and the Ninth Troop Carrier Command under the newly-created First Allied Airborne Army, headed by Lt. Gen. Lewis H. Brereton, who previously had commanded Ninth Air Force of which the Wing formerly had been a part.

From this reorganization, which placed ground and air components necessary for an airborne attack under a unified command, came orders to prepare for another assault. Enemy-occupied Europe and the world tensely waited during the months following D-Day for another front to be opened in Northern Europe. While Gen. George Patton's tank forces sliced through Belgium.



Heroes ARE MADE ON HOLLAND FLIGHT

At an airborne headquarters, plans were made for an attack near the Belgian border, but this operation was scrapped because Patton's armor had cut its own path to the north. A paradrop near Tournai, east of Lille, was cancelled when ground forces pushed into the town several hours before drop time.

But the day soon came when armored units no longer could continue their drive. Sept. 17, a seemingly peaceful Sunday afternoon, English churchgoers watched 53rd Wing C-47s streak through the skies, headed for the German northern flank in Holland.

There were three major drop and landing zones—Nijmegen, Arnhem, and Eindhoven. Into these three sectors, the 53rd spilled more than 11,000 airborne troops—more than one complete airborne division, plus full equipment.

The Holland raid was costly, scores of power planes and gliders falling prey to flak and ground attacks, but the missions were successful. The 53rd Wing, with less than four months of combat flying time behind it, once more had delivered the goods in the Allied Airborne Army's first large-scale offensive.

Thrown headlong out of the door of his flaming,

bullet-riddled C-47 before he had a chance to don a parachute. T/Sgt. Bela E. Benko, Detroit, descended safely by looping the chute over his arms and holding his hands to his side. "By doing this, I managed to pull the ripcord and keep from dropping out of the harness," he explained later.

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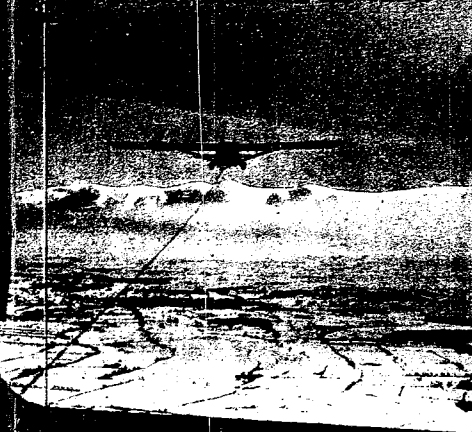
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month longer than he should have. AWOL charges were preferred against him, but the court decision: "Not Guilty."

Troop Carrier sorties over Holland were history-making; they laid the basis for more dramatic action in months to come. Along the notables carried by 53rd Wing into the Netherlands were Maj. Gen. (now Brig. Gen.) Taylor and Maj. Gen. (now Brig. Gen.) [Name obscured], who also had been aboard 53rd



Flying Boxcars

BOLT FOR BASTOGNE

DECEMBER 23, 1944: A seemingly unending procession of cumbersome C-47 Skytrains crawled noisily from a dispersal area at an airdrome in Southern England, pointing their noses toward the runway. Primed for a dash through the skies over Europe, the planes wheeled onto the strip and gained speed, their prop-wash catching onlookers, as the flying boxcars zoomed into space.

Never before had there been a re-supply mission of such proportions. This was a day to remember—a day when the 53rd Wing, in a last-minute change of orders, scrapped a schedule for the transportation of airborne men to the front lines in order to execute the greatest and most dangerous re-supply operation in the entire European war.

Laden with parapacks containing ammunition, food and medicine, 53rd Skytrains rose into the air with engines roaring in a mighty crescendo. Field Marshal Gerd von Rundstedt's famous late December drive was at its height. Skytrains streaked for Bastogne, Belgium, with the urgent mission of re-supplying the beleaguered 101st Airborne Division.

The mercury hovered near zero, snow blanketed the Western Front as airborne troops, tossed into the line as foot soldiers, stubbornly resisted von Rundstedt's piercing salient in the Ardennes area.

Gen. McAuliffe, acting 101st commander, had replied, "Nuts," to a German surrender ultimatum, an expression typical of the skytroop general whom wingmen remembered well. Addressed as "Sir" while boarding a 53rd plane during the Normandy invasion, Gen. McAuliffe had replied:

"Listen, Joe, I'm No. 3 and my name is Tony. Now, what do you want?"

THE 101st Airborne Division had resisted for days but food was getting scarce, ammunition was low and many wounded required medical attention. For days, troopers held on with supply lines cut off. For days, they had fought on "just plain guts." When the call went out to Troop Carrier Command, the 53rd was preparing to transport elements of the 17th Airborne Division as reinforcements to bridge the gap between the "battered bastards of Bastogne" and their supplies.



Pittsburg, Kan., wing operations chief, cancelled the personnel movement schedule with scant time to spare. Hundreds of air cargo men began the job of loading parapacks and fastening them into place along the bellies of the Skytrains. In squadron operations rooms, pilots clamored for the chance to fly supplies to the men they had carried on two airborne invasions.

Visibility was poor as the procession of planes soared over the coast of the Continent. The soup was getting thicker. Navigators fretted over the possibilities of missing the drop zone and releasing parapacks over enemy terrain.

Damp, impenetrable fog shrouded the formations. First Lt. Theron W. Miller, Akron, O., described the weather as "so bad that the birds wouldn't even walk."

As planned, the 53rd Wing swept into the drop

...in minutes past the 1000 mark. Hundreds of... with treacherous... on one edge of the DZ, a dough could be seen making his way across the field, his foot tracks dotting the snow behind him. Darting back to cover after picking up his bundle, he looked up and waved.

He could have been one of hundreds of airborne men in the area that day, and he could have been S/Sgt. Wilfred Harrow, LaPorte, Ind., a member of an anti-tank battalion, who wrote to a group of the 33rd, "We stopped fighting the Germans when your C-47s came over. It was a beautiful sight to watch the multi-colored chutes float down almost into our arms. It wasn't such a bad Christmas after all!"

ALL of the 33rd's Yuletide missions were not flown to the Bastogne area. Some went to the northern flank of the German salient in support of "Hogan's 400," a lost outfit that walked from the mouth of Hell, through enemy lines, to safety.

S/Sgt. Andre Mongeau, Kanakee, Ill., a radio operator, bailed out of his flaming aircraft at the incredible altitude of 350 feet and landed in an evergreen tree. Hearing, hushed voices, and assuming Nazis must be heading towards American lines, he moved towards them. He soon was halted by two Yanks and taken



Hogan was... the enemy

Mongeau was... fought with them... Col. Hogan, 400 of his men... trudged 20 miles in the night through enemy emplacements, over extremely difficult terrain.

For three days, re-supplying Bastogne operations continued. Battered defenders gradually beat back the Bulge as the salient shrank, finally shriveled up completely. Canny von Rundstedt made a strategic withdrawal. The re-supply of Bastogne was over, and 33rd Wing added another bright chapter to its story—first to drop paraspaks to the beleaguered forces.

The box score of the 33rd's Yuletide missions read: 319 pieces of artillery, 4030 gallons of gasoline, 1,261,007 pounds of ammunition, 177,472 pounds of food and 356,089 pounds of various combat materiel.

Despite the fact that 33rd Wing had borne the brunt of Ninth Troop Carrier Command's skytroop missions over enemy territory for months after the airborne

assault on Normandy, the Wing had carried more than 150,000,000 pounds of supplies through skies to Allies fighting on the Western Front—150,000,000 pounds of sub-operational freight, as distinguished from the combat freight hauled into drop and landing zones on attack days; 150,000,000 pounds of critically-needed materials flown to airstrips often less than half a dozen miles from the front lines; 150,000,000 pounds of supplies—more than one pound per person if every man, woman and child of the United States personally had transported the cargo to front line doughs.

Not only was the 53rd first to achieve the 150,000,000 pound mark, but it also was the first to record a total of 100,000 patients evacuated by air from front line strips. Lt. Col. Robert D. Johns, Mansfield, Pa., leader of a formation of Skytrains from Col. Adriel N. Williams' 456th Group, piloted the first C-47 to transport wounded personnel from France on D-plus-4.

On March 27, 1945, the first Troop Carrier aircraft to land in Germany was guided in by 1st Lt. Marvin Cabl, Cedar Vale, Kans., who evacuated the 150,000th patient to be transported by Troop Carrier from the front. This day later, 1st Lt. Richard G. Little, ... plane to



53rd TROOP CARRIER WING

—Ever First

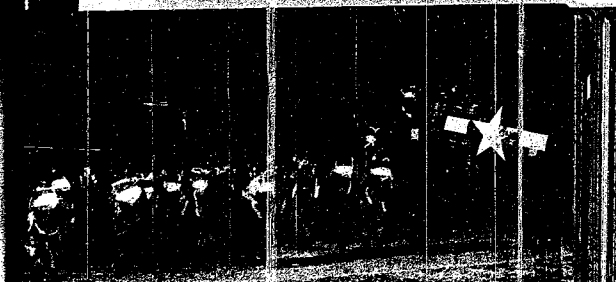
THE story of the 53rd Troop Carrier Wing is both a story of "firsts" and of front line activity. But all of the 53rd Wing's firsts are not included in its tactical history. Some date back to training days in the States.

Activated at General Mitchell Field, Cudahy, Wis., Aug. 1, 1942, under the command of Brig. Gen. (then Col.) M. M. Beach, the Wing moved to Ft. Bragg, N. C., and then to Ft. Sam Houston, San Antonio, Tex., where it conducted the first large scale airborne maneuvers with Troop Carrier planes.

The results of the maneuvers were written into combat records in Normandy; Holland and Bastogne when the 53rd performed tactical sorties with some of the same personnel which attended the Ft. Sam Houston mock airborne assaults—men like Gen. McAuliffe of Bastogne fame.

From Texas, the Wing switched northward to engage in maneuvers at Sedalia, Mo., with the 17th Airborne Division, the same unit the 53rd transported into Germany in 1945. Gen. Beach piloted a C-53 towing two gliders, with Lt. Arthur B. Kuberra, Eau Claire, Wis., and Lt. John W. Lisano, Houston, Tex., at the controls, from Alliance, Nebr., to Laurinburg-Maxton Field in North Carolina, in the first long-distance dual-glider tow in history—a preview of 1945's combat dual-tow performance.

At Pope Field, N. C., the Wing employed a V-of-Vs formation for the first time to drop paratroopers of the 11th Airborne Division. Here, also, the Wing was the first to use a static hook-up for glider take-offs.



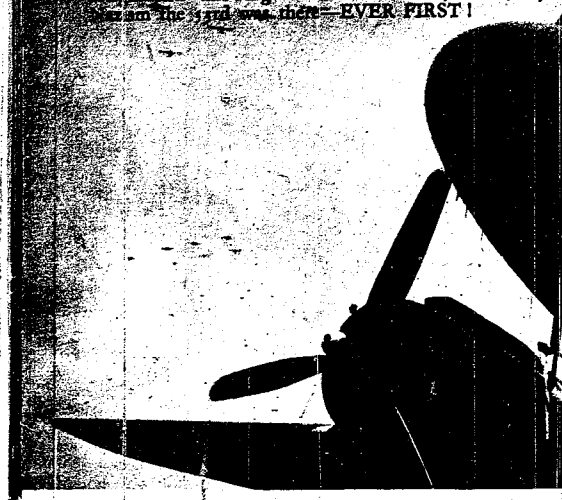
First pilot to make a C-47 flight from Natal, Brazil, to Dakar, North Africa, was Maj. Curtis Frisbie, Roxbury, Kan.

One year after it had received its full quota of five groups, the 53rd Wing had flown 27,000,000 miles—a figure comparable to more than 1000 trips around the world, or 9000 trips across the Atlantic Ocean!

Over the same period, nearly 200,000 air hours were accumulated during four major D-Days—Normandy, Southern France, Holland and the Rhine—and the resupply missions extending from the beachheads of Cherbourg to the National Redoubt in Germany, including the transportation of gasoline to Gen. Patton's forces in Northern France in midsummer, 1944; Christmas parapack missions to Bastogne, Red Ball sorties to St. Vith in February, 1945.

The 13th Troop Carrier Wing and one provisional
company of the 13th Troop Carrier Group supported the airborne invasion of the
Normandy beaches. The 13th had carried 11 percent
of the supplies and nearly six to ground forces fighting
out of the bag.

From the front with airborne troops and supplies
and back to the front to evacuate wounded, the team
of the 13th Troop Carrier Wing stands ready for future
operations knowing that in the battle to destroy
Nazism the 13th was there—EVER FIRST!



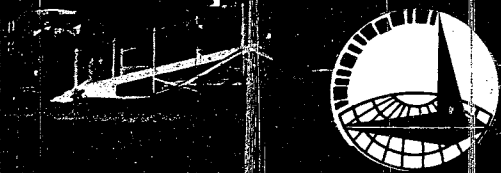
TEAM

AUTOGRAPHS

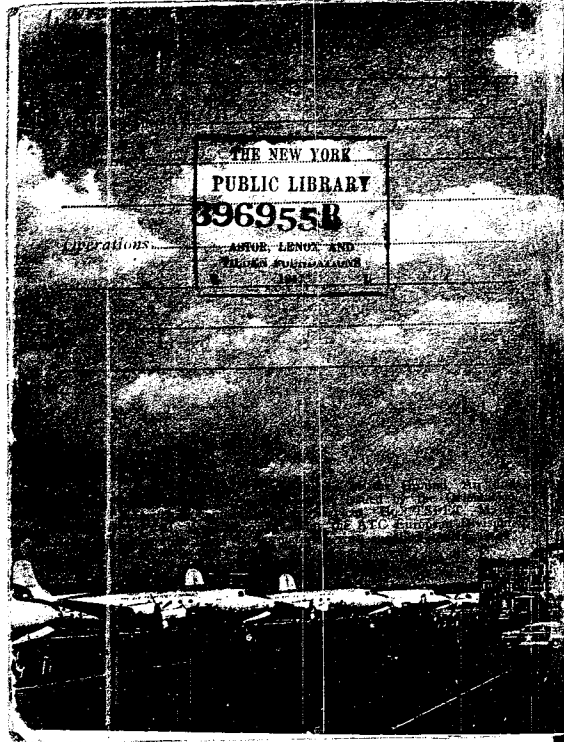




ATC



AIR TRANSPORT COMMAND IN EUROPE



U. S. Army Forces in the European Theater



It seems to me appropriate that the story of the European Division, U.S. AAF Air Transport Command, briefly recorded in this booklet, should be told now at the close of the war. For the work of the ATC, to a greater degree than that of almost any other military organization, bridges the chasm between war and peace. The story that is told in this booklet is primarily concerned with ATC's part in the victory in the European Theater of Operations. Though not always spectacular, that part was a great one. Measured in terms of the importance of the cargo and personnel flown, ATC's behind-the-lines role was crucial. Every individual who contributed to it can take pride in a good job well done.

And we can now take added satisfaction from the knowledge that our remaining jobs are bringing the great potential benefits of air transport to a world at peace. For it is to the tasks of peace that we of ATC must now dedicate all the hard-won experience herein described.

Paul Allen White

Major General, Commanding

THE STORY OF
The Air Transport Command IN EUROPE

A FLEET of huge C-54 transport planes roared down the runway of an airfield on the east coast, then headed out over the Atlantic. Eighteen hours later the first plane landed in England. Hurriedly, cargoes were transferred to the Troop Carrier Command's C-47s and rushed to the front lines in France.

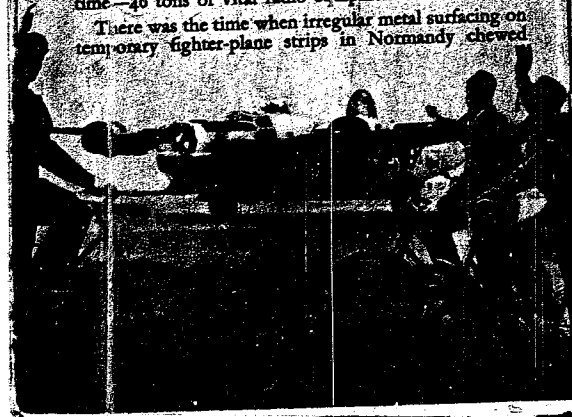
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This was one of the greatest single air supply "lifts" ever recorded, one of the fastest air deliveries ever made from the United States to Europe.

For five days, the Germans, determined to thwart the American breakthrough efforts at St. Lo, had concentrated their fire on walkie-talkie operators. The Nazis had been successful, so successful that when zero hour for the big attack approached, field radio equipment and supplies needed by the thousands were numbered in dozens.

An urgent appeal was flashed to the States. Vital supplies were rushed to an airfield. The Air Transport Command took over. It delivered the goods in record time—46 tons of vital radio equipment.

There was the time when irregular metal surfacing on temporary fighter-plane strips in Normandy chewed



away rear wheel casings on badly needed P-47s and P-51s. Reserve supplies estimated to last six months melted away to a 10-day backlog.

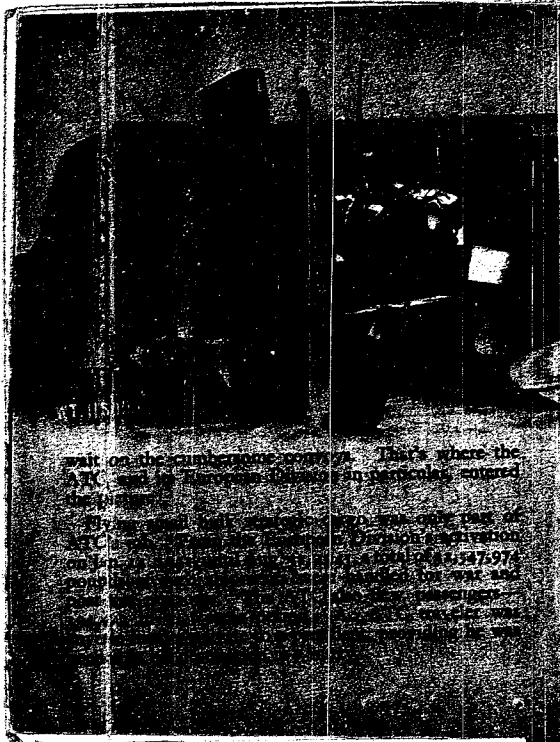
Again the wires hummed. Tire casings were delivered at Newark Airport from all over the U.S. Five days later, the first C-54, stacked to the struts with this crucial cargo, landed at a Scottish terminal of ATC's European Division. Fighters took to the air again, blasting the way for infantry. The team rolled on.

On another occasion, a drowsy clerk typing an inventory list at an 8th Air Force supply depot added an extra zero after the item: "Bushing pins, counter-weight." What was believed to be an adequate stock amounted to a two day supply weeks later as ground crews worked around the clock at the 8th's principal heavy maintenance depot to replace worn engines on Flying Fortresses. When these tiny, indispensable bushing pins were gone, the engine repair line would shut down.

The ATC again answered an urgent call. The threat to the over-all strategic bombing campaign ended when the giant C-54s dropped out of the skies to deliver the vital goods.

ATC was born of the urgency of war. Often, necessity demanded the impossible be accomplished. Scarcely half a dozen years ago, flying the Atlantic was a major aeronautical undertaking. To the men and planes of the ATC, it now was a routine hop.

Sometimes, vital war materials and personnel couldn't



wait on the cumbersome cargo. That's where the ATC and its European Division in particular entered the picture.

The ATC's European Division was activated on Aug. 31, 1945, and its headquarters was set up in London. The ATC's European Division is now the largest of the ATC's divisions, with a staff of 1,477 personnel. The ATC's European Division is responsible for the ATC's operations in Europe, Africa, and the Middle East.

At one time or another, the ATC carried most of the world's VIPs — "very important persons," in the jargon of the airways. The European Division's most spectacular effort in that field was providing air transport facilities for the Big Three conference at Potsdam. The outfit's key personnel passed one of its severest tests by successfully routing eight C-54s carrying the principal American participants, including President Truman, into a Berlin airport within 75 minutes. Dispatched from six airfields stretching from London to Gibraltar, the big planes touched down at 10-minute intervals.

Besides high-ranking military and diplomatic personnel, the ATC transported many of the world's best known stage, screen and radio celebrities. There were unusual passengers as well. Once, two shepherds were flown to a Scottish airdrome in answer to an urgent request for help in keeping sheep off runways that had been built across the animals' feeding grounds. On another occasion, 200 yelping, sloe-eyed husky dogs were transported from the ATC Arctic bases to the snowbound Western Front to aid in rescuing wounded.

In addition to cargo and passengers, the ATC hauled one of the foremost morale boosters — mail. From its activation through Aug. 31, 1945, the European Division handled 36,719,014 pounds, amounting to billions of air and V-mail letters.

AIRWAYS TRAILS ARE

Blazed
OVER EUROPE.

STILL another aspect of ATC's basic mission was the ferrying of combat planes from assembly lines in the States to the European Theater. This was the original job of the ATC when it was first organized as the Ferrying Command on May 29, 1941. The initial directive ordered the command to deliver American planes to the United Kingdom during Britain's lone stand against the Nazis.

Later the mission was expanded to include plane deliveries to other nations under Lend-Lease. After U.S. entry into the war, the organization was renamed the Air Transport Command and assigned the job of long-range aerial supply to all U.S. and Allied forces. Up to V-E Day, European Division airfields received and distributed 15,927 tactical aircraft ferried across the Atlantic by the ATC.

At the peak of its operation, the European Division utilized more than a score of bases that pin-dotted the European Continent from its northernmost reaches to its southern extremity, and from the moors of Scotland to the once-proud Tempelhof in the ruins of Berlin.

More than once, ATC personnel underwent shellfire, bombing and strafings. During the outbreak between British occupational forces and Greek partisans at Athens in December, 1944, and January, 1945, ATC men were billeted in the area where the fighting was most bitter.

First Lt. Zenophon Papazoglou, Stony Hill, Conn., and T/Sgt. Harold Ochs, Troy, Ohio, were killed. They had volunteered for missions of transporting flour from the International Red Cross in Athens to the starving civilian population in nearby villages and were hit by shells from a warship. Their heroism brought posthumous awards from both the American and Greek governments. Other members of the ATC



detachment received decorations for bravery in the performance of duty.

The ATC men were again under fire at Metfield, U.K. terminal of the Scandinavian run. Four men were wounded when this base was bombed and strafed by the Nazis on March 17, 1945. Two weeks previous, one man was killed during a German plane attack.

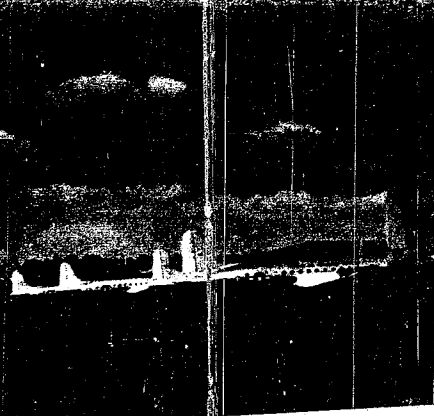
One of the few examples of Allied-German cooperation during the war resulted in ATC operations being extended into neutral Switzerland. This was an agreement with Germany based on mutual recognition of the needs of American and German prisoners of war for mail from home. As a result, an ATC C-47 flew two round trips a week between Paris and Cointrin Airport near Geneva, carrying an average of two tons of mail each trip.

Some of the European Division's base units boasted colorful histories. Two of these were Orly, near Paris, and Prestwick, Scotland. During World War I, American volunteer fliers who formed the famed Lafayette Escadrille trained at Orly. In World War II, as a Nazi base, it was bombed in U.S. air raids until only one building was standing. Yet, only two weeks after its capture by Allied forces, with bomb craters filled in and new buildings and facilities hastily erected, the field was serving again as a major base.

The first Paris-bound ATC plane landed at Orly only six days after the liberation of Paris. Another Orly "first" occurred Oct. 6, 1944, when an ATC C-54

Skymaster landed after the first non-stop flight from the U.S. Gen. George C. Marshall, Chief of Staff, was a passenger.

Prestwick was the most widely-known trans-Atlantic terminal during World War II. It was the first airfield used by the European Division, ATC operations beginning in January, 1943. Probably more VIPs passed through Prestwick than any of the division's bases. Full generals rubbed elbows with field marshals, Lord Halifax was likely to meet Averill Harriman. The ATC and RAF shared famed old Orangefield Hotel at this terminal, and the corridors of the sprawling building resounded with many languages. Uniforms



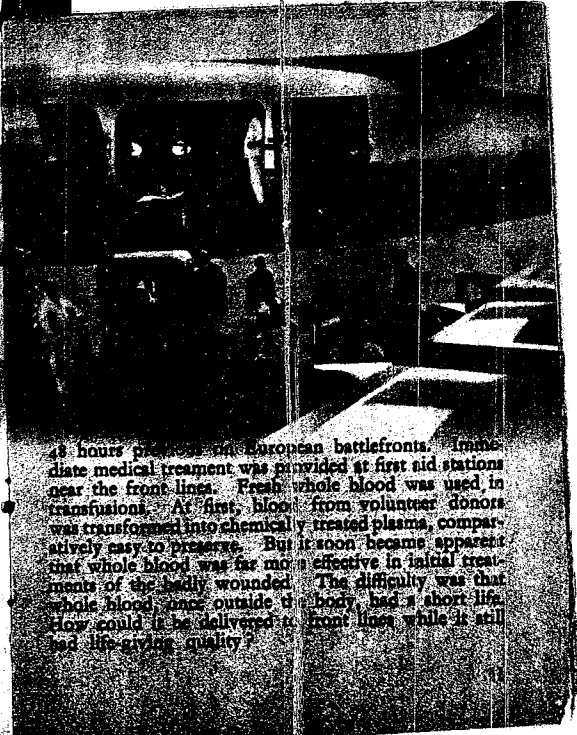
Not only aviation but medical history was made at three of the division's largest bases. The aerial evacuation of wounded soldiers from Prestwick, Orly and Naples was one of the proudest of all ATC's varied activities. Few accomplishments afforded ATC personnel deeper satisfaction than did its part in the evacuation-by-air program.

Wings for the Wounded - THAT'S THE ATC

LITTER bearer!" That ominous cry first was heard as the troops hit the beaches on D-Day. It rose to a swelling crescendo at St. Lo, Aachen, Huertgen Forest, the forcing of the Rhine. But long before the "Cease fire" order was given in crumbling Germany, the call of the wounded lost some of its fearfulness.

Science which produced the ultimate in destruction also developed wings for the wounded. Air evacuation of wounded men, only recently termed "dangerous, impracticable, medically unsound and militarily impossible," became a reality. ATC air ambulances went to work.

In a multitude of instances, general hospitals in the States treated patients who had been wounded only



48 hours on the European battlefronts. Immediate medical treatment was provided at first aid stations near the front lines. Fresh whole blood was used in transfusions. At first, blood from volunteer donors was transformed into chemically treated plasma, comparatively easy to preserve. But it soon became apparent that whole blood was far more effective in initial treatments of the badly wounded. The difficulty was that whole blood, once outside the body, had a short life span. How could it be delivered to the front lines while it still had life-giving quality?

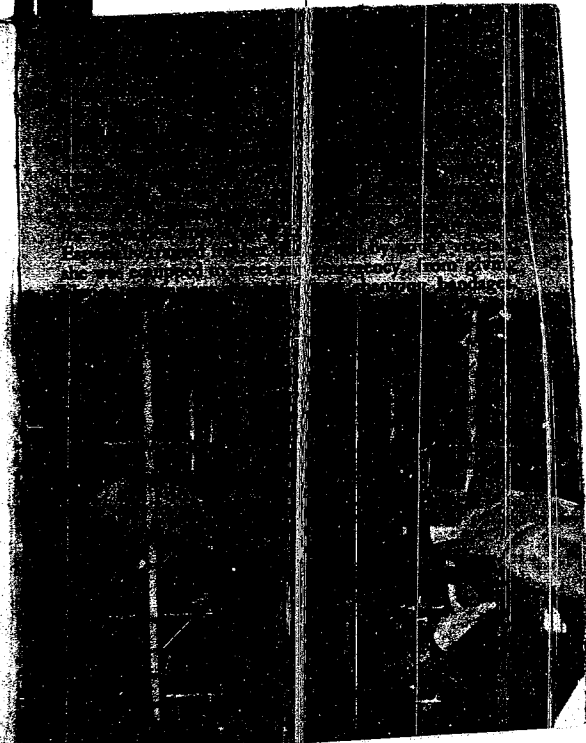
An ATC C-54 Skymaster took off from an airfield in the U.S. on Aug. 21, 1944, loaded with a cargo of whole blood — a cargo as valuable as any ever transported. The whole blood was packed in containers designed to preserve its strength and was stored in a cabin equipped to maintain a temperature of 35 to 40 degrees.

Twenty-four hours later, the blood arrived at ETO field hospitals. Within a few months, the ATC was flying 1500 pints of whole blood daily from the States to the ETO.

With their ebbing strength restored, wounded were delivered to rear echelon holding units. Several days later, they were transferred to field hospitals near Prestwick, Orly or Naples. Then, the ATC took over.

Even for air evacuees, flying home was not just a process of walking, or being carried, out to the runway to board a plane and then taking off. All passengers received the ATC briefing. They were told what measures would be taken if the plane had to be ditched — the chances for this were approximately one in 1000 — instructed as how to use the oxygen and the surprising number of men who never before had flown were reassured. Even for evacuees, foreign currency was exchanged for American greenbacks.

The wounded soldier's destination in the States was decided by two factors. One considered his morale; the other, his health. If at all possible, he was delivered to a general hospital near his home. If this



The trans-Atlantic trip was quiet, uneventful, a miracle of efficiency, coordination and safety. A stop at Iceland brought hot food, fresh milk, ice cream, Red Cross aides, a new flight nurse. Most patients were asleep when a second stop was made at Newfoundland. Those who stirred learned they were only four hours from the U.S. Recalling St. Lo and many other battlegrounds only a few days behind them, they marveled at what was happening.

When the big plane touched down at Mitchel Field, New York, the wounded were lowered away on the hoist. Ambulances whisked them to hospitals. Another ATC errand of mercy was accomplished. The story was not in just this one flight, but in the magnitude and success of this wartime operation that had been called "medically unsound and militarily impossible."

ATC's European Division began its aerial evacuation of wounded in January, 1944, moved into high gear after D-Day and continued the service long after V-E Day. Four months after the surrender of Germany, air ambulances had flown approximately 55,000 patients from the European and Mediterranean Theaters across the Atlantic to the States. In May, 1945, with field hospitals filled with men who had helped make V-E Day possible, a record total of 6984 evacuees were flown home.

The wounded had been given wings!

"Gonnie"

AIRCRAFT SWARM TO SWEDEN

JUNE 13, 1944, 0200 hours: Ack-ack batteries opened up in nearby Hyde Park and S/Sgt. Mary Betty Lee, Greensboro, N.C., was awakened from her first night's sleep in London. That morning, Sgt. Lee and 100 other Wacs reported for duty at the European Division headquarters of the ATC, the first ATC Wacs to serve overseas. Now, as they peered from the windows of their billets, they were given an "official" reception with two air raid alerts. Guns, searchlights and enemy bombers put the war on a personal basis.

Within a short time these typists, drivers, parachute riggers, supply clerks, teletype operators and mechanics were busily performing their assignments like veterans. The needs of the fighting men on Normandy beaches swept aside all normal thoughts of working hours.

Pfc Jane Windham, San Antonio, Tex., aerial engineer, earned her wings the hard way. A pilot who had studied aeronautical engineering before the war, she had flown on bombers from an ATC base in Montana to advanced fields in Alaska, where ships were

turned over to Soviet Russia, before coming overseas. Now, Pfc Windham found an office job awaiting her.

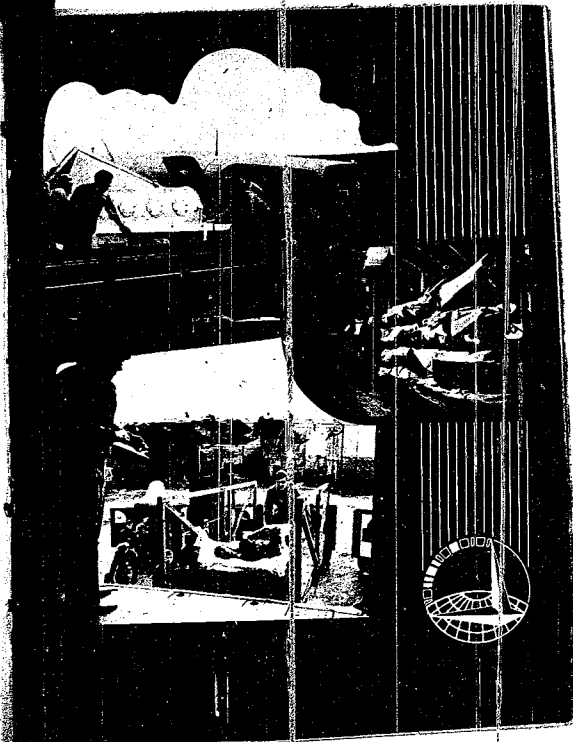
"I didn't come overseas to fly a desk," she said.

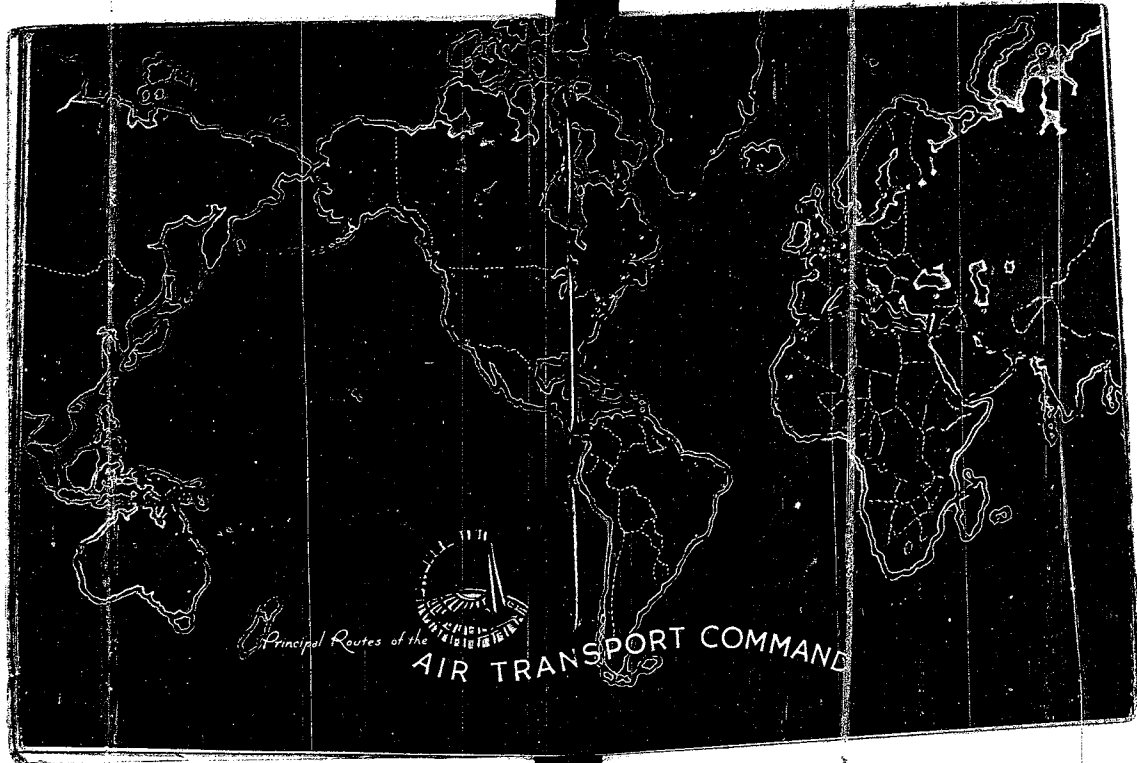
So the Wac was assigned as an aerial engineer with a plane. "The flying I do is like walking across the street," she said in describing her job.

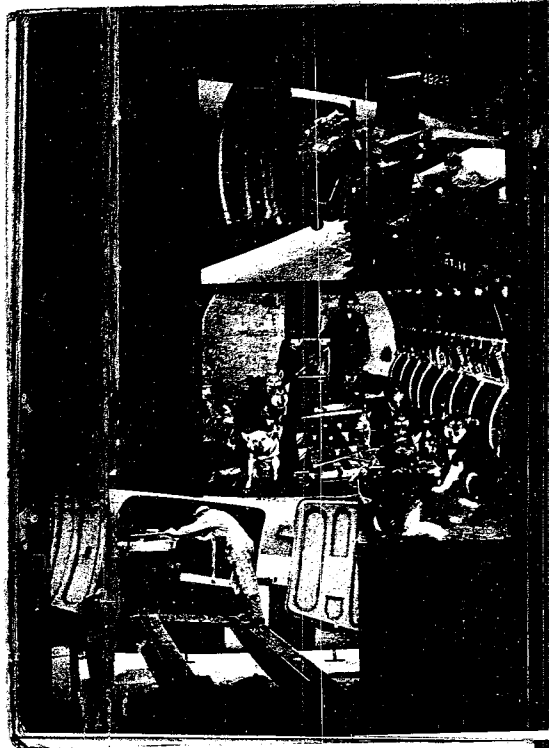
Perhaps the most striking change the veteran Army air traveler notes today is that brought about by the Wac traffic clerks assigned to some routes of the ATC's European Division.

Back in the old days, a plane ride meant riding atop a barracks bag or sweating it out on a bucket seat. Today, an ATC passenger may ease into a plush seat while a Wac like Pfc Martha J. Blanchard, Dallas, Tex., looks after him. She fastens the safety belt, unshackles her charge after take off, brings magazines and coffee. She is one of 10 flight traffic clerks in the entire ATC.

Initiated by the European Division as an experiment on its London-to-Paris run, use of Wacs as flight traffic clerks was so successful that extension of the service was ordered. These Wacs wear air crew wings, which have been earned by performing a variety of technical jobs in addition to contributing to passenger comfort. The flying Wacs prepare manifests, serve as mail couriers and do most of the paper work concerned with passenger flying.







It was midnight at Leuchars Airfield, Scotland. The date was March 31, 1944, two months before the opening of the invasion of Europe. An unarmed, specially converted B-24 Liberator bomber taxied down the wet, slippery runway. It turned into the wind, moved slowly a few feet, then roared away into the night.

In the pilot's seat was Lt. Col. Keith N. Allen, Washington, D.C., veteran Army and commercial flier. At his side as command pilot was Col. Bernt Balchen, famed Arctic aviation expert.

Destination: Sweden, across the icy North Sea and over German occupied Norway. This was the beginning of one of the most difficult and dangerous air operations of the war — the "Sonnie" project. The operation called for the ATC to fly 2000 trained Norwegian fighting men from neutral Sweden to Britain. The task of evacuating 1500 interred U.S. airmen who had made forced landings in Sweden later was added.

From the outset, fliers were beset by innumerable problems in implementing the desired strategy. Foremost obstacles were operating the Scotland-to-Sweden run as a "secret" pseudo-civilian airline; flying past approximately 250 Luftwaffe night-fighters stationed at several fields in southern Norway plus the anti-aircraft and coastal defenses studing the country; operating in almost total daylight prevailing during the summer months. The last-named situation put the "secret"

...line in the paradoxical position of grounding its planes during the best flying weather.

Swedish authorities permitted the arrival and departure of only three planes daily at Bromma Airport. "Sonnie" aircraft also were assigned three corridors, each about 20 miles wide, to travel over Swedish territory. Any plane outside these corridors would be fired on by Swedish anti-aircraft batteries after one warning shot. The critical gasoline shortage in Sweden permitted allotment of only 300-400 gallons of fuel for each plane on its return trip. After a normal run, aircraft landed in Sweden with approximately two-hour fuel reserves.

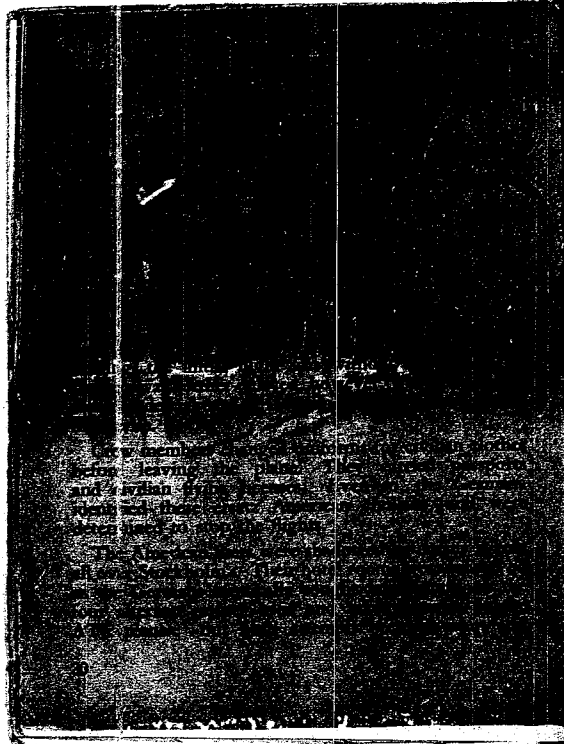


The initial flight followed lengthy diplomatic negotiations with Sweden for the release of the trainees and American airmen. When the Swedish government approved the plan, which originally called for completion of the evacuation program in 90 days, Gen. Carl Spaatz, USSTAF chief, selected ATC for the job because of its experience in large-scale passenger transportation. Col. Balchen, the Norwegian-born pioneer flier who won a special Congressional medal for his work as chief pilot of the Byrd Antarctic Expeditions in 1928-30 and who possessed extraordinary knowledge of the Scandinavian weather and terrain conditions, also was Gen. Spaatz's choice.

Other members of the crew on the first flight were Maj. David H. Schreiner, Columbus, Ohio; Capt. Robert C. Durham, New York City; Capt. Robert J. Withrow, Lompoc, Calif.; T/Sgt. Albert L. Sage, Jr., Drew, Miss.; Sgt. Ray Foy, Newberry, S.C.; T/Sgt. Cecil F. Grove, Waverly, Mo.

Others who later participated in "Sonnie" flights included 1st Lt. Lester M. Schick, Hudson, Ind.; T/Sgt. William C. Jesperson, Willard, Mont.; T/Sgt. Albert Krasevac, Grass Valley, Calif.; S/Sgt. Wilford L. Bollinger, Des Plaines, Ill.; S/Sgt. Neil G. Richards, Cheyenne, Wyo.

Success of the first flight was all-important and except for heavy ground fog forcing the plane to circle the Bromma Airport at Stockholm for two hours before



during the entire operations not a single "Sonnie" plane was brought down by German coastal defense guns.

The project achieved remarkable success. Scrapping all considerations of passenger comfort, upwards of 35 persons were crammed into the converted Liberators on each flight from Sweden. Interned nationals and French, Dutch and Soviet Russian government officials were among the passengers. Once, the entire personnel of the Norwegian government-in-exile was flown to Sweden. Only one plane was lost on more than 128 flights from the Scottish base.

"The Bug"

TRANSPORTS STRANGE CARGO - V-2

THE "Sonnie" project led to another equally dangerous assignment for the ATC. Code name for this job was "Ball" or "Carpetbagger," and the mission called for dropping arms and supplies to underground forces and for parachuting spies and saboteurs into German-occupied Norway.

As American troops punched for an opening at St. Lo in Normandy, all efforts of the American 801st Bomb Group and RAF units which specialized in carpetbagger work were in support of underground move-

ments in France, Belgium, Holland and Germany. Aerial supply to the patriots in Norway virtually had ceased.

Gen. Spaatz called for Col. Balchen and Lt. Col. Allen once more. Altogether, seven veteran crews were attached to the ATC for the Scandinavian operation. The RAF's Leuchars field was selected for the jump-off and on July 17, 1944, the first of six specially modified B-24s lifted skyward and headed across the North Sea.

The aircraft were painted a dull black with flame-responders fitted to the guns and flame-dampers placed over exhausts. Highly secret navigational equipment was installed and the belly turrets were removed, leaving an opening known to the crew as the "Joe Hole."



supplementary parachute-fitted bundles; agents parachuting into Norway jumped through this exit.

Flights had to be made over the same dangerous enemy-held territory in 24-hour daylight which prevailed during the summer months in the northern latitudes. It was difficult to spot the underground "reception committees," make a run into the wind over designated rendezvous at 1000 feet and parachute supplies squarely into the area.

Supplies could not be dropped blind without falling into the hands of alert Nazis and Quislings. Drops had to be made without a moment's loss because circling to search for targets only attracted enemy patrols.

The initial flight was successful and 67 carpetbagger missions followed during the next two months, 41 of which were successful and 26 incomplete because weather conditions in target areas prevented drops. A total of 120 tons of critical supplies — machine guns, explosives, food, clothing and materials essential to resistance and sabotage — were delivered. The final phase of the project sent a handful of American soldiers into Hitler's expected northern redoubt in a miniature preview of the proposed invasion of Norway.

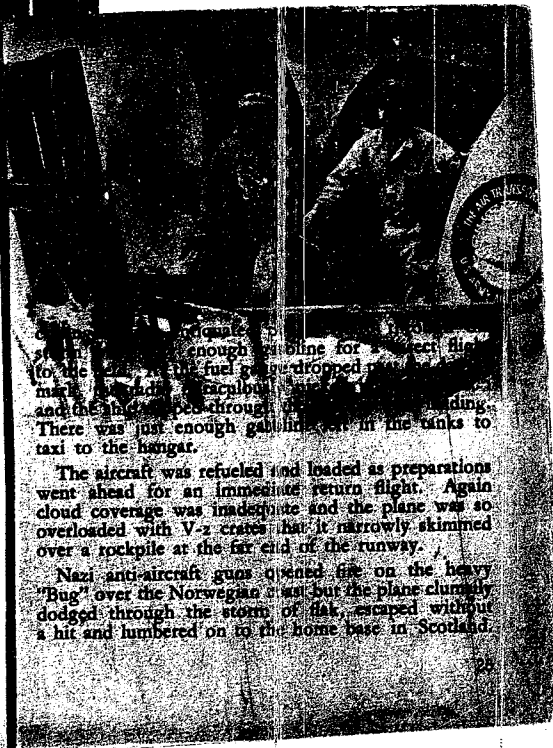
In June, 1944, ATC's London office received a strange request from the British. Would the ATC undertake to fly to England a mysterious 8000-pound object which had fallen almost intact near Kalmar in southeast Sweden?

Southern England already had been showered with Hitler's V-1 buzz bomb and the British, working feverishly to discover the secrets of the second of the enemy's "vengeance weapons," sought to obtain the weird looking object for scientific study. The ATC agreed to take the job.

The pilot assigned the task of bringing back the V-2 was Lt. Col. Allen, who later was killed in action. He accepted the job with two glaring shortcomings. Even when disassembled and crated into smallest component parts, the huge, battered hulk would require at least a C-47 Dakota cargo aircraft; only one such plane was immediately available for the job and this was a comparatively ancient C-47, poorly equipped for the long and hazardous hop over the North Sea and Norway.

The plane was called "The Bug" and Col. Allen's crew was composed of Capt. Durham, Capt. Withrow and a Norwegian radio operator. There was no time to fit "The Bug" with proper navigational aids nor was there time to wait for normal cloud coverage which ordinarily would provide the only cover for unarmed transports over enemy territory.

Flying virtually blind, Col. Allen and his crew spanned the North Sea, crossed Norway without incident and eventually established radio contact with an airport near Stockholm. Minutes later an electrical storm crackled about the ship and only one message from the ground got through: "Make all haste. Field



There was just enough gasoline for a short flight to the field. The fuel gauges dropped and the crew had to land. The aircraft was damaged and the pilot was killed. There was just enough gasoline in the tanks to taxi to the hangar.

The aircraft was refueled and loaded as preparations went ahead for an immediate return flight. Again cloud coverage was inadequate and the plane was so overloaded with V-2 crates that it narrowly skimmed over a rockpile at the far end of the runway.

Nazi anti-aircraft guns opened fire on the heavy "Bug" over the Norwegian coast but the plane clumsily dodged through the storm of flak, escaped without a hit and lumbered on to the home base in Scotland.

There, the cargo was hastily transferred and three hours later the grotesque carcass was in the eager hands of British scientists in Southern England.

The secrets of the rocket bomb learned from the ensuing studies did much to prepare Britain against her last ordeal. The ATC and "The Bug" had completed their strangest cargo job.

ACHIEVEMENTS CHART WAY TO

Air Age of Future

Lt. GEAN WILLIAMS, San Bruno, Calif., nodded to his co-pilot, Lt. Marvin W. Vick, Winston-Salem, N.C., and gripped the wheel. Seconds later, their war-weary B-24 Liberator roared into the gray skies and headed westward over the Irish Sea. Below lay the island of Anglesey. Already fast fading out of sight was the take off point, "Happy Valley," the ATC air-base at Valley, Wales.

M/Sgt. James Kavanaugh, Long Island, N.Y., radio operator and gunner, glanced at T/Sgt. Namon W. Lovil, Santa Monica, Calif., the engineer. Both grinned, then glanced down at the receding shore line. Their thoughts were the same. This was different from a tense bombing run over Germany. This was

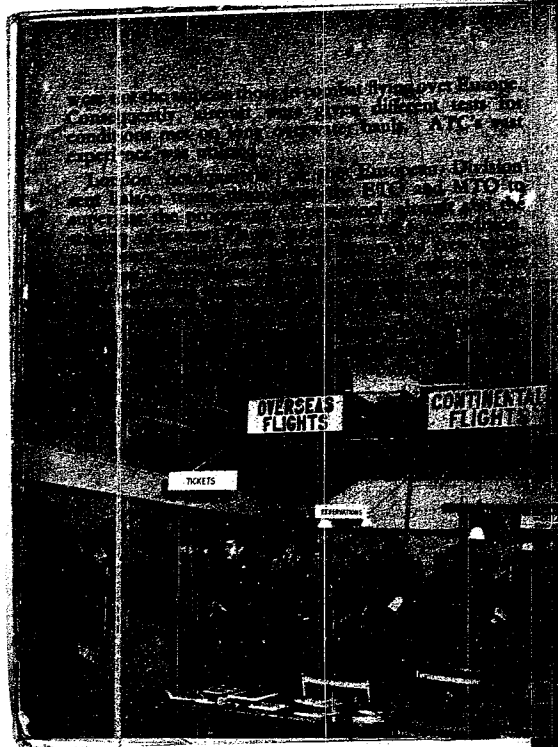
the one they'd been sweating out all those long months. This was the trip home.

Through its four year history, the ATC was called upon many times to accomplish what seemed impossible. This time the task was staggering. The European Division faced the Herculean job of redeploying thousands of men and planes to the States in time to participate in the knockout blow against Japan. As if that was not a sufficient challenge the division was given the additional assignment of helping to ferry thousands of high-point combat men eligible for discharge back to the States.

Plans for a redeployment schedule from the European Theater first were drawn up when Germany's fate became apparent after the Rhine was crossed in March, 1945. The time for the total job was estimated at nine to 12 months. On May 15, however — V-E Day plus seven — the schedule was drastically revised and the War Department directed the return of heavy bombers within 60 days — "as soon as possible with as many people as you can carry."

The first heavy bombers took off from Gioia, Italy, May 17, 1945, in the first flight under the White Project, code name for the ambitious program. This was the beginning of the greatest mass movement of aircraft in aviation history.

Although speed was the keynote, the safety factor was not overlooked. Problems encountered in flying the ATC routes across the North and South Atlantic



pioneering days early in the war. Instructions to cover any emergency were issued. Special weather briefings were held and pilots and navigators given the opportunity to brush up because combat planes were not equipped to use regular ATC radio aids on the long stretches across the Atlantic.

Units of the British, Brazilian and United States fleets formed a chain of safety ships along both the North and South Atlantic routes. All ships in the chain were notified by the ATC of the departure of planes and a close check was kept on the passing aircraft.

Within three days after the initial flight from Gioia, the rate of clearance reached 78 aircraft daily. In two weeks, 1000 planes flew home. The high water mark was reached June 18, 1945, when 196 four-engined and twin-engined craft left the European and Mediterranean Theaters in a 24-hour period.

Although the White Project involved movement of aircraft from all four Air Forces in Europe — 8th, 9th, 12th and 13th — the largest number of planes was from the 8th. When the program swung into high gear, an average of one 8th Air Force bomber left England every 20 minutes. By July 10, the 8th's last flight of 35 planes left Valley. The redeployment schedule for this Air Force originally was set for nine months, later cut to two. In the end, a total of 2118 bombers and 41,500 men flew to the States in 51 days.

With the 8th gone, attention was focused on re-deploying the 9th Troop Carrier Command's remaining planes. Take off points for the White Project aircraft were at Valley; Prestwick, Scotland; Marseilles, France; Gioia and Farnigliano, Italy. Valley was typical of these busy spots.

Incoming crew members and ground crew passengers were greeted by two Wacs — Pvt. Esther Steers, Greenwood, R.I., and Pvt. Irene Conover, San Diego, Calif. The Wacs directed them to billets, messes, told them how to exchange their foreign money for U.S. greenbacks and explained base regulations. These Wacs always pointed to a huge sign which read: "Damn it! Don't forget your personal belongings!" Tracking down owners of wallets left under pillows and baggage scattered over the airdrome were major headaches for ATC personnel operating the redeployment program.

The liaison teams had troubles of their own, resulting for the most part from the American mania for souvenirs and pets. White Project crews were forcibly dissuaded from stowing away everything from verboten German weapons to anesthetized dogs hidden in duffle bags. One individual attempted to fly home a goat slung in the bomb bay.

The White Project was completed Aug. 31, 1945, thus ending an amazing page in aviation history. The effect on future trans-Atlantic air transport could be

judged from the final figures: 5615 planes and 86,077 crew members flown back to the U.S. in 104 days. The meticulous safety precautions paid off, too. In moving this vast armada only seven major accidents occurred with the loss of 72 lives.

Meanwhile, high point combat men had not been forgotten. A program known as the Green Project was inaugurated May 12, 1945 — V-E Day plus four — when veterans of the European campaigns started on the last leg of their homeward journey. More than 150 C-45 Skymasters were used in this program and more than 75,000 men were ferried across the Atlantic by Sept. 1, 1945.



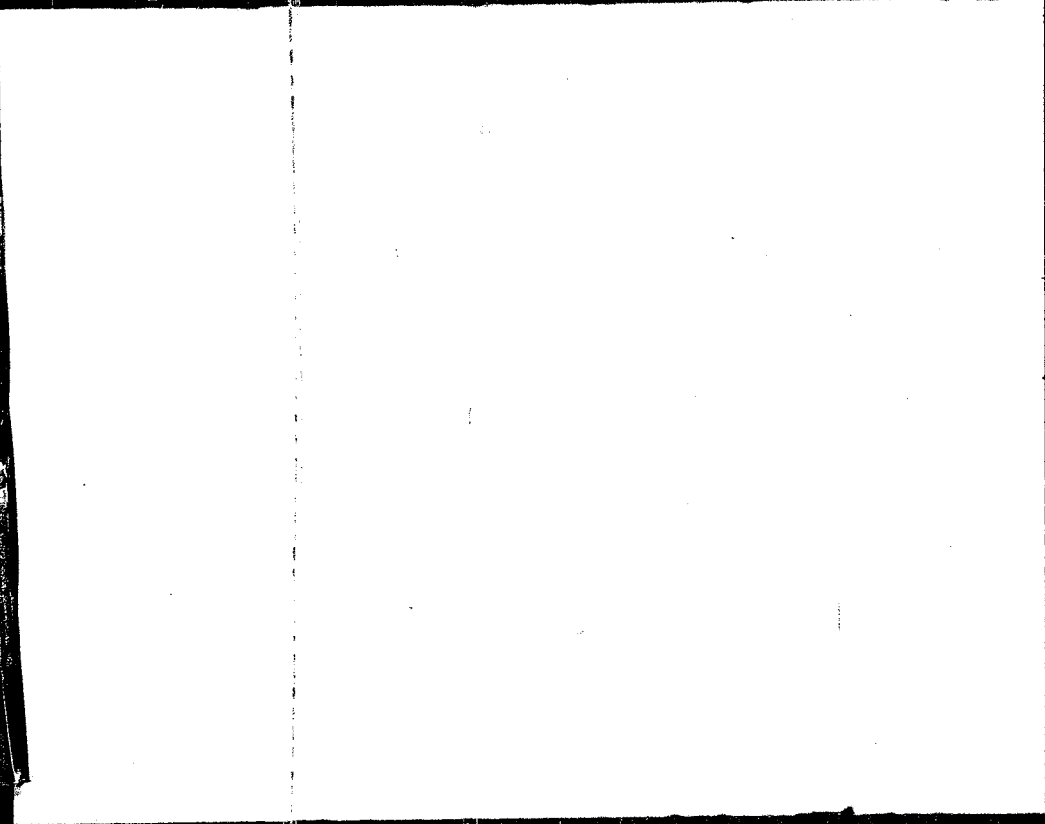
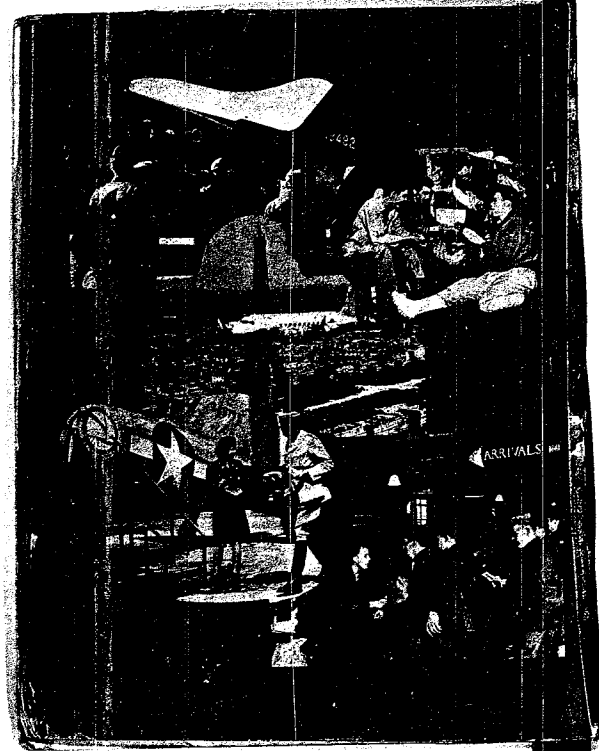
Take off point for most of the Green Project flights was Marseilles, in Southern France, although Paris and Prestwick airports also were used. The initial trans-Mediterranean leg of the long journey home on this route was flown by Fortresses of four heavy bomb groups from the 8th and 15th Air Forces, which shuttled between Marseilles and Casablanca, terminal of the trans-Atlantic run.

Hasty conversion of combat planes and crews to passenger flying on this service was one of the boldest and most successful experiments in ATC's "greatest air lift of all time."

The White and Green Projects held special significance for far-sighted aeronautical engineers and enthusiasts. The case for post-war air transport across the oceans of the world had received its most spectacular demonstration. Another notch had been taken in the belt of the fast-shrinking global waistline. The bridge to America was there to be used; it was up to the future.

For the ATC organization, the future means curtailment and cutback until its job is finally done. But the results of the European Division's brief wartime career will not be forgotten soon. The scientific advances achieved by painstaking research, the airfields carved across a war-wrecked continent by back-breaking labor, even the administrative procedures developed from mountainous paper work, will leave their mark on the air age of the future.





BAYONETS HALF-TRACKS GUN MOTOR CARRIAGES MORTARS
 ARTILLERY MACHINE GUNS GRENADE LAUNCHERS PISTOLS
 RIFLES SHOTGUNS TANKS AMMUNITION SHELLS BAZOOKAS
 WEAPONS CARRIERS TANK DESTROYERS BULLETS JEEPS
 ROCKETS WRECKING TRUCKS TANK TRANSPORTERS DUKWS
 FIRE CONTROL INSTRUMENTS BOMBS MINES WATCHES TRUCKS
 CANNONS FLARES PRIME MOVERS ARMORED CARS CARBINES
 HOWITZERS CARGO CARRIERS ANTI-AIRCRAFT WEAPONS
 TRENCH KNIVES ROCKETS GRENADE LAUNCHERS REVOLVERS TRUCK
 TRAILERS TRACTORS TANK RECOVERY VEHICLES
 BAYONETS HALF-TRACKS GUN MOTOR CARRIAGES MORTARS

the Story of
ORDNANCE in the **ETO**

Name _____

Date Enlisted _____

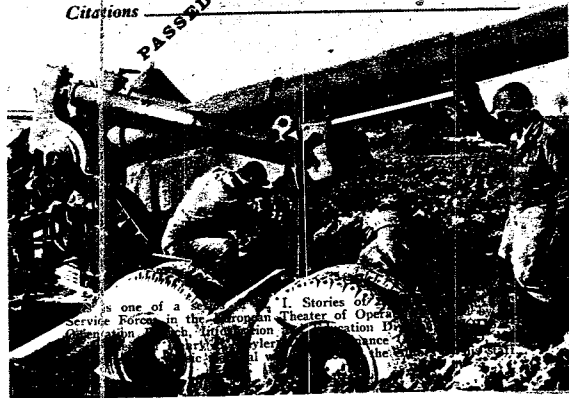
Assigned to Ordnance _____

Training _____

Battle Actions: _____

Citations _____

PASSED BY CENSOR FOR MAILING HOME



It is with a great deal of pride and personal affection that I take this opportunity to greet you, the officers and men of the Ordnance Service. I find it difficult, however, to congratulate you on the job you have done, for, to me, no amount of praise can properly describe your great achievements. Ordnance has always been short on words and long on hard work, and what you have done to smash the forces of aggression in Europe more than proves this fact. Suffice it to say that the miracles of supply and maintenance in the battles of Western Europe constitute one of the proudest chapters in the story of the war. This war is not yet over. Ordnance will continue to maintain the standards you set here—until the enemy in the Pacific is smashed. When this task is done and total peace comes, I know you will equal your feats as soldiers to build a greater America.

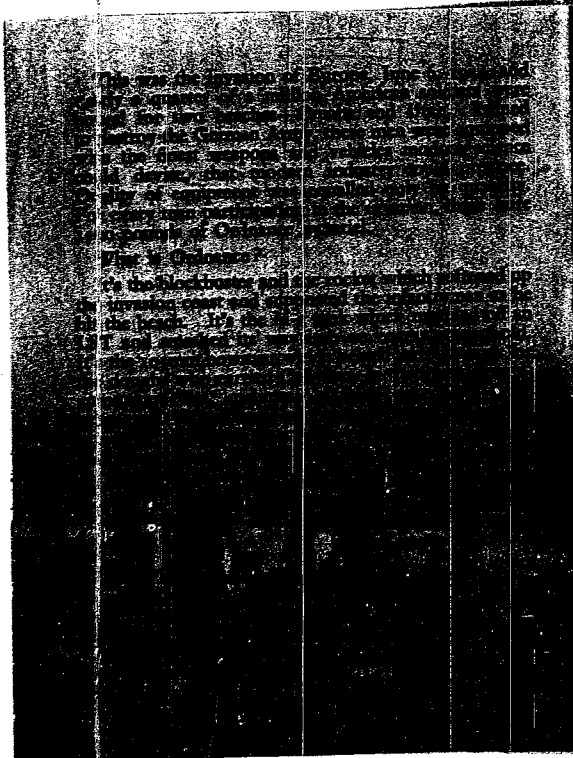
H. P. Bayler

Major General,
Chief Ordnance Officer, ETO

The Story OF ORDNANCE IN THE ETO

INVASION!
A mighty armada—the greatest assembly of ships the world ever had known—moved steadily across the English Channel and headed for the French Coast. Overhead roared a fleet of aircraft so immense that it nearly hid the sky from view.

...one of a series of Stories of Ordnance Service Forces in the European Theater of Operations. This is the first in a series of 15.



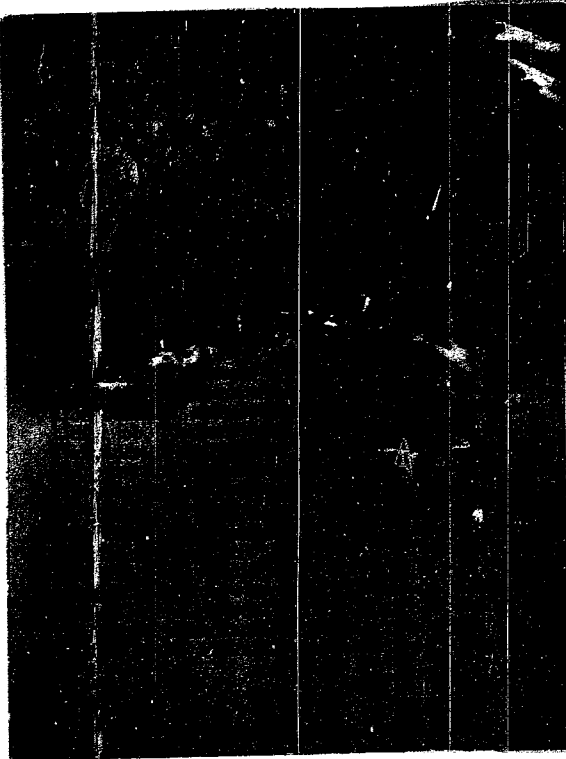
scout car that went out on reconnaissance, the two and a half-ton truck hauling supplies from the beachhead. It's everything that rolls, shoots, is shot, and dropped from the air.

The story of Ordnance in the European Theater of Operations is the story of men as well as materiel. It's the story of maintenance crews who put damaged vehicles back into action while sniper bullets zinged nearby and 88s screamed overhead; of ammunition companies fighting off dive bombers and infiltrating attacks; of tank recovery units and contact teams, depot companies and storehouse workers. It's the story of welders, small arms mechanics, artillery technicians, instrument repairmen, bomb disposal men, foreign materiel experts and clerks. It's the story of 175,000 officers and men who not only delivered the goods but kept that equipment in fighting condition through France, Belgium, Holland, Luxembourg and Germany. It's the story of supply and maintenance in five United States Armies.

That's Ordnance!

When asked how he won a certain Civil War battle, Gen. Nathan Bedford Forrest replied that he arrived "first with the most." Gen. Forrest was translating the word "logistics" into simple terms.

Since the first cave man picked up a club and began socking his enemies with it, logistics has been the Number One headache of any war. Supplying a military machine is a science. Supply was the secret



These pieces were turned on British defenses and Boston soon was retaken.

During the Civil War, Ordnance played a vital role in the field of development when breech-loading, rifled small arms gradually replaced the clumsy muzzle-loading, smooth-bore muskets. Delivery of the goods was the power behind Gen. Sherman's smashing drive through Georgia and South Carolina. The picture was the same in 1917, but to a much greater extent, when America converted from peace time production practically overnight to throw the might of its arms into France and tip the scales of war towards Allied victory.

Flaming Bomb — **150 YEARS OF ACHIEVEMENT**

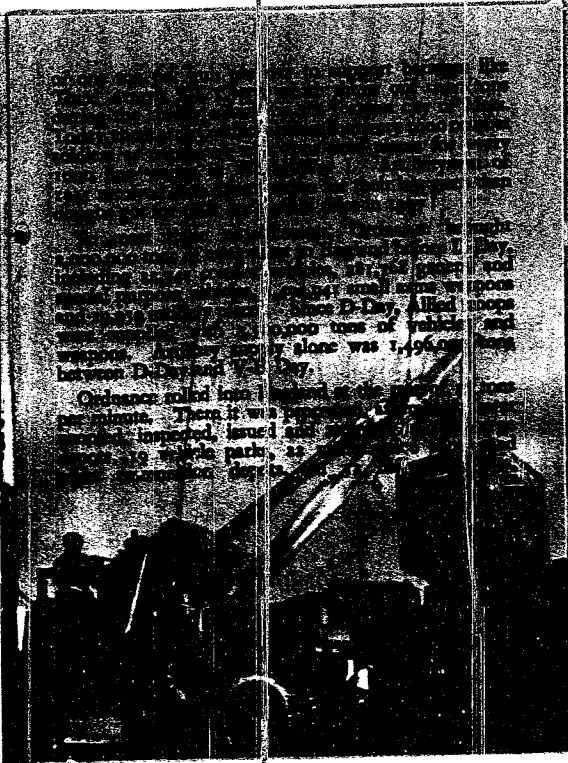
ALTHOUGH the Flaming Bomb insignia of Ordnance is the oldest in the Army, representing 150 years of achievement, this service's greatest task—the greatest challenge it ever faced—began approximately 10 years ago along the shores of Chesapeake Bay. Here, the stillness of the Maryland countryside was shattered by the crash of bombs and shells, the rumble of tanks, the crack of small arms fire. This was Aberdeen Proving Ground where a small group of Ordnance officers and men worked 24 hours a day to perfect the forerunners of today's M-1 rifle, M-4 tank and 105mm howitzer.

Ordnance was not at work any too soon. When Hitler's panzers rolled through France in the spring of 1940, Nazis were confident that the democracies had little with which to fight. Two factors Hitler overlooked and which eventually helped to shatter Germany's dream of world conquest were American inventive ability, and its product, American industry.

While Nazism struck crippling blows, American industry rolled up its sleeves. When Gen. Eisenhower threw his first punch at the Germans on the North African beaches, industry and Ordnance teamed up to pay dividends. The building of equipment stockpiles for the invasion of Europe followed. For two years, Ordnance labored unceasingly in United Kingdom depots to support a military operation which had not been accomplished successfully since the 11th century when William the Conqueror crossed the Channel to invade a hostile shore.

The Table of Basic Allowance for an armored division calls for 13,148 small arms weapons, 499 artillery pieces, 879 combat vehicles and 1733 other vehicles. This equipment weighs 23,317 tons. For tanks alone, monthly replacements number 8000 different kinds of parts and assemblies, involving 1,500,000 individual pieces packed in 15,000 containers. The initial equipment of an infantry division calls for 16,843 small arms weapons, 180 artillery pieces, 17 combat vehicles and 2072 other vehicles. Total tonnage is 9072.

Production of ammunition is based on the formula



Ordnancemen assembled 1000 vehicles daily. The job of preparing thousands of the 350,000 different items which made up Ordnance equipment—each item for its own specific part in the invasion—was endless.

Waterproofing alone was one of the greatest problems facing Ordnance during the pre-invasion period. Ordnancemen worked on waterproofing techniques for almost a half year. Four or five minutes were needed for a vehicle to leave the landing craft, drive through the water, and roll ashore. To counteract the damaging effects of salt water, technicians prepared compounds and wrappings for equipment, and conducted training programs in waterproofing for drivers of vehicles. Experience in the North African and Sicilian invasions helped to some extent, but the scale on which the invasion of Europe was being planned made the job of waterproofing proportionately more difficult.

The basic unit of firepower for American infantry is the M-1 rifle, a semi-automatic weapon which spits out a clip of eight .30 caliber shells as fast as a dough can squeeze the trigger eight times. The Germans used the bolt-action Mauser, a good weapon but inferior to the Garand, which Gen. George S. Patton, Jr., calls "the greatest battle implement ever devised."

Anti-tank guns with a high muzzle velocity are a German specialty, but their performance falls short of the job done by American ATs, typical of which is the 57mm piece. This mobile weapon features a breech mechanism which ejects shell cases automatically, thereby increasing an already rapid rate of fire.

Allied troops respected the performance of the German 88mm all-purpose gun, but Ordnance answered this highly-touted piece with a variety of superior artillery weapons, including the 105mm howitzer which replaced the 75mm as the standard field piece. Germans were so awed by its rate of fire that prisoners frequently asked to see the American "automatic artillery." In the heavier stock, the 155mm "Long Toms" and the 240mm pieces consistently outlugged the German artillery.

Said one German PW: "I spent three years in Russia and then came to the American front. American artillery is 100 per cent better." Said another: "I served in Italy, Russia and on the Western Front. The Americans have much better artillery."

According to Gen. Patton's tactics, it's tanks versus artillery, not tanks against tanks. Developed as a result of this basic concept of armored tactics was the M-4, the finest medium tank of any army. Had it not been for the M-4, Allied armies may not have been able to throw out the spearheads which paved the way for the smashing breakthrough at St. Lo, the race across France and the final assault on Germany.

The M-4 is fast, turns on a dime and throws 76mm shells from a gun with a 300 degree traverse. Germans could swing their armored artillery only 45 degrees and couldn't fire while under way. Because of the gyro-stabilizers, M-4s can blaze away while moving.

Shermans directed by Lt. John Kingsley, Co. B, 25th

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Shermans directed by Lt. John Kingsley, Co. B, 35th

Tank Bn., knocked out 11 German Tigers in one day. Fourth Armored's S/Sgt. Pearce O. Miller's M-4 tank took four direct hits without being stopped as it left the smoldering remains of four Nazi tanks in its wake; S/Sgt. Joseph L. Laperle had one M-4 knocked out from under him, but he climbed into another and smashed four enemy tanks.

U. S. armor gained respect from others besides the men who drove the tanks and fired the guns. A Nazi prisoner who fought in France, Norway, Finland and Russia said: "Your artillery and your tanks are your best weapons."

The newest American armored Sunday punch is the M-26 "General Pershing," mounting a 90mm piece. When this tank made its debut with the 9th Arm. Div. in March, 1945, it crawled into a barrage of 88s, took several direct hits, then roared ahead as if nothing had happened. Since then, the M-26 has left a path of smashed enemy guns and tanks hundreds of miles long.

Among tank destroyers, the M-18 "Hellcat," which can fire its 76mm gun while moving at a speed of 45 miles per hour, knocked out more than its share of German armor. A typical performance occurred at Bastogne late in 1944 when an M-18 knocked out six Panthers in six minutes. Slightly larger and twice as mean is the M-36 TD, mounting a 90mm gun.

The many types of automatic small arms which answered every possible tactical need, the heavy artillery which plastered the opposition before the infantry

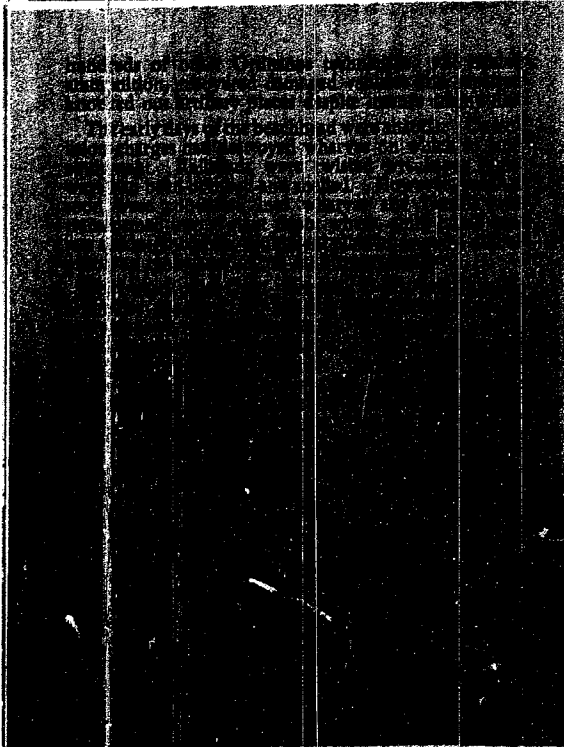
assaults, the scores of combat, general and special purpose vehicles which made the U.S. Army the most mobile in world's history—the performance of this equipment was evaluated by Gen. Eisenhower's recent statement:

The effectiveness of our Ordnance is partly due to simplicity in design and purity to the range of U. S. equipment, which provides a weapon for every target. The enemy's battle losses have been far greater than ours. In pieces of artillery, the enemy has lost eight to our one. We have knocked out twice as many tanks as we have lost.

D-Day- ORDNANCE HITS THE BEACHES

THE first Ordnancemen to hit the beach on D-Day were attached to the famed 1st Inf. Div. Some of these included Lt. James S. Logan, Niagara Falls, N. Y.; Sgt. Harvey R. Ransom, Cozanovia, N. Y.; Sgt. Charles A. Haase, Bainbridge, N. Y.; Sgt. Mario A. Liberatore, Philadelphia; Cpl. Charles C. Bodine, Dallas, Tex.; Pvt. Wilfred R. Stiffler, Altoona, Pa.

Within 1000 yards of enemy lines, they issued ammunition to 1st Division troops while simultaneously storing a reserve supply. These men were followed by



Supply problems alone were sufficient to keep Ordnance busy, but this was only half the job. There was maintenance. The late Ernie Pyle once described a small phase of that when he wrote:

This is not a war of ammunition, tanks, guns and trucks alone. It is as much a war of replenishing spare parts to keep them in combat as it is a war of major equipment. A thousand tanks or a thousand motor trucks are as good as no tanks or no trucks if the butterfly valve, no larger than a quarter, is missing from the carburetor of each of them. The gasket that leaks, the fan belt that breaks, the nut that is lost, the distributor point that fails, or the bearing that burns out, will delay GI Joe on the road to Berlin, just as much as if he didn't have a vehicle in which to start.

Ordnance technicians--automotive mechanics, small arms experts, artillery contact teams--worked far into the night to solve problems which had not even been foreseen at the training centers in Aberdeen or Flors. Germans struck back hard in those early days and the amount of equipment put out of action caused many sleepless nights for maintenance companies. But just as fast as battered equipment came in, tank experts and gun specialists patched it up. Nazis frequently were bracketed by guns they thought had been knocked out for all time.

Working conditions were far from ideal. Gone now were the air-conditioned shops and neat vehicle parks of the United States and England. Improvisation



typical of the maintenance crews which worked and fought through Normandy was the 735th Maintenance Co., supporting Pres. Harry S. Truman's World War I outfit, the 35th Inf. Div. In the six months following D-Day, Ordnance technicians performed so expertly that the 35th hadn't a single artillery piece out of action because of malfunction or the lack of service.

These Ordnancemen saw their share of fighting as well. S/Sgt. Orville W. Johnson, Murtagh, Ohio, was

awarded the Bronze Star for retrieving a knocked out 57mm anti-tank gun and a 105mm piece while Germans opened up with all available heavy stuff. Near St. Lo, S/Sgt. Kenneth D. Whitmore, Fremont, Nebr., broke up a traffic bottleneck caused by a damaged tank which blocked one of the main supply arteries in that area. Using a 10-ton wrecker, Whitmore dragged the tank to one side of the road as shell fragments and Mauser slugs peppered his vehicle.

Heroes EMERGE IN RACE ACROSS FRANCE

ORDNANCE did its job in many ways during the Normandy campaign, but probably its most unusual detail was near Falaise when fighting was at its fiercest. Sgt. Stanley C. Gallus, Royalton, Minn., and Cpl. Edward L. Pelkey, Little Falls, Minn., reserved a site for their supply company which was to occupy it next day. Settling down, they tried to sleep, but enemy artillery and small arms fire forced them to seek a safer spot. Down a road, they were stopped by Frenchmen who informed them of a large enemy troop concentration nearby. Pelkey moved cautiously. The armor he saw indicated a major breakthrough attempt. Far in advance of American troops, Pelkey and Gallus raced back until they ran into an armored force officer. He

detailed them to observe the enemy and to halt American traffic. A few hours later M-4 tanks blasted into the German assembly area. Ordnance had done strange jobs on the peninsula, but this was the first time it had served as G-2.

After St. Lo, the fluid situation vexed not only welders, mechanics and drivers, but "typewriter commandos," cutting through a blizzard of paperwork, as well. Because work orders and requisitions for weapons, ammunition and spare parts had to shuttle between forward and rear areas, a motorized Pony Express was organized. Ordnance couriers with First and Third Armies would roll up collectively as much as 1000 miles a day over roads that sometimes threatened to stop even jeeps. Pvt. "Lucky" Lucadamo, Newark, N. J., former pro football player, found bad roads weren't his only obstacles. On several occasions he left the wheel to engage infiltrating Germans with machine gun fire.

As American troops bore down the peninsula, Ordnance converted the chaos of those first slam-bang weeks into a semblance of organization. The Communications Zone was divided into Base and Advance Sections, and this combination of Base to ADSEC to Army smoothed out multiple supply wrinkles. But new situations developed, particularly when Gen. Patton's tanks punched through German defenses at St. Lo and launched a frenzied race across France. Ammunition companies tossed the SOP book out the window. Ammunition supply points were discarded temporarily;







there wasn't sufficient time to unload ammunition. Instead, Ordnancemen left equipment and supplies aboard trucks as they leapfrogged depots forward in an attempt to keep up with the tanks, sometimes as far as 150 miles ahead of advance supply bases.

One ammunition unit moved into a small town at night, searching for infantrymen it was supplying during their advance. When they failed to find the doughs, the ammunition men settled down for the night, planning to shove on next day to catch up with the troops. Next morning, they were awakened by the crack of small arms fire, and discovered their infantrymen moving in to take the town still held by the enemy.

The summer was unusually hectic; ammunition outfits frequently were confronted with problems other than supply. The famous 17th Ammunition Co., a Negro outfit, was assigned to mop up a resistance pocket near the Belgian border. Bombed, strafed and shelled by Nazis for days, the men waited for the chance to answer back. When a call for volunteers was issued, every man in the company stepped forward.

Armed with Springfields, 62 picked men went to work, eventually located a barn which was the resistance center. T/Sgt. Harold F. Jackson, Milwaukee, Wis., put an end to the tough opposition when he scored a direct hit on the building with an incendiary grenade. Although the Germans shouted "Kamerad" there was little time to relax. First Army troops needed more ammunition. They got it.

The little French village near Morlaix always will be known as "Ordnanceville" to 14 members of the 16th Ordnance Co., who took the town from the Krauts without firing a shot. Detailed to deliver five tanks and three armored cars to the 6th Armd. Div., these men were stopped en route by Frenchmen who warned them of Germans in the village.

Discussing the situation, the Ordnancemen decided to attempt to take the village and deployed their vehicles so that every gun was zeroed in on the enemy position. Spotting this opposition, the German commander assumed an entire armored division surrounded his garrison; he surrendered his 123 officers and men.

Ordnance field service, of which the Contact Team is a part, turned in a remarkable performance. Made up of four to six technicians, these teams constantly were on the move from their bases to front line units where they inspected artillery, small arms, fire control equipment and made on-the-spot repairs. Compact and mobile, the teams covered from 50 to 200 miles a day. Only the heaviest barrages interrupted their work when the men jumped into foxholes, sweated out the attack, then returned to their tools.

Typical was one team from the 520th Ordnance Co. comprised of S/Sgt. Harry R. Lemmen, Holland, Mich., heavy artillery specialist; Sgt. Francis J. Mosely, Union Springs, Ala., instrument diagnostician; Sgt. John Rigdon, Birmingham, Ala., small arms expert; Pvt. Hyman Sparkes, Ashland, Ala., driver and jack of all

trades. One of the most efficient teams in the ETO, this group was a welcome and familiar sight to many front line men. Said Sgt. Mosely:

The Germans got to know our vehicle pretty well during one period when the front was more or less static. Every day for a week they tried to zero us in with their 88s, but we were lucky and always got through okay.

**"PULL BACK -- STAY
IN BUSINESS -- *Fight*"**

With the opening of the Red Ball Highway, Ordnance trucks rolled forward in a steady stream to support front line units with necessary supplies and equipment. Dotting this great thoroughfare were various maintenance organizations charged with the responsibility of removing weak links in the chain of transportation. Ordnance teams conducted frequent inspections to determine how well drivers observed first and second echelon maintenance rules. Whenever necessary, Ordnancemen yanked damaged vehicles off the road, made necessary repairs, got them moving as quickly as possible. Tire patrols roamed the routes, fixing flats, issuing new tires. The Ordnance team was clicking.

Flaming Bombers went into action when Seventh Army threw its invasion keymaker at Southern France

supply and repair depots were established in the suburbs of the French capital. Typical was Depot o-644, where thousands of vehicles, weapons, and spare parts were disassembled from bulk shipments and prepared for immediate reissue to smaller units in ADSEC. Staffed by more than 3000 officers and men, Depot o-644 was the largest of any on the Continent.

The autumn stalemate was followed by the Battle of the Bulge in December, 1944. Chief target in von Rundstedt's drive was the First U. S. Army; thousands of tons of equipment were in danger of being captured during the height of the Nazi blitz. From Col. J. B. Medaris, First Army Ordnance Officer, came the order:

Pull back. Stay in business. Fight.

Ordnance pulled back. The enemy captured little materiel. In three days, 3300 Negro troops of the 71st Ordnance Group evacuated three ASPs under enemy fire, reduced a large base ammunition supply depot to point size and set up a new ASP to serve an Army corps while turning over two of the supply points to another Army. Simultaneously, this unit supplied troops with a minimum of 3000 tons of ammunition daily, and, at one point during the Bulge battle, established a record by delivering 7500 tons in 24 hours.

The 100th Ordnance Ammunition Bn. grabbed seven Belgian locomotives and evacuated 100,000 rounds of 155mm ammunition and 43,000 rounds of 105mm projectiles. The 202nd Ordnance Depot Co. evacuated

its 600-ton outfit in two days. The 310th Ordnance Bn. pulled scores of field pieces out of the line before Germans could capture them.

Ordnance stayed in business. The 390th Ordnance Bn. withdrew 100 miles in sub-zero weather. During this period, units of the battalion frequently lost contact with each other. Yet the 390th turned out 4000 repair jobs, including work on 88 tanks, while transferring its headquarters.

Ordnance fought. In one sector, the only troops blocking a complete German breakthrough was a group of Ordnancemen under Col. Nelson O. Lynde, then First Army Maintenance Officer. Known as "Lynde's Task Force," the men set up defense points and traded blows with the enemy until help arrived. In the wake of the 4th Armd. Div.'s smash into Bastogne to relieve the 101st Airborne Div. was the 3450th MAM Co., the same unit that built the "tankdozers" in Normandy.

In Seventh Army's sector, Flaming Bombers took their share of the counter-offensive, and for them it was the same thing: "Pull back; stay in business; fight." While evacuation was the general policy, there were some outfits which had to hang on because of the tactical necessity. One of the few ASPs not evacuated was that operated by the 680th Ord. Ammunition Co. Little distance separated it from the enemy, but men of the 680th, veterans of the North African and Italian campaigns, had seen rough days before. When the Krauts were only a few miles away, the Ordnancemen

Equipment losses in four United States Armies for December doubled those of the previous month. However, maintenance service cut down losses immeasurably, putting back into action some equipment battered beyond recognition. The repair ratio was two small-arms weapons for each one lost and 12 to one for artillery weapons.

In Third Army alone, maintenance crews put back into action more damaged guns and vehicles than were lost by four entire armies in December. Considerable economy in repair work was due to the Ordnance salvage program. Salvage crews stripped ruined equipment of every part which could be used again on another tank or gun. Set up at strategic locations, Ordnance collecting points served as salvage centers, facilitating proper distribution of damaged materiel and parts.

Between D-Day and V-E Day, third, fourth and fifth echelon maintenance shops in the Communications Zone

repaired 335,995 vehicles of all types, 407,182 small arms weapons and 11,182 artillery pieces—a total of 754,259 jobs.

French plants were used for reconditioning and overhauling of engines. Shortly after the liberation of Paris, 15 major French automobile plants were reopened. With French labor under Army Ordnance supervision, production was increased to more than 600 jobs per day on every type engine used by the army. The program cut down months, removed thousands of miles, saved several Liberty ships' shipping space and \$ 25,000,000.

With the Allies all-out spring drive under way, the problem of keeping pace with tanks and infantry once again became the chief concern of maintenance and supply. Leapfrogging of depots again was initiated.

To support the Rhine offensive, speed was vital. One Ninth Army Ordnance outfit near Remagen received 50 new M-26 tanks destined for the assault on the east bank of the Rhine. These giant vehicles were processed in 72 hours. Maintenance was more mobile than ever before. Even heavy maintenance companies pulled stakes and advanced several times a week.

The 3448th MAM Co., operating a Third Army forward collecting point, had a difficult time keeping up with Gen. Patton's troops. Although it had to pack up and pull out unwieldy equipment six times in two weeks, it was able to load and move out of an area one and a half hours after receiving orders.

The 769th Light Maint. Co. was a part of the 69th

Inf. Div. which spearheaded the drive, taking Leipzig and meeting with Soviet troops at Torgau. The 76th frequently fastened its times its mechanics traveled with the drive, these men repaired captured vehicles including 60 sedans, 30 buses and a repair company, which handled 1,000 and repaired 2,000 items. Meritorious Service Plaques.

At this time, many German roads and other facilities were being men to expedite their work. Maint. Coy (T) used for the repair of the vehicles and for the supply of the troops.

Flaming Bombers READY FOR ANY OR ALL JOBS

THE over-all picture resembled that of the previous summer when Allied armies swept through France. Distances covered were tremendous. In one week, trucks hauling ammunition for Third Army rolled up mileage equivalent to 25 trips around the world.

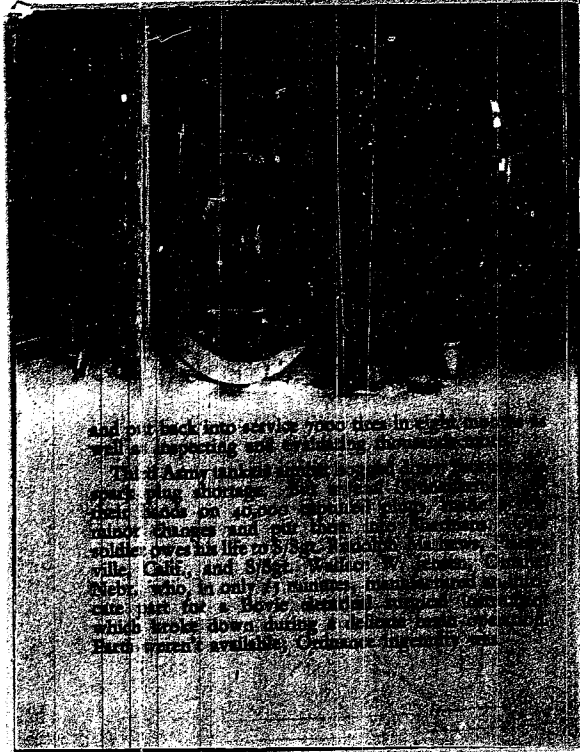
Roads were spotted with maintenance and tire patrols. In forward areas, Ordnance Intelligence teams scouted for new enemy weapons and inspected recently captured factories. Results of their findings now are being examined by experts in Washington and Aberdeen. These teams were made up of especially picked men like Sgt. Otto Hess, Brooklyn. Born in Germany, Hess used his knowledge of the country, language and people, as well as his civilian experience in commercial photography. He was of invaluable aid to his team.

Up ahead with armor and infantry, Bomb Disposal squads were busy pulling stingers from UXBs. Squads frequently helped combat engineer units remove land mines and neutralize road blocks. In several instances, Bomb Disposal men, working in advance of combat troops, including both infantry and engineers, removed fuses from demolition bombs to keep important bridges from being destroyed.

The 20th Bomb Disposal Squad deactivated shells and blockbusters from Normandy to the Cologne Plain. Like others, this squad was faced with unfamiliar problems. At Cherbourg, while inerting enemy demolition charges set in various parts of the city, the men became aware of the fact that Krauts had used French ammunition. Another harrowing situation arose in Normandy when the 20th defused two 2000-pound blockbusters lying on either side of a road while a column of mediums, whose vibrations threatened to set off the bombs' detonating mechanisms, rumbled over the road.

The 146th BD Squad distinguished itself in Italy, France and Germany. The rough jobs it handled typify the work of any Bomb Disposal Squad. It was all in the day's work when Capt. Andrew B. Nicholls, Ithaca, N. Y., and T/Sgt. James P. Kendall, Louisville, Ky., deactivated two "screaming meemie" rockets in a CP 100 yards from the German lines; when Sgt. Robert H. Cowan, North Canton, Ohio, and Cpl. Melvin J. Beck, Pittsburgh, removed several artillery shells from another CP while dodging enemy mortars; when Cpl. Leo M. Gagliatti, Brooklyn, was blown 30 feet into the air as his jeep went over a land mine and lived to tell the story.

With the 4th Armd. Div., which launched the incredible Third Army spearhead in April, 1945, was the 126th Maint. Bn. It literally was a garage on wheels, and used 16 tons of parts and supplies in its daily repairs. Forty Purple Heart awards were made to men of the 126th.



and put back into service 5700 times in eight months
well as inspecting and maintaining thousands of
The Army tanks have been equipped with
great big antennas. These antennas are
their heads on 4000 feet high. They can
detect changes and can detect the location
soldier. One of his life to Sgt. Harold Hillman
ville, Calif. and Sgt. Walter C. Smith, U.S.A.
Neb. who in only 27 minutes managed to
care just for a few seconds. The tank
which broke down during a battle. The
hadn't been available. Ordnance officials said

Lt. Anthony Pluth, Chisom, Minn., 156th Ord. Bn., worked out an added safety feature for armored vehicles. Sandbags were placed in a rack, fitted around the hull of a tank. In the event of a direct hit, the bags would explode Panzerfaust and bazooka shells before reaching the armor.

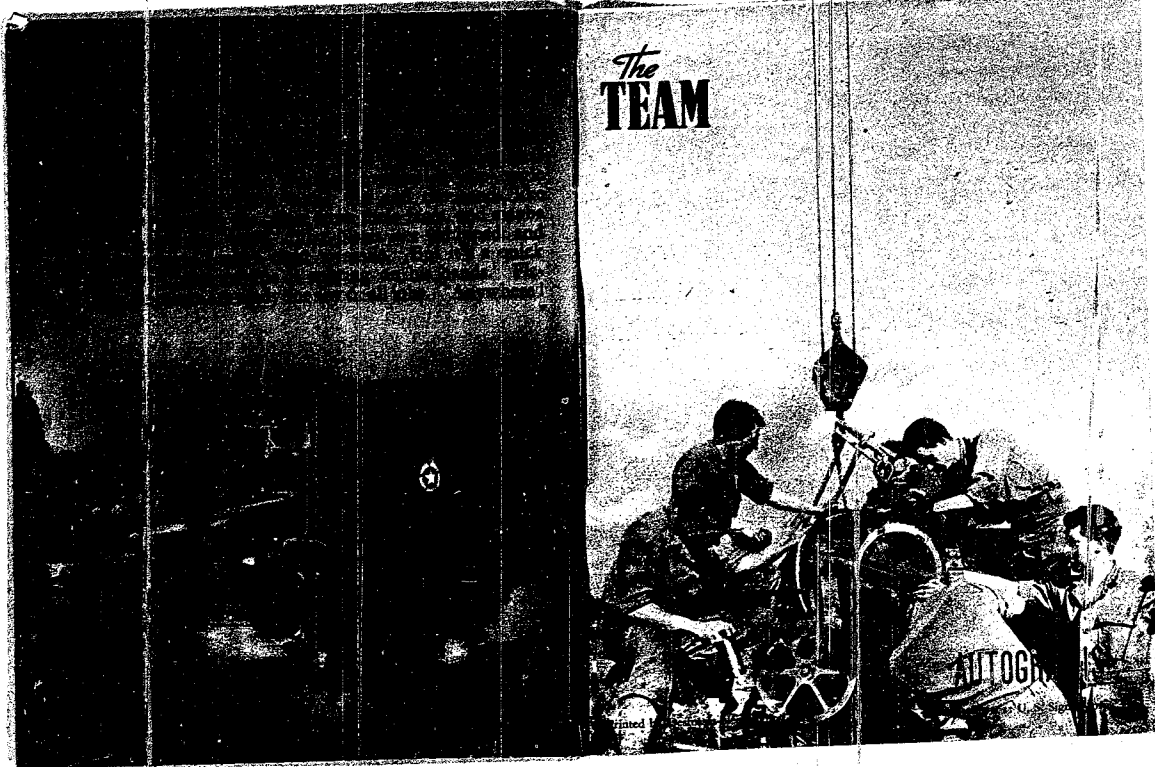
Carbine-carrying troops can thank two Ordnancemen, Sgts. Walter H. Walker, Winkle, Ohio, and "Slim" Wolff, Philadelphia, for a device which enables the weapon to be fired on full automatic.

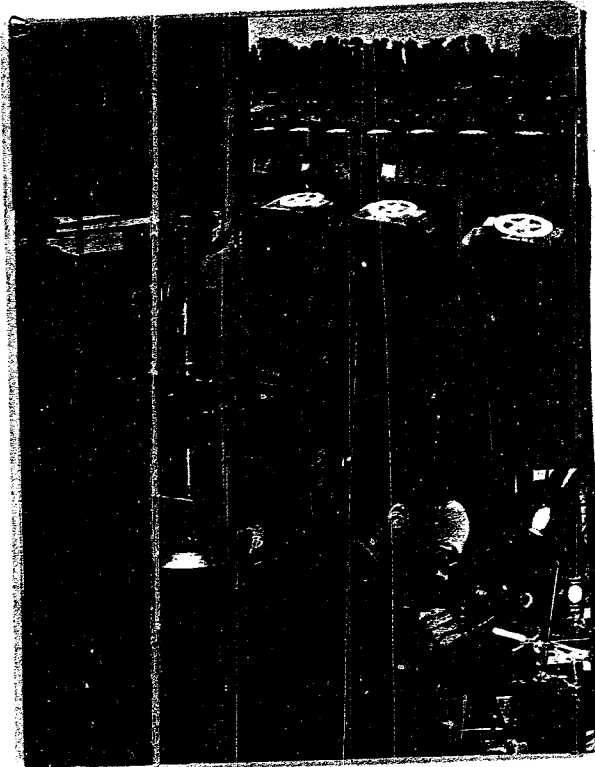
The 3212th Ordnance Small Arms Maint. Co. put 85 liberated Soviet Russian and 25 French civilians to work for the troops of a French regiment attached to Seventh Army. Performing 400 jobs a day, these mechanics, under Ordnance supervision, repaired more than 20,000 automatic and semi-automatic rifles and machine guns in two months.

The story of Ordnance's achievement in the ETO actually requires volumes; every one of the 150,000 Flaming Bombers—from Maj. Gen. Henry B. Saylor, Chief Ordnance Officer, to Pvt. Joe Smith, welder—has a story to tell.

The story each can relate varies in importance, but, according to Lt. Gen. Levin H. Campbell, Jr., U. S. Army Chief of Ordnance, "Collectively they turned out a mechanical and technical superiority for American troops which no other Army in the history of the world has ever equaled."

The
TEAM

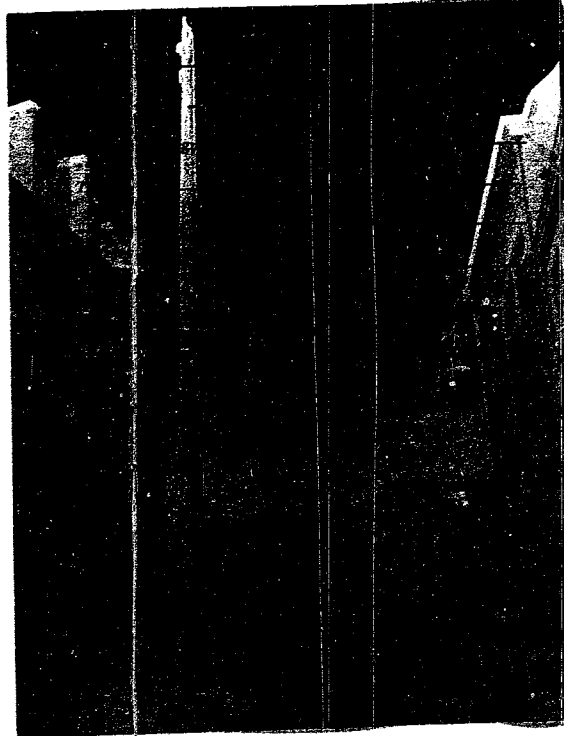






SERVISE

Story of the
Signal Corps



To tell the whole story of your devoted work in the European Theater of Operations, or to portray in words the unflinching spirit you have displayed in solving the arduous problems which confronted you, would be difficult indeed. This little book does not attempt so much. Here you will find only a few highlights from a story that is studded with heroism. But I sincerely hope that this account, brief though it be, will serve to pay some measure of the tribute due your labors here. And I must hope that even so thin a volume somehow will convey my gratitude for having been privileged to work among you.

Major General, U.S.A.
Chief Signal Officer

THE STORY OF

The Signal Corps

IT WAS D-Day and 210 minutes minus H-Hour when landing craft dropped two specially equipped Signal Corps DUKWs of the 36th Signal Bn. into the churning English Channel about 10 miles off the Normandy coast.

Through a hail of enemy mortar and artillery shells, the amphibious vehicles began their wallowing course toward the shoreline.

Signalmen in those DUKWs composed an information team whose mission was to furnish a fast and reliable radio channel direct from the beachhead to the headquarters command ship. The lives of men depended on this operation.

At H-Hour minus 15 minutes, still offshore, the team opened its radios and began sending messages. All went according to plan until 80 minutes later — the DUKWs' landing time — when the approach of the craft to the beach brought such heavy mortar and machine gun fire that neither equipment nor men could be landed.

Finally, at H plus three and a half hours, the DUKWs pushed ashore. Until late afternoon, the team remained in an exposed position, operating its radios without pause, amid the constant hail of enemy shells.

One of the DUKWs was knocked out, a man killed and two others wounded. But radio operation continued until dusk fell over the beaches. With darkness the enemy was pushed back and the team moved further inland to more sheltered positions.

For more than 15 hours, the one remaining DUKW and its Signal crew maintained a direct radio channel. S/Sgt. Leland R. Raborn, Greenwood, S.C.,

leader of this invasion outfit, and 15 team members received the Silver Star. A collar award was made posthumously to Pvt. Overt L. Halesch, Grand Rapids, N.D. Overt who carried the decoration was Cpl. Herbert J. Nelson, Pittsburg, Pa.; Cpl. Joseph A. Amato, Le Roy, N.Y.; Cpl. Robert E. Chapman, Rochester, N.Y.; Cpl. Kenneth Richardson, Marshalltown, Ia.; Pfc. Robert B. Bergie, Concessville, Pa.; Pfc. Fred W. Oble, Okla.; Pfc. Joseph W. Cunningham, Royal Oak, Mich.; Pfc. William O'Leary, Brooklyn; Pfc. Robert J. August, Lansing, Mich.; Pfc. James P. Mildenberger, Minneapolis, received the Purple Heart in addition to the Silver Star.

Sgt. Raborn and his team were but one of the numerous Signal Corp. "Talk Forces" engaged in hazardous and difficult assignments that grim day. These were Signalmen of the Shore Fire Control



dropped with the 82nd Airborne Div., and men of the Joint Assault Signal Companies who landed with the Engineer Special Brigades.

The over-all function of Signalmen who landed with the engineers was to furnish radio, telephone and messenger communications to the Beach Command and various shore elements. At H-Hour minus three, Signalmen of the 186th Joint Assault Signal Co., aboard LCIs, opened their radios to identical frequencies and formed a listening net to give the Brigade Commander instant control of the situation in event of last minute attack change.

First Lt. Richard M. Bollinger, Vancouver, Wash., was assistant radio officer in charge of one Signal section. He and his men were equipped with a 300 watt radio station. Their first assignment was to find a location for the station and open a point-to-point non-tactical radio channel between Utah Beach and Plymouth, England.

Under a deluge of German mortar fire, the men went ashore at 1035. After rushing across the beach, heading inland several hundred yards and crossing a large mine field, the group established radio communications while they dug in along the hedgerows. By 1200 hours, the section was furnishing communications to engineer battalions.

Throughout the initial phases of the beach landings, Shore Fire Control Teams carried out one of the most

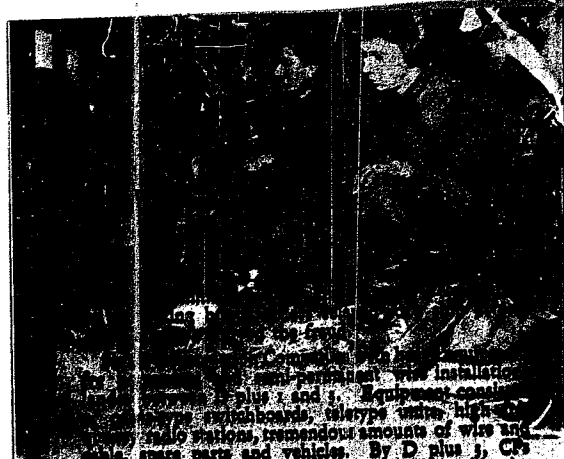
dangerous jobs allotted to Signal Corps personnel. Equipped with portable field sets, these men landed with assault troops. Their mission was to go inland, sometimes ahead of the infantry, and observe and correct battleship gun fires.

These teams were headed by one Army and one Navy Fire Control Officer whose messages were sent back by Signal Corps enlisted personnel who carried radio sets on their backs.

All volunteers, these Signalmen fully understood the danger connected with their work. Some shore parties were wiped out; many men sustained wounds, others were captured. Damage to equipment was extremely high, but this had been anticipated. Reserves of both men and equipment were available. The Navy's success in obliterating enemy strong points was largely due to the firing data radioed by the Signalmen.

Forty-eight per cent of the men became casualties and 60 per cent of the equipment was rendered useless. But, the message got through and the mission was successful.

As the enemy was pushed back, additional men and Signal equipment came ashore. Telephone lines were laid, switchboards installed and channels opened. These wire installations had been urgently needed. Radio transmissions, after the invasion was fully launched, were being increasingly intercepted by the Germans. Frequently Nazis tried to enter the voice nets which were furnishing lateral communications to



... personnel was installed
... plus 4 and 5. Equipment consisted
... switchboards, teletype units, high
... radio stations, tremendous amounts of wire and
... spare parts and vehicles. By D plus 3, CP's
... had been established on the beaches, complete with wire
... connections. One beach alone had 25 large switch-
boards in operation.

At one switchboard, operating just off the beach,
an operator was repeatedly blown from his position
by blasts from an exploding ammunition dump only
300 yards away. He returned to his position each time
to complete urgent calls and remained until the exploding
ammunition had severed all trunks to his board.

First Communications Zone Signal personnel arrived D plus 4 and immediately surveyed French and German communications facilities. The large exchange at Cherbourg was rehabilitated immediately following the fall of that port.

Science and Skill

GUIDE OPERATIONS

For more than 80 years, U.S. Army Signal Corps personnel has dedicated its lives and abilities to the famous and indomitable motto: "Get the message through." Destinies of millions of American soldiers depended upon the skill of Signalmen to live up to this proud pledge. Many Signalmen made the supreme sacrifice to assure its utter dependability.

From the days of smoke and wig-wag signals, through years of pioneering, research and constant development, the Signal Corps advanced with science to perfect the ultra-modern organization which today employs telephone, telegraph, radio and radar to direct and guide the operations of America's military forces.

The story of the Signal Corps' activity in the European Theater started long before actual U.S. entry into the war. In addition to the military attache in England, a Signal Officer was assigned to the Special Army Observer's staff in May, 1941. This officer kept U.S. military authorities abreast of significant Signal developments. Months before the war declaration,

plans were made for establishing a U.S. Army headquarters in England and for storage space of U.S. Signal equipment. This Signal officer also was concerned with plans for U.S. occupation of Iceland. During this same period, some 500 Signal Corps officers were in the U.K. receiving training from the British in electronics.

The U.S. declaration of war resulted in even closer British-American cooperation. On Jan. 3, 1942, U.S. Army headquarters was established as United States Army Forces in the British Isles, commonly called USAFBI.

Mid-year, 1942, the U.S. started the tremendous buildup of troop strength in the U.K. for the coming invasion of Africa and ultimately, Europe. From a few local switchboards and motor messengers, Signal communications expanded rapidly into a large and complex network of telephone, teletype, radio and messenger services. Telephone switchboards were installed in Ports, Base Sections, SOS Headquarters at Cheltenham and at ETO Headquarters in London. The main London switchboard consisted of 108 operating positions serving approximately 3500 subscribers.

Shortly before D-Day, teleprinter traffic on the SOS network reached a peak of 8,000,000 words per week and overseas traffic also reached a high of 5,000,000 groups per week. Radio facilities were readied for the invasion and Very High Frequency stations were

installed to provide communication facilities across the Channel.

Largest single Signal Corps task was the buildup of Signal supplies sufficient for the coming campaign as well as for normal consumption by troops stationed in the U.K. Thousands of tons of supplies and equipment required a storage and warehouse system on a scale greater than ever before conceived. Loading and shipping problems created situations without precedent. Approximately 320,000 tons of Signal equipment and supplies were sent from the U.S. to the European Theater.

The history of the Signal Corps in the ETO is a record of constant work around the clock, seven days a week. Wherever battles raged, wherever armored and infantry forces advanced, Signal Corps installed essential lines of communication. Signalmen dug holes, planted poles. They climbed poles, placed wire, repaired breaks. They operated so close to the front that Signal Corpsmen often were atop poles stringing wire as infantrymen plodded through the hedgerows.

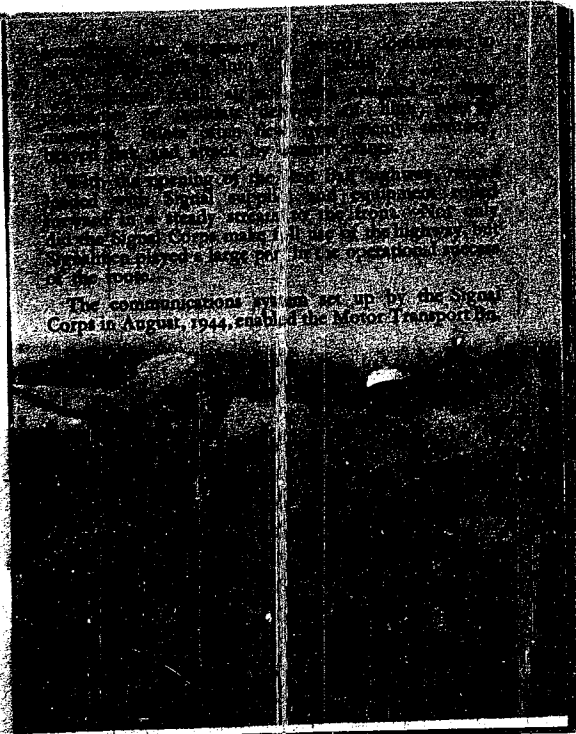
Working in mine fields, under constant enemy mortar fire and occasional strafing, wire teams of the 32nd Signal Construction Bn. placed 14 miles of Spiral-4 cable between 5th Engr. Special Brigade Hq. and a British unit on the left. This was accomplished in 48 hours although work was delayed because engineers, clearing a path through the mine fields, were slowed down by booby traps.

It was this organization and the 35th Signal Construction Bn. that supplied most of the wire communications for First Army across France, Belgium and into Germany. From D-Day to the end of June, 1944, First Army used more than 5000 miles of a single type of field wire. Many miles of German military and French civil communications were rehabilitated and hundreds of miles of new cable were installed as well.

The 215th Signal Depot Co. was typical of the supply and repair outfits which landed with assault troops. Men who first set up shop on the beaches were overwhelmed with the quantity and complexity of supplying and repairing Signal Corps equipment. More than 100 tons of equipment was First Army's daily requirement. The superior services of this outfit earned its members the Meritorious Unit Plaque.

Signal supplies, arriving on the Continent at the rate of 6000 tons weekly, were composed of approximately 31,000 separate items. Communication facilities were expanding and enemy action constantly interfered with established lines and circuits. Patrolling wire lines was a 24-hour a day job, necessitating prompt action when breaks were discovered.

While the work of installing new stations for radio and telephone was in progress, Signal Corps Motor Messenger Cos. filled the breach. Messengers traveled day and night through areas covered by exploding mines. Casualties were suffered, vehicles knocked out. It



to control the flow of traffic. Directing convoys to destinations was accomplished by a six-station radio net using SCR-399 radio sets, which were mounted in 2½-ton trucks. The 990th Signal Service Co. installed and operated the system until relieved by elements of the 3119th Signal Service Bn.

Signalmen

JUMP OFF WITH ASSAULT TROOPS

AS-THIRD Army joined First Army in the drive across France, the speed of the advance became so great that wire communications proved inadequate. To meet this problem, a system of Very High Frequency radio relay equipment was installed.

Months of planning and experiment went into the new system. Because, with this equipment, each station must be beamed or sighted like a rifle on the next station and communication is possible only when there are no terrain features obstructing the line of sight between antennae, a description of conditions which were expected to be found in France was gathered by the Office of the Chief Signal Officer months before the invasion. An area in Maine was chosen where water paths and elevation factors were nearly identical with those of Normandy.

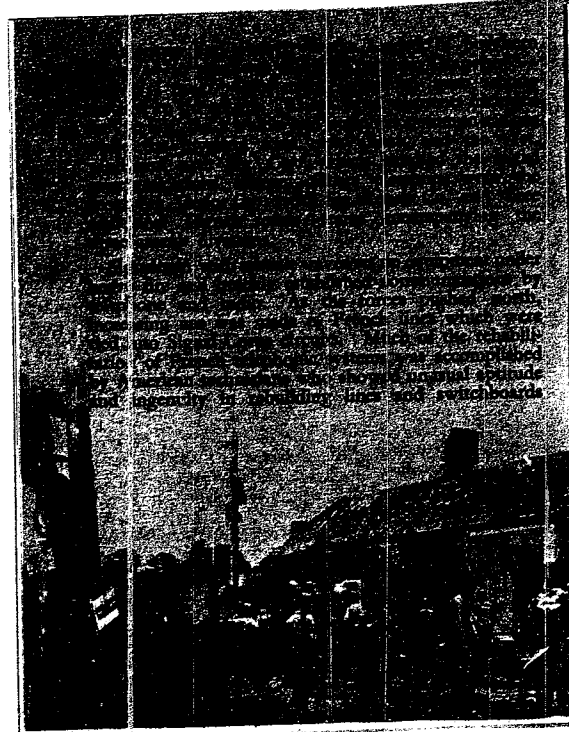
As a result of these experiments and experience gained in North Africa, the radio relay link system was developed to the point where it provided four tele-

printer circuits in addition to three radio telephone circuits. The system proved excellent in providing communications for the rapid advance despite the fact that transmissions were subject to enemy reception.

The march across France was a nightmare to the hard-pressed technicians. The 143rd Armd. Sig. Co. with the 3rd Armd. Div. built more than 1200 miles of wire lines by the time the Argentan-Falaise gap was closed. In the sweep across France, these Signalmen handled an average of 1000 radio and messenger messages daily. Mileage rolled up by the Signal crews was eight to 10 times that covered by the division in attack.

To save time, wires were strung along hedges and through fences. In more open country lines were built of a type known as "rapid pole line constructions," using small poles made of 2 x 4 timber which didn't require digging large holes for placement. Temporary lines were strung on lance poles, even tent poles.

When the 80th Inf. Div. established the initial Moselle River bridgehead against some of the stiffest opposition encountered in the entire battle of France, Signalmen used assault boats to reel wire across the flooded river. Clamping wires to the piers of a blasted bridge, Signalmen tied cables to the initial strands installed above the raging waters by engineers. This work was accomplished under constant artillery fire by the enemy who tried desperately to knock out the bridge.



partially destroyed by bombs, land warfare and German demolitions.

Probably the first Signalman to enter Paris was Sgt. Earl J. Spoon, Lamont, Okla. Driving a jeep carrying a powerful two-way radio (SCR-193), Sgt. Spoon accompanied Col. Otto M. Low, First Army Intelligence Officer. Their job was to report progress of operations to First Army headquarters.

Despite constant sniper fire, Sgt. Spoon was transmitting the required information from high ground adjoining the St. Lazaire railway station within 30 minutes of his entry into the capital.

Same day, Maj. Lloyd C. Sigmon, Los Angeles, radio engineer on the staff of the Chief Signal Officer, and Lt. (then M/Sgt.) Lavon M. Young, Abilene, Tex., made a preliminary survey of communication facilities in the city. Free French forces had seized radio stations and telephone exchanges, thereby limiting damage the Germans had hoped to inflict.

By the end of 1944, the American wire system comprised approximately 3,500 long distance underground cable circuits, rehabilitated from the French. These totaled 125,000 circuit miles or 250,000 wire miles. The Signal Corps also installed 1200 miles of new pole lines constituting 20,000 miles of open wire.

By V-E Day, 1,916,187 wire miles of French cable and 30,968 wire miles of French open wire pole lines

had been rehabilitated. The Signal Corps had constructed 2995 miles of open wire pole lines, constituting 52,778 miles of wire.

In addition, 12,968 miles of pole lines were rehabilitated for use of the Military Railway Service for operation control of rail movements. This constituted 51,872 wire miles. Three pole line systems were constructed for the Military Pipe Line Service, comprising 3997 miles of construction and 4652 miles of wire.

Working in conjunction with French and Belgian communications agencies, the entire long lines communication system was rehabilitated, in many cases substituting American repeater equipment for destroyed stations.

The main axis of communications was the Posts, Telegraph and Telephone cable system from Cherbourg to Paris and lines to Nancy and Metz, a distance of 700 miles.

The Signal Corps was directly concerned in resuming wire communications along the vast network of continental railways. In the west, this system linked Cherbourg, Le Havre, Rennes, Le Mans and Orleans with Paris; in the east, it kept pace with advancing American forces, establishing communications for railway supply lines to Dijon, Luxembourg, Aachen, Antwerp, Lille and Amlens.

The American Military Communications Network was centered at Paris where the local military telephone







system handled about 25,000 calls daily. A long distance switchboard handled 5000 every 24 hours.

This wire system was interconnected with 740 underground cable circuits totaling 85,000 miles. The British operated a parallel system in Northern France and Belgium, thus completely integrating Allied communication facilities for each sector.

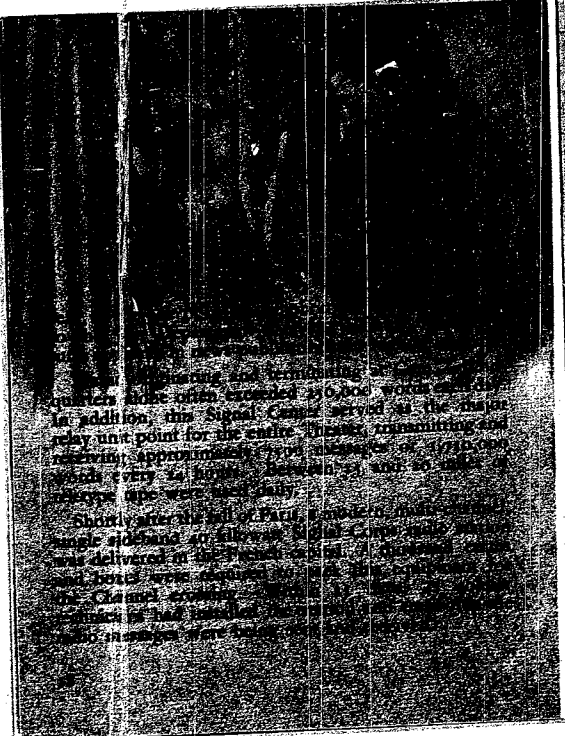
Pictures

NO WORDS CAN DESCRIBE

THE Signal Corps communications system expanded steadily. With the establishment of Paris as headquarters of the Communications Zone, a Signal Center was opened which handled a volume of military traffic second only to the War Department. The center was installed in a former German blockhouse, with walls of reinforced concrete 10 feet thick. Using 123 pieces of major equipment and operating 82 teletype and 13 radio circuits, this installation interchanged approximately 1000 messages daily with the War Department alone.

Of the 50,000 messages handled each week, about 95 per cent were radio-teletype and teletype, the remainder being transmitted and received by high-speed radio, manual radio and courier. An even greater volume was handled direct by the Signal Dispatch Service without passing through the Signal Center.

Using the same channels over which messages were



Direct hookups with the War Department, London and the Signal Corps' world-wide radio communications system enabled the Signal Center to transmit messages to any point Allied forces were operating throughout the world.

Since D plus 38 when the first Signal Corps Message Center Wac, Cpl. Aurelie Durkin, Danbury, Conn., landed in Normandy, Wacs played an increasingly important part in speeding messages from one vital center to another. Their presence relieved hundreds of men for more advanced echelon work.

The 3341st Signal Service Bn., consisting of skilled messengers and operators, was the first activated women's battalion in the Army. Women worked as telephone operators, radio operators, cryptographers, draftsmen, typists, clerks and message center couriers.

The most complete and graphic records of World War II were made by members of the Signal Corps who went out with lens and gun to cover the story of the army's participation in the liberation of Europe.

Camermen went into battle by parachute and glider, they rode on tanks, trudged on foot with the infantry. Wherever man and machines were in battle, these Signal Corpsmen clicked their cameras to provide pictures no words could describe.

Members of the 165th Sig. Photographic Co. made the initial landings with paratroopers in Normandy

and operated with advanced elements of First Army in the sweep across France, Belgium and Germany. Men of this outfit won 20 Bronze Stars, one Silver Star and a Croix de Guerre in addition to numerous Purple Heart awards. The company was presented with the Unit Citation for Meritorious Service.

Photographer Cpl. Ernest B. Braun, Covina, Calif., and his driver, Pfc Ivan "The Terrible" Babcock, Ludington, Mich., were pinned down with a 9th Inf. Div. platoon during a German counter-attack. Crawling back to where they had left their jeep, the two men set out to obtain help. Near Malmedy, they spotted a number of men gathered around some tanks at a crossroads. "Gee, those guys are wearing funny helmets," remarked Babcock. "They're Krauts, let's go!" was Braun's answer. Help was obtained from the 7th Armd. Div. and the beleaguered platoon was relieved.

There were men like Pvt. Herbert J. Stark, New York City, who landed at Normandy with a Ranger Assault Battalion. When the unit was being swept with murderous machine gun fire and his camera had been damaged beyond use, the photographer snatched a rifle from the body of a dead German and wiped out three machine gun nests.

The mission of a Signal Photo Company was to procure still and motion pictures for training and historical purposes and for public release. The teams usually went out in pairs, consisting of a movie cameraman and a still photographer.

Sgt. Reuben A. Weiner, Los Angeles, not only had a penchant for getting into the fighting, but also developed a technique for alternately shooting with camera and gun. While on a reconnaissance mission with 7th Armd. Div., Weiner reached the center of a German town with snipers firing from all sides. He blazed away with a machine gun, then, during a momentary lull, discovered he was the only living man in the street. All others had taken shelter in the houses.

On another mission, Weiner was with assault troops storming Geigan. Seeking a more advantageous point to get motion pictures of American artillery, Weiner, accompanied by Cpl. Howard Vetrane, Philadelphia, still cameraman, discovered three Germans in foxholes. When the cameramen fired shots over the foxholes, two of the Germans came out, hands over heads. The third tried to escape and was dropped by Weiner's .45.



Sgt. Thomas J. Maloney, Ishpeming, Mich., and Peter J. Petrency, Youngstown, Ohio, landed with the 4th Inf. Div. on D-Day at Utah Beach. Debarking in 15 feet of water, the pair swam to shore, towing their equipment despite intense enemy mortar and machine gun fire. Because their equipment was water-soaked, they fought the first few hours as infantrymen. Maloney later was awarded the Bronze Star.

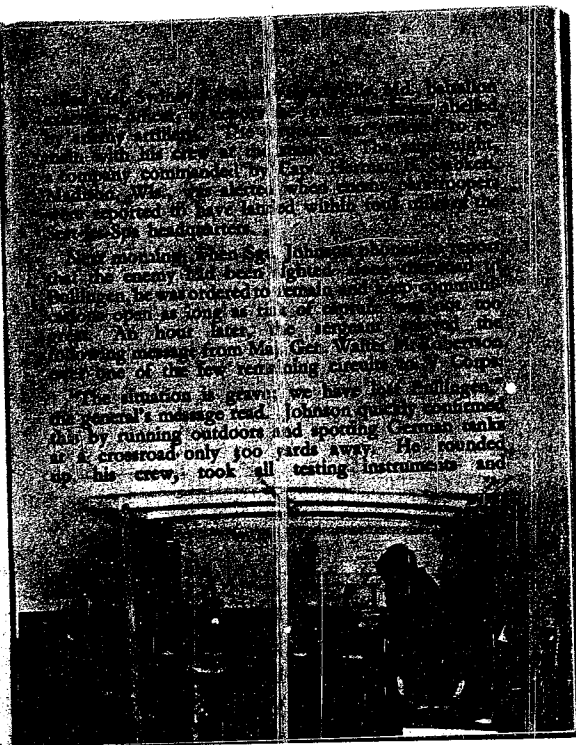
S/Sgt. Joseph W. Le Gault, Los Angeles, came in with the 2nd Airborne Div., floating to earth by parachute two and a half hours before H-Hour. He injured a knee in making the landing and barely had time to destroy his equipment before being captured. Later, he was liberated from a hospital in Cherbourg.

BULGE:

Communications NEVER FAILED

THE long wait in eastern Belgium from early September until mid-December was marked by the rehabilitation of several underground cables from Liege to La Calamino on the German border and the cable from Liege to Verviers. This work was under the supervision of S/Sgt. Charles L. Andes, Birdsboro, Pa., whose prowess as a cable splicer was a feature of the remarkable rehabilitation record of French and Belgian cable lines throughout the campaign.

Sgt. Raymond A. Johnson, Chicago, was manning a test station at Bullingen Dec. 16, 1944, when he



escaped by a back street with the enemy in pursuit.

During the German breakthrough, construction battalions continually were pressed to re-establish communications. Men suffered from the extreme cold and the pressure of fighting through snow and ice to their objectives. Through January and February, under most trying conditions, the Armies never lost communications and the eventual turning point of the Nazi drive was due, in part, to the excellent communications which enabled the command to keep in constant touch with field units.

Scattered units under key non-coms labored almost around the clock. Work was slowed by mine fields through which wire had to be laid. Casualties occurred, but the job went on. Lines were being constructed and put into operation at unprecedented speed as the Germans were driven back to their native soil.

One of the most decorated Signal Corps outfits was the 46th Sig. Bn., serving with V Corps, First Army. From D-Day until April 30, 1945, its men received 216 awards, including 115 Bronze Stars, two Oak Leaf Clusters to the Bronze Star, 15 Silver Stars, one Legion of Merit, 62 Purple Hearts, one Oak Leaf Cluster to the Purple Heart, 15 Certificates of Merit and five Croix de Guerre Medals.

The first American cable crossed the Rhine River at Remagen shortly after First Army captured the bridge. The sudden crossing of the Rhine made cable communications immediately essential, but Signal supplies

were not readily available. Fortunately, a large quantity of captured German cables had been stored and could be used for such an emergency. By insulating the cable in record time, S/Sgt. James L. Lewis, Sweetwater, Ala., and members of his team had it ready within a few hours.

First Lt. James E. Mulliken, Birmingham, Ala., and a crew of 16 men moved to the river and immediately set to work. Capt. Slebka previously had located a termination on the west bank of the Rhine, then crossed over by ferry to establish the other terminal point.

Because no boats were available, Capt. Slebka decided to take copper wire across on the ferry and allow it to drift downstream to the point of the cable crossing, then pull the heavy cable across. This was accomplished after much difficulty due to the debris and wreckage in the river. Several times, work was interrupted by German planes attempting to knock out the bridge. During the entire operation, German artillery shelled railroad and ponton bridges across the river.

Five additional submarine cables were placed across the Rhine between Bonn and Andernach. On one occasion a sunken barge allowed downstream and rested on the cable at Remagen, but no internal trouble developed. Signal Corpsmen entered the town of Halle with infantry units April 17 to capture eight German officers and assorted Nazi Signal personnel and took over the German switchboards.

First/Sgt. George C. Vaupel, Irvington, N.J., entered the building of the local telephone exchange with pistol drawn and was greeted by the German officers ready to surrender. Vaupel had come to Halle as a member of the advance party of the 3rd Sig. Service Bn. under command of Capt. Casimer J. Halicki, Maroa, Ill., to investigate the communication system.

The Signalmen passed members of the infantry and engaged in street fighting before locating the telephone building. Operators still were at their positions, sending the last German messages telling of the fall of the town. Other members of the group included First Lt. Wilburt W. Royson, Irvington, N.J.; T/Sgt. Eugene Smith, Lexington, Ky.; Pfc William E. Dooley, Lewistown, Pa.; Pfc William J. Kingery, Cincinnati; Pfc Raymond E. Greulick, Perrysburg, O.

On another occasion, 15 members of the 569th Sig. Co., 69th Div., held off an entire German garrison for one and a half hours when they entered the city of Weissenfels to establish communications. These wire crewmen were under the impression that the 9th Armcd. Div. already had captured the town. Actually, the 9th had by-passed Weissenfels.

On the outskirts of the city, three enemy machine gunners opened up on the Signalmen who immediately returned the fire. After cleaning out the machine gun nests, this crew was subjected to sniper fire for 90 minutes. One sniper was picked off by

Cpl. Robert L. Coval, Zionsville, Ind. The group, under Lt. Robert Hoelke, Pittsburgh, repelled several small-scale attacks before the 27th Inf. Regt. arrived to clear out the town and allow the Signalmen to establish communication lines.

Then there were the members of a wire team from Co. B, 56th Sig. Bn., headed by Sgt. Donald P. Schulte, Ellsworth, Wis., who were called upon to handle more than they bargained for when they were attached to the 102nd Cavalry Group in March, 1945.

They crossed the Ruer River and joined the cavalry outfit in Germany, only 2000 yards from the main lines. At this time, the Americans were advancing so rapidly that it was impossible to maintain communications by use of land wires so the wire team established a radio link to division headquarters. When the crew members took up temporary billets in Schwerein, they were the only Americans in the town except for kitchen personnel of the 102nd and five men operating the radio link. As German soldiers in civilian clothes were surrendering, the task of searching and guarding the prisoners fell to the wire team.

As the advance continued, wire couldn't be rushed forward fast enough so this team constructed a line from the next town to the radio link. Once, the wire team's trucks were halted to allow cavalrymen to clean out a pocket of 14 Tiger tanks which were gasless but still holding out. Crewmen were busy setting up the radio

link when shells landed in the area. It later was discovered that this was American artillery plastering a German convoy jammed bumper to bumper on the road ahead.

Throughout the Reich, the use of German underground cables greatly enhanced the work of Signal Corps. Nazi civilians sometimes were put to work, but more often the trained GI cable splicers and technicians solved the mysteries of the foreign communication system and adapted it for Allied use.

"Get the Message Through"

When Allied forces began their final advance across Germany, the course of operations caused single Armies to spread over hundreds of miles of territory. The Signal Corps' intricate system of communications was extended more than ever before.

During these operations, First Army staff officers were in constant touch with all activities by high-power radio stations capable of transmitting and receiving messages over distances of more than 100 miles. Stations were mounted on jeeps and operated by the 17th Sig. Bn. As American lines advanced, liaison officers went forward to maintain a running description of the fighting. Messages were encoded by radio operators and transmitted to CPs.

The high antennae carried with jeep radio stations

Sgt. Obey D. Johnson, Forest Hill, La., was in the party with Maj. Gen. Maurice Rose, 3rd Armd. Div. CG, when the general was killed as he attempted to surrender. Previously, Johnson, along with Pvt. Everett Wick, Louisville, Ky., was at Remagen when the first crossing of the Rhine was achieved. Their messages brought the reinforcements that guaranteed the holding of this vital bridgehead.

One of the most interesting developments in field radio was the construction of a powerful 60 kilowatt mobile radio station. Called "Sigcircus," this mobile station had all the facilities of a fixed station of comparable power and was completely self-sufficient. It was equipped with broadcast and radio facsimile transmission facilities in addition to the normal message-handling radioteletype channels. The station could also make recordings on wire, film and disc and carried its own Signal center complete with radio teletypes for simultaneous sending and receiving between Europe and the U.S.

When the landing barges of the Allied forces scraped the world-famed Riviera beaches on D-Day, Aug. 15, 1944, invasion troops found a basic system of radio and telephone communication installed and in operation.

This communication network was established by Signalmen of an Airborne Signal battalion who landed by parachute and glider prior to H-Hour. Lt. Col. William L. James, Little Rock, Ark., a battalion com-

mandet, was in one of the first gliders to take off on this invasion. His aircraft was over the Mediterranean when the tow rope broke away from the skytrain and the glider crashed into the sea.

After being in the water nearly two hours, the colonel and his men were rescued, then returned to Italy. Knowing that the third series of gliders had not left the airfield, Col. James collected his men, hitch-hiked to the field and arrived just in time to make the hop.

The colonel's second glider also was doomed to crash. It reached its destination, however, before tangling with a tree. Already the possessor of the Legion of Merit, Col. James received the Bronze Star Medal for his outstanding action near Les Arce, France, during the airborne invasion of Southern France.

In addition to its primary mission, the Signal Corps also was charged with the responsibility of maintaining and repairing the equipment necessary to do the job, along with Signal Intelligence work and the processing of V-mail.

The tremendous task of repair and maintenance of Signal Corps radio, telephone, teletype, cryptographic, radar and other types of equipment demanded that repair companies operate a system of workshops at Signal Depots as well as send crews of skilled technicians out into the field to keep front line equipment functioning. Thousands of Signal Corpsmen, many of whom came

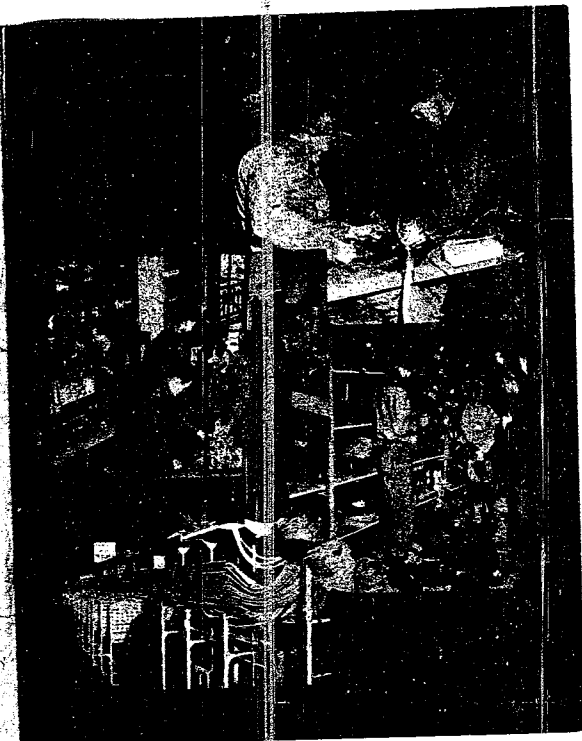
from similar jobs in civilian life, kept the equipment working.

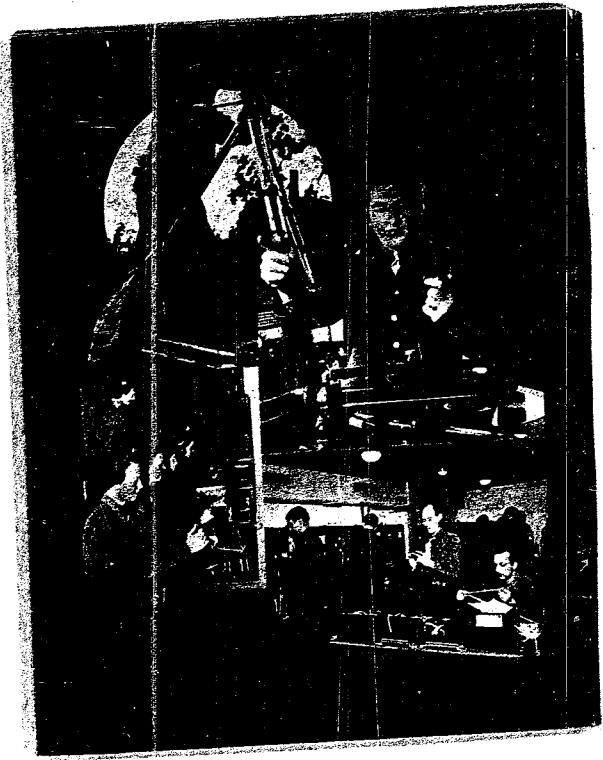
Signal Intelligence, using the latest developments in radio, intercepted enemy transmissions and obtained information invaluable to field commanders in their tactical planning.

Little known to the millions of GIs and civilians using the V-mail service was the fact that the Signal Corps was directly responsible for the laboratory processing of this handy form of personal mail. Working with the Army Postal Service, Signal Corps V-mail laboratories were set up in London, France and Iceland and rapidly photographed and printed incoming and outgoing V-mail on a scale that reached several million individual letters per day.

The success of American air and armored forces, the close liaison that carried all troops to victory was due in a large measure to superior Signal Corps equipment, developed specially for each branch and arm of the service.

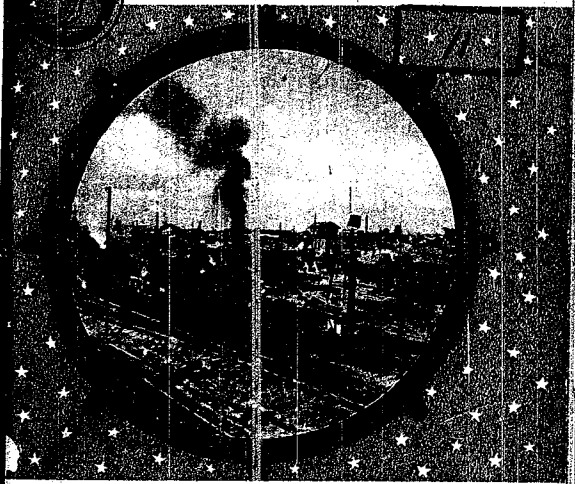
The story of the Signal Corps activity in the European Theater is rich in achievement. Ever alongside of the paratrooper, assaulting infantryman and armored crews, the Signaller was always on the job accomplishing his mission. Regardless of the odds, the Signal Corps always could be depended upon to "Get The Message Through."





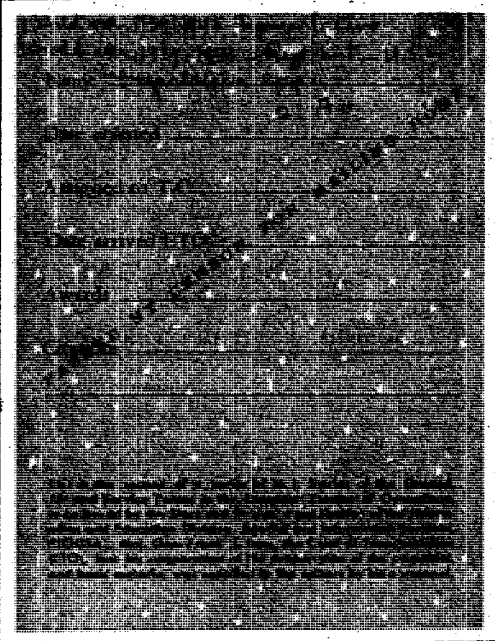
Re: Army Transportation Corps

**DESTINATION
— BERLIN!**



THE TRANSPORTATION CORPS
will furnish the necessary transportation!

C. W. 7



It is with pride and emotion that I endorse this story of the Transportation Corps in the European Theater of Operations. This story is your story; it is the story of your aching muscles, long and arduous hours of unsung labor, and your devotion to duty. It is the story of the unsung stevedore working in the holds and on the quay sides. It is the story of the weary truck driver with his load of precious cargo moving to the front along strange roads with lights blacked out. It is the story of the duck driver, ferrying vital supplies amid mine-infested waters.

It is the story of train and engine crews moving over unknown paths to strange destinations with that same spirit the American railroad man has shown for generations. It is the story of the weary but alert dispatcher, humble section hand, switchman and dispatch rider, each doing a vital part.

It is the story of the back shop, round house and harbor craft repair crews: grimy, faithful, essential. It is the story of tug boat crews in strange and dangerous waters, and the story of the RTD at outlying camps, control points, and stations. It is the story of men and women working long and arduous hours at desks throughout the Theater. In short, it is your story; it is a tribute to you, and you may well take pride in it.

Let it serve to inspire you to still greater efforts. The sole reason for the existence of the Transportation Corps is to carry to the fighting man at the front what he needs. If we do that, we will have accomplished our mission. If we fail, we will not have kept the faith. Let each of us remember that our individual efforts are capable of swelling into a stream of men and supplies moving steadily and relentlessly to the front. Let us resolve to increase constantly this stream until Victory is ours and until we return to our homes. Carry ever in your hearts our slogan that "The Transportation Corps will furnish the necessary transportation."

Frank E. B...
Major General, U.S. Army
Chief of Transportation

45X803

1. No subject.

OCTOBER 25, 1944: Infantry Replacement Pvt. Paul Shimer of Chambersburg, Pa., adjusted his field equipment, turned for a last glimpse of England, straightened, and walked to the waiting LSI.

When he approached the gangplank for his cross-channel journey, Sgt. Murray Ley of the 14th Port pulled him aside to point out that he was the 1,000,000th Yankee embarked from Southampton since D-Day.

Upon arrival at Cherbourg, Shimer's outfit boarded the "Twentieth Century Flyer," pride of the 72nd Railway Operating Bn. By nightfall it was well on its way to the front.

At an advanced railhead a fleet of trucks met the "Flyer." Shimer jumped into the nearest. It was an old "6x6." Soon the last lap was over and Shimer and his buddies were engaging the Germans.

Shimer's trek is essentially the story of the Transportation Corps. Speeding on the seas, roaring on the rails, rushing down the highways, the TC knows every corner of the European Theater of Operations and then some:

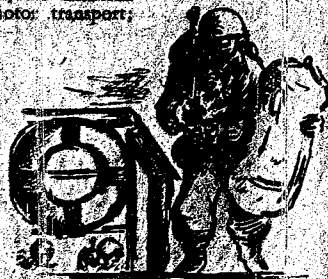
the stifling Persian and African deserts, the snow-laden Elbrus Mountains, the ice-packed Klondike and Yukon, the back country of Australia, the tropical southwest Pacific, the jungles of Burma, the farthest parts of China.

Although June 6 always will signify its start, in reality the invasion was launched when the first boatload of Yanks left New York Harbor.

Departure from the U.S.A. likewise marked the beginning of the TC's job. Prior to D-Day that job fell into three classes: movements of men and material to the United Kingdom, within the UK, and out of the UK.

There were hundreds of preparatory matters and projects: the unloading of millions of soldiers and tons of cargo in English ports; the direction of traffic—rail and motor transport; training at Seamills; railroad car assembling and locomotive conditioning; barge building at Totnes; supervising ports and marshalling areas; pre-stowing of vessels.

Then came the all-important planning for the operation on the continent—rail, motor transport and marine.



A TEXAN RUNS THE SHOW

SUPERVISING the UK operation was Maj. Gen. Frank S. Ross of El Paso, Tex., who, as a colonel, flew to England on May 12, 1942 to take over the infant set-up which presently was to become a continental organization.

Guiding all movements of water, motor and rail was the RTO with the red brassard of the TC on his left arm—the Railway Traffic Officer. To men who had just come 3000 miles to a foreign country, the presence of the US-RTO was most welcome. It was his task to make sure that Yanks didn't get lost in the web of British railways, for there was always one guy out of a trainful who would end up in Liverpool asking, "Is this Edinburgh?" Later, in June 1944, Port Per-



sonnel, brothers to the RTO, embarked thousands of craft loads at the hards. The RTO was a familiar figure at the Marshalling Areas. Yanks met him again at Cherbourg, St. Lo, Paris and...

D-Day dawned and the greatest transportation spectacle in all history unfolded. Toward the beaches of France moved a mass of seacraft of all types carrying trucks of every description and railroad equipment sufficient to operate any Class I railroad in America.

The invasion was on!

THE BEGINNING OF TC

Now, time out to pick up the background of the TC! On March 9, 1942 the Transportation Service had been set up as a new division of the Services of Supply, and on July 31, 1942 the Transportation Service became the Transportation Corps.

All battalions assigned to railway transportation in the Corps of Engineers had been transferred to the Transportation Corps on Nov. 16, 1942, completing centralization of transportation functions. But Motor Transport had been a shifting service operation between the Quartermaster Corps and Transportation until July 11, 1943, when the TC—already developed into one of the largest of the Army's seven technical services—took over its operation.

THE *Meris* came, but Pvt. Bob Shafer and his 186th Port Co. buddies went on working. Time didn't count. Boxes of ammunition did. It was on the fourth day when the last ammo load had started for the beaches that enemy flak knocked Bob out. As he was placed on the DUKW with its precious cargo, the men of the 186th moved to another ship.

Bob says his Purple Heart belongs to the 186th.

Without the loads from the ships there would have been no "battle of the beaches." Battles depend on ammunition, food, and POL—petrol, oil, lubricants. The men of the port battalions, DUKW units and harbor craft gangs knew this as they shoved off early on June 6.

Behind the invasion headlines lay the "miracle" of the Normandy beaches. Miracle? No! Just blood and sweat. No miracle to the port battalion men who unloaded tons upon tons of material for the D-Day build-up! No miracle to that single battalion which worked 102 straight days and nights without time off! No miracle to another, which in a single night unloaded 1226 tons of hellish cargo!



But if it was a miracle, the men of the 334th Harbor Craft Co. made it permanent. During August 1944 alone they performed 1403 channel operations. These army sailors towed 150 vessels and 288 barges into harbors, made 117 ferry trips, and threw in five salvage expeditions for good measure.

The men who joined the June 6 armada had a UK background, and they also had mounted the North African invasion in the fall of 1942. As members of major U.S. port installations at Southampton, Bristol, Belfast, Glasgow and Liverpool, together with their respective subports, they had learned in the school of grimy sweat and aching muscles, for these ports handled the huge influx of men and cargo necessary for the pre-invasion build-up.

Once the invasion started, the supply problem on the beaches was second in importance only to the military effort to hack out the initial beachhead. The Germans reasoned that if they could choke the flow of our equipment to the continent, we would fall easy prey to counter-attack. So the Nazis hung on to the ports.

The 11th Port arrived in Normandy June 8. That unit was in reality a combat outfit, trained for fighting, chosen to carry out the TC's role in the initial landings. The vast Allied army still was exclusively dependent upon supplies that could be hauled across the beaches. To win the Supply Battle of the Beaches, it took the grit and nerve of the 11th Port and their willingness to work long hours to help weary soldiers in the struggle to enlarge the beachhead.

THE KRAUTS CLUNG TO CHERBOURG

CHERBOURG was our first goal. Its capture was delayed by stubborn German defense. Once it was taken, the burden on the beaches was not immediately relieved. The Germans had wrecked the port's installations. Water and land mines were a constant menace. Until the harbor could be de-mined and repaired there could be no relief for the beaches.

Other problems had to be faced. In peacetime, the port had been geared to passenger traffic rather than cargo. Now that had to be changed. Navy salvage crews and engineer gangs had to repair enemy demoli-

tions and adapt damaged installations to accommodate the ships that eventually would arrive. While this was being done the beaches continued to handle all the men and material flowing to the continent.

The weather was rotten all through June. On June 20 all hell broke loose in the channel. For three days while a storm raged the Allied supply line was knocked into a cocked hat. The DUKWs got off the waves. Heading out from the beaches, the piers wove and then buckled like accordions. Ships foundered. Derelict craft jammed the beaches. Vessels were pounded to pieces and capsized. Giant causeways, which had been towed across the channel in sections, were twisted beyond repair. When it was over our men had as big a mess to clean up as they had had in the early days after D-Day. The artificial harbor installations were wrecked, the sands were strewn with debris of smashed barges, landing craft and vehicles. But the men pitched in, and within a few days things were shipshape again.

Whatever the job was TC men attached to the engineer shore brigades tackled it.

When word arrived that a crewless ship was adrift in a mine field, W-O John Potter of East Windsor, Ont., Sgt. Joe Kohler of Ebenezer, N.Y., and Cpl. Henry Botwin of Houston, Tex., volunteered to save the craft. They did.

When the engineers lacked sappers to clear a working space for unloading, TC men cleaned up the beach space.

Under constant enemy fire from the top of a cliff, they helped the engineers remove bodies, wrecked vehicles and landing craft; and then they unloaded ships and got more cargo moving to the front lines.

There were no piers, only ships anchored in deep water far from shore. Stevedores from port battalions worked in the holds of the vessels, unloading supplies into landing craft, DUKWs, barges. The Navy piloted the landing craft into shore, while TC men from amphibian truck companies drove the barges, and "sailjers" of the harbor craft companies towed the barges to shore.

Other men from the port battalions unloaded the craft on the shore, stacked the stuff, reloaded it onto 2½ ton trucks, and the trucks sped off to the dumps.

It was a nightmare to the men running the beaches. The swing shift found it difficult to determine the location of vessels. To get cargo moving, DUKW drivers often were instructed to go out and unload any ship



standing close by. They did—heedless of danger.

Enemy action took its toll. For example, five men of a single unit (Sgt. John Souza, Cpl. Don Nelson, Cpl. Mahlen Corson, Cpl. Jim Parnham and Pfc Johnny Porter) were injured. But, before their Purple Hearts arrived, they were back on the job.

DUKWs were sunk when struck by submerged objects, or blown up by mines—and they were hard to handle.

By the time Cherbourg was captured June 27, tens of thousands of tons had been unloaded. *The first phase of the supply battle of the beaches was won.*

THE GERMANS MISCALCULATED

It took a number of weeks before Cherbourg could operate, and when ships did file into the harbor, operations were on a small but gradually rising scale. It had been anticipated that Cherbourg's tonnage load would be shared by the other ports—Brest, Le Havre, Rouen, St. Malo, Calais, Antwerp.

But the only points defended to the bitter end were the ports. For crucial weeks the enemy kept them out of our hands, and when the harbors finally fell, all but Antwerp were severely damaged. The Germans were sure that with only one major port and two strips of beach we couldn't supply an army of the mammoth size needed to sweep them out of Fortress Europe.

Until the first piers were rebuilt in Cherbourg, unloading operations were carried on in pretty much the

same way as they had been on the beaches. Veteran handlers like Sgt. Floyd Trotter of Portsmouth, Va., boosted the totals. Landing craft weren't used as much as at the beaches; the bulk of the cargo was dumped into DUKWs and barges. Work was twenty-four hours a day in twelve-hour shifts, seven days a week—no days off!

Unloading the ships, loading the trucks and flatcars often meant much more than twelve hours for the men of the port battalions. On the breakwater and on ships anchored in the harbor, they often spent another two hours going to and from work. Sometimes they were stranded aboard the vessels when ferry craft were delayed. The less experienced worked with oldtimers like the 109 men of 392nd Port Bn., all in their fourth year of foreign service, who had sweated out homesickness in Iceland and England long before Cherbourg.

The men of the harbor craft companies had a big hand in making Cherbourg a success. Harbor craft companies are an invention of this war and this theater. The first six companies were activated at the Charleston POE in May 1943. During the last war the Army depended on French civilian tugboats, but this time the enemy made that impossible. The Army had foreseen this situation and was prepared.

This is typical of what these companies were up against at Cherbourg: the crew of one ST-75 in a July 18 convoy from Southampton to Cherbourg was made up of men from the 328th and 335th Harbor Craft Cos. In a dense fog this ST-75 and five other boats became

separated from the convoy 'about midnight.' Fired on when he approached the shore on the following morning, the ST-75's ship's master set a course to the north. Before he could clear the Channel Isles, enemy shore batteries opened fire.

The first round took off the foremast. Seven of the crew went overboard. One soldier—sailor refused to abandon ship and went down. A sergeant was so badly injured that he later died. An officer was severely wounded in the leg. The survivors clung to a rubber raft until nearly dark the next day, when they were picked up by a British destroyer and returned to England.

Since D-Day the real American secret weapon on the continent has been two hands frozen to the steering wheel—white hands and black hands—driving 200 to 300 miles in a single day to get gasoline and ammunition and rations to the armies.

Truck drivers worked twenty hours a day, and when overcome by fatigue, stopped to splash cold water on their faces, and drove on. They slept on piles of ruins scarcely cool from the heat of battle. For months they went without mail.

But they got the supplies to the front, and some died with their hands still clutching the wheel.

On a single night, five 2000-gallon tankers were knocked out by enemy action. While on his way to a gasoline dump, a driver was killed at Gavray, when his loaded truck skidded off the wet pavement on a curve and turned over in a 20-foot ditch.

On Aug. 2, in the vicinity of La Haye Pesnil, the driver of a 2½-ton ammo truck, Pvt. Nathan Henry, 3623rd QM Truck Co., enroute through a small town, was greeted

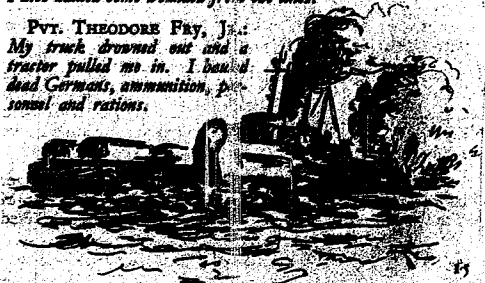
by machine gun bullets and fifteen Germans. His truck shot out of action, Pvt. Henry dismounted and escaped under fire. He found his way to friendly lines, bunked the rest of the night in a French home. By morning the Americans had captured the town. Pvt. Henry found his truck—a burnt-out wreck.

WHAT D-DAY WAS LIKE

Motor Transport Service units have destroyed the myth that trucking is rear echelon work. The advance detail of the 3683rd QM Truck Co. (TC) came in on D-Day. Here's what the men said:

PVT. WALTER PHARSON, JR.: *My truck drowned out and I had to swim ashore. I dug in on the beach but had to be dug out when it caved in. A couple of grenades were thrown at my truck while I was hauling ammunition. On D plus 3 a bomb fell in front of the truck and tore up the radiator and both front tires. Fragments killed several foot soldiers. I also hauled some wounded from the lines.*

PVT. THEODORE FRY, JR.: *My truck drowned out and a tractor pulled me in. I hauled dead Germans, ammunition, personnel and rations.*



Pvt. CHARLES EVANS: I believe we came in on the first wave on D-Day. After we landed in about three feet of water, my truck quit and a dozer pulled me out. The engineers kept telling us to get off the beach. In a couple of minutes the enemy came. I read my Bible at night. I kept reading the 23rd Psalm.

Pvt. ERIC T. DAVIS: I tried to sleep that first night but machine guns kept me awake. Next day the planes came in low after my truck.

Pfc. HARRY HILL: I was stuck in three feet of water and they were shelling us. On D plus 2 I was hauling dead Germans to a cemetery. Also hauled ammo from the beach to the dump, which was a quarter of a mile from the beach at that time. It was pretty hot during those short runs.

Pfc. ELMORE HOLMES: I was loaded with ammo when my truck drowned out. Soon as I got on the beach the Krauts started strafing. Every time I'd start to drive, they would come over and I'd dig for a ditch or a slit trench. A piece of shrapnel hit my right front tire.

Pvt. RANDOLPH DILLON: Landed during shell fire. My truck quit and I had to get pulled in. Slept on the beach. Hauled engineer equipment and ammo. When the enemy came over we took cover. On the second day a sniper fired at us. The sailor riding with me killed him.

The planning for this giant trucking enterprise on the continent began months before D-Day. When the liberation was being briefed, almost everyone in the UK was thinking about railroads and ports. But



The flower
Gen. Ross
center with
Miles (right)
Gen. Harpe



The Move
201 speeds
to the front



**U. S. Army
Transportation Corps**
"Speeding on the seas—
roaring on the rails—
hastening down the
highways"

CARGO
The Blood
Of Armies

DUKW
Kings of
Beaches



Col. Loren Albert Ayers, the energy machine of the TC, foresaw the importance of general purpose motor transport. Known to his men as "Little Patton," Col. Ayers was mainly responsible for getting two drivers for every vehicle, for obtaining special equipment and for training port battalion personnel as drivers for short hauls, which released regular truck companies for long trips.

While our forces gathered strength in Normandy during June, Motor Transport had a relatively simple job in clearing the beaches and carrying supplies to dumps within easy reach of the ports. But when Lt. Gen. George S. Patton's Third Army began its drive down the Brest Peninsula and fanned out at the end of July, the real challenge to the TC began. After the breakthrough at St. Lo, on July 25, the trucks of the TC Motor Transport Brigade streamed along the highways day and night in order to keep up with the drive. Never before had such vast quantities of men and material been carried by motor transport. If lined up in convoy form, the trucks of MTB would have reached from Cherbourg to Paris.

Thereafter, the MTB was split two ways to take care of the First and Third Armies. Gen. Patton's Army presented the more difficult job, for its advance depended on whether the TC could deliver the POL. The combat troops could get by on local food or K and C rations and they weren't using much ammunition, but they had to have POL to keep going. It was then that POL rose to 40% of the total tonnage.

GASOLINE CAN BEAT ARTILLERY!

TANKS were gasoline-hungry. Early in September, a POL convoy had stopped at a TCRP and had been directed to its assigned dump, when a colonel halted the lead truck. He rerouted the convoy to a unit of the 4th Armored Division whose tanks had been stalled four days for lack of fuel. The tanks had been swapping artillery fire with the enemy. The appearance of the convoy was like water to a man dying of thirst.

Servicing the First and Third Armies meant standing by for any emergency. A single mistake might have meant the failure of a key tactical operation.

Motor Transport moved everything. On June 25, 1944, two 30-ton Diesel locomotives were hauled on M-19 tank transporters. On Aug. 11, the M-19 tank transporters were converted to cargo carriers for ammunition, carrying on each 45-ton trailer payloads of supply up to 30 tons.

On July 29 hundreds of thousands of gallons of gasoline were moved in five-gallon cans from the beaches to La Haye du Puits for the Third Army. On July 30 scores of 2000-gallon semi-trailers moved thousands of gallons of POL from Charbourg to Beugeville, and a tremendous movement of gas in five-gallon cans from one beach to La Haye Pesnil for the Third Army was begun.

The daily commitment for hauling POL was raised from 300,000 to 600,000 gallons. An emergency haul of 100,000 gallons of Diesel fuel for the French 2nd Armored Division was completed Aug. 10. The figures indicate the tremendous amount of POL devoured

by Gen. Patton's and Gen. Hodges' armies. Without motor support, it would have been impossible to exploit Gen. Patton's breakthrough.

ON Aug. 25 the Red Ball Express, designed to haul supplies to the First and Third Armies, was instituted. The name "Red Ball" in pre-war days denoted railway transportation of very high priority. The red ball and the arrow were easy to follow—even at night.

The job of the Red Ball Express was to place 100,000 tons of maintenance and reserve supplies, made up exclusively of bulk POL, in the Chartres—la Loupe—Dreux triangle by Sept. 1, and subsequently to extend the supply line



eastward. Of the 100,000 ton total, an estimated 75,000 tons had to be moved by truck. A special route was designated for the haul, allowing only one-way traffic and restricted to trucks of the Red Ball Express.

Full headlights were used at night on the highway from St. Lo to the River Seine, but approaching the front line the drivers reverted to cat-eyes. On the first night that vehicle lights were turned on, an old woman in Alençon cheered. She thought the war was over.

On Sept. 5 a revised program for the Red Ball haul began. In the new phase the TC carried thousands of tons daily from ports and beaches to armies or forward destinations. In addition, Motor Transport daily moved 1800 tons of bulk gas from pipe line stations to delivery points.

TRUCKS FOLLOW THE BATTLE

The Red Ball Express constantly lengthened as our armies advanced. Originally the bivouac was scheduled midway between the loading and unloading points so that one driver could sleep while the other worked. Trucks were scheduled to operate 22 hours out of 24, leaving only two hours for maintenance. Another method was to allow one driver to complete a round-trip from loading point to destination.

The lightning advance of our armies made the bivouac temporary—Le Mans one week, Alençon the next, then Versailles! Always forward! T-Sgt. Clarence E. Miller of Port Washington, N.Y., whose duty was to locate adequate bivouac areas and supply overlays, became accustomed to the order, "Pack up! Office,

kitchen, clothing! We're moving. *Fifteen minutes!* Once he started out at midnight and in six hours located and prepared an area for several companies.

The elastic nature of the Red Ball highway shifted the bivouac, but rapidly advancing armies created an even more serious problem in the identification of destinations. Cpl. John D. Madden, Jr., of Linden, N.J., was in charge of seven trucks and four trailers which were to pick up equipment at an engineer dump near Fourigny. He arrived at the loading point, secured his cargo and set out. Reporting to the TCRP at Chartres, he was dispatched to an engineer depot—but the depot had moved forward. Three successive locations disclosed that the line had moved up, taking the depot along. In a 150-mile sprint to Chalons the convoy reached the Sixth Engineer Depot and unloaded.

There it was told to gas up for the return trip. The supply was a German tank car on a railroad only two kilometers from the front lines. On the way back, the convoy panhandled rations and gas. Eight days later Cpl. Madden and his buddies reached their own outfit.

GI ingenuity has been the turning point in many military engagements. At St. Malo the German garrison retired to a seemingly impregnable harbor fortress and defied the GIs to fetch them. The island fort dominated the harbor, and both aerial and shore bombardment failed to budge the Krauts. Only a direct infantry assault, employing landing craft, could succeed. The nearest craft were 200 miles away.

On the next day, Aug. 25, a group of 40-foot semi-

trailers was driven onto the beaches of Normandy during low tide and then waterproofed. When the tide flowed in landing craft were floated and secured atop the submerged trailers. After the tide had ebbed, the semi-trailers were de-waterproofed and driven with their ingeniously loaded cargo to St. Malo, where the sea-craft were re-loaded. Loaded with infantry they were pulling out from shore when the German garrison surrendered.

Gasoline is a hazardous commodity, and handling it in forward positions calls for courage. What happened at Coutances proves that.

Bombed night and day, Coutances had been knocked to bits. Shells had pulverized the houses, and the town was a sea of flames. Just beyond were our armored spearheads whose advance spelled POL. A convoy of 13 double-bottom, 2000-gallon tankers had to get the gas to Gen. Patton. At a little more than normal convoy distance apart, and with a speed of 45 miles an hour, the trucks dashed through the pitted, rubble-heaped and flame-enveloped streets. One spark would have ignited the fumes on the cat-walks and in ten seconds the entire convoy would have earned a one-way ticket to heaven.

But TC came through with the POL!



The Folligny yards in Normandy were covered by burned and twisted steel, charred railway cars, and rubble from blasted buildings. Bomb craters overlapped. The couple of skeleton buildings still standing became headquarters of the railroad battalion assigned to operate the line from Folligny to Le Mans.

Running the military railroads on the continent is the job of the Second Military Railway Service, commanded by Brig. Gen. Clarence L. Burpee, of Jacksonville, Fla., who came into the service from the Atlantic Coast Lines. The majority of his officers and men are also former railroadmen, and their railway outfits now operating in France and Belgium originally were sponsored by railroads back home. The ace alumni of 35 U.S. lines are currently represented in every aspect of Army railroading on the continent.

Military railways resemble civilian roads in organization. Headquarters of the Military Railways Service corresponds to the office of the general manager. Next come grand divisions, each of which is similar to the office of a general superintendent and operates a section

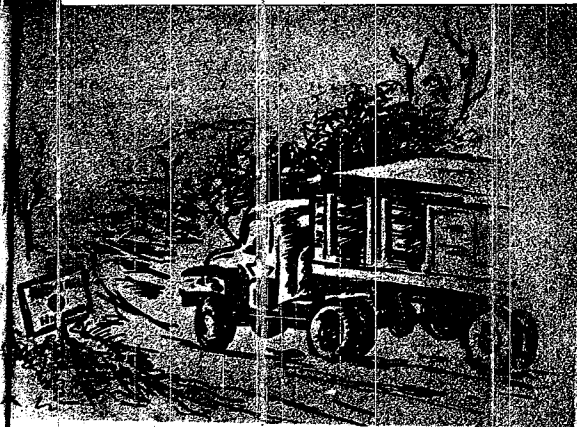
of line. Under the grand divisions are the operating battalions to run the trains, and the shop battalions for heavy maintenance.

Since D-Day, the 1st MRS has done a whopping job of hauling supplies to the front by virtue of its extraordinary organization and administration set-up. Gen. Burpee's outfit inherited a railway system at a standstill. What our bombers hadn't smashed, the Germans had wrecked before they fled. The first job was to repair track, yards, telephone lines.

Most of the repairs of railway lines were handled by the Corps of Engineers. Since D-Day, their general service regiments repaired over 1,500 miles of track, erected 100 railway bridges, rebuilt signal houses, marshalling yards, railway stations. One bridge thrown up by the engineers originally had been destroyed by American bombers, rebuilt by the Germans, smashed again by the R.A.F., and when finally captured was rebuilt once again by the engineers.

REPAIR, REBUILD, THEN OPERATE!

Tracks and railway-yard demolitions represented only the first problem facing military railroaders. In addition, engines and rolling stock needed to be placed in operating condition. The Germans had wrecked plenty of their equipment, but much could be saved. Everything from toilet paper to tin cans was used to patch up the cars. Sometimes, when boxcars had been damaged too severely, the sides were entirely cut out, and the cars converted into flatcars.



Captured rolling stock included French, Belgian, German, Austrian, and Czech cars. Streamlined passenger cars from the Cherbourg-Paris run were a particular prize. Some of the engines that fell to us had been manufactured in 1865, while the newest ones were marked 1944. In Cherbourg, twelve captured locomotives had been sent to France by the American Army during World War I. Their World War I duties over, they had been handed to the French for civilian use. They served the Germans during the occupation, but finally we got them back in World War II.

Captured equipment fell short of carrying the tonnage demanded of the railways. The bulk—both engines and cars—had to come from the States.

LOCOMOTIVES FROM THE U.S.A.

Planning for this "ferrying" program started back in 1944. Over 900 locomotives were manufactured in the States for continental operation, shipped to England, readied for use and stored until D-Day. Over 20,000 cars were prefabricated in the U.S., transported piecemeal across the Atlantic, then assembled in England by the battalions destined to use them in France. After D-Day, the cars and engines were ferried across the channel in



across the channel, ocean-going freighters specially constructed to carry railway stock; in 300-foot steel barges; and in converted LST's.

After lines were repaired and sufficient rolling stock put in shape, other problems had to be solved by the Army railroaders, who were obliged to follow closely behind troops. Trains ran on the heels of the engineer gangs repairing the tracks. These first trains were decisive, since their job was to deliver priority cargo to the troops on the move. They had to be dispatched down the line long before complete railway facilities could be installed. No time to wait for communication lines, fuel and water points!

Trains were loaded, the five-man crew given a case of K-rations, and off they went with orders to keep going until stopped. Supply dumps might be three or four days away!

CASEY JONES AT MAINTENON

On the way crews had to stop for stalled trains. It was not always possible to stop, which is what brought the ghost of Casey Jones to Maintenon. Now Casey Jones was an Illinois Central engineer who was killed in a head-on collision back in 1893. Before he died he told his fireman to jump.

There was quite a line-up between Rambouillet and Maintenon on the night of Sept. 3 despite the fact that our trains were supposed to run 30 minutes apart. At 0325 a blacked-out trainload of high octane gas roared

around a down-grade curve and crashed into the train ahead. The cars rocked and rolled on the rail under the impact of the explosion.

Of the three men on the colliding Diesel, the fireman leaped out of the window; the brakeman plunged through the doorway; the engineer followed last, hitting the ground as the second car of his train piled over him.

GASOLINE IS DYNAMITE

Gasoline cans burst a hundred feet in air. The little village 1000 yards away caught fire. The heat of the flames welded the Diesel to the rail.

A conductor, Sgt. Ralph Latronica of N.Y., got to within four cars of the burning Diesel, and at the risk of being sliced in half, uncoupled 15 cars.

Sgt. Frank H. Moore, of Granada, Miss. — an Illinois Central man from Casey's own railroad — was the conductor on the train that was rammed. He was on the head end of the collision, but he thought of the deadhead crew asleep in the caboose. The crummy was three cars ahead of the fire. Racing toward the back end, Sgt. Moore fell into a shell hole 20 feet deep — and bounced right up again.

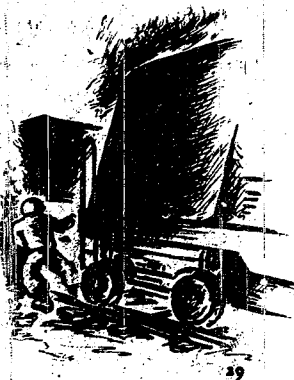
At the same time Pvt. "Bugs" Edward Russel of Mansfield, O. — a New York Central brakeman — worked his way to the rear, hugging the sides of the cars to avoid exploding cans, whizzing by like 88's. When

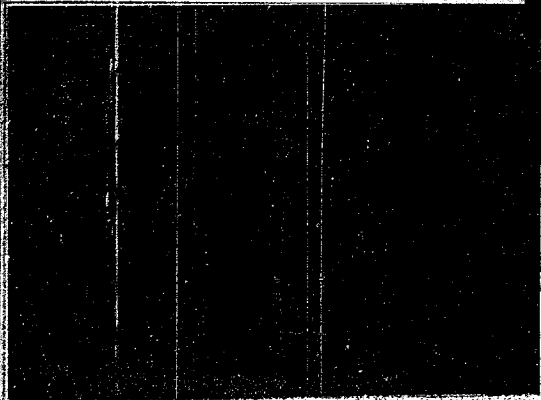
he got to within three cars of the fire, he began to uncouple the cars.

That took courage, and that's the TC.

Crews had been told to use fueling and water points left by the Germans. These points were found all right, but usually badly damaged. For fuel, the men chopped up broken cross-ties, scoured the countryside for timber, and crammed their fires with furniture from bombed-out houses. They got water from local fire departments, creeks, and shell craters. They organized bucket brigades of farmers to tap a local lake. They grubbed coal from every damaged engine.

They dispatched trains by bicycle, jeep, radio, walky-talky and positive blocks, which are defined areas between stations where no train may enter until the preceding train has cleared. Railroaders in blackout, they flagged with cigarettes, burning newspapers and matches. Crews of railway operating battalions ran blind at night, not knowing whether there were rails under them, or whether the tunnels were mined with TNT, or whether the bridges were bombed out.





The French language also could ball things up. One engineer thought he had received a highball from a French flagman. The hoghead went over a condemned bridge with his 41 cars of ammunition. The last 17 cars crashed with the bridge. The conductor jumped over the brakeman, as the iron pig buried its nose.

The work of the crews was planned so that the men could complete their run and get their rest within 16 hours. More often it was three or four days before they returned; sometimes crews went 11 days with only 16 hours of rest; and one group of men was out for 31 days. The First or Third Army would put an officer on the hand-

boom, and he'd say to the hoghead, "You're taking this train through." The original crew would stick with the train from Normandy to its destination — over you talks away. Yet, however tough it was, the 16,000 men of the 2nd MRS kept troops moving and delivered supplies to the front.

GEN. PATTON NEEDED POL

On Aug. 14 our front was at Mayenne. Gen. Patton said that if he could get 31 trains of ammunition and POL in 14 days, he could take Paris. The 740th Railway Operating Bn. arrived at Mayenne on Aug. 17. Trains, a quarter of a mile long — the equivalent of a 4-mile truck convoy — rolled toward Le Mans, with lights turned on. Snipers shot the windows out of the cars, and German machine guns peppered the boilers with armor-piercing shells, but the trains got through. First Lt. Benjamin "Company" C. Magee, of Gary, Ind. — an Elgin, Juliet and Eastern man — in charge of all movements through Mayenne, went five days without sleep, but the 740th gave Gen. Patton 26 trains in five days. And then on Aug. 30, the 740th took the first train into Paris. It was a fair bargain!

Just that there has been many first trains, and the 2nd MRS plans to take the first train into Berlin!

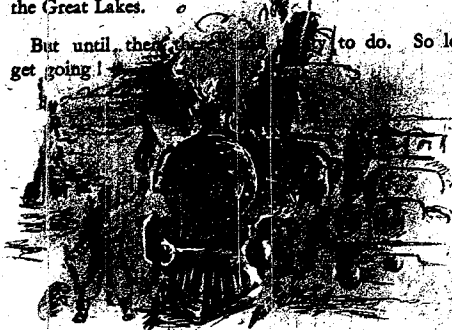
And now our last incident of TC courage and skill — Loaded with 300 American casualties and 60 wounded German prisoners, T-1 H.L. "Hot Rail" Ellington

and his crew made a wild run from Chartres to Le Mans for sulphanilamide and blood plasma. With no lights, the GI hoghead babied his train against the current of traffic, and made it! Wounded GIs appreciate a hoghead who applies his brakes gently and nurses his train along.

Our story does not end here, for the greatest challenge is the final drive to Victory, and then the pay-off—taking everybody home.

When all of that is done, we will make the rails hum between New York and Chicago, we will rush across the highways to Kansas City and Denver, we will unload cargo at Charleston and New Orleans, we will navigate the Great Lakes.

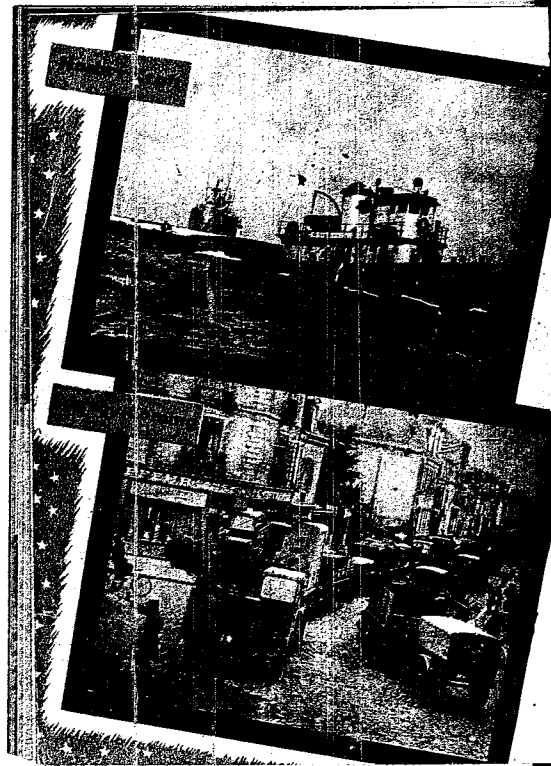
But until then, there is a lot to do. So let's get going!



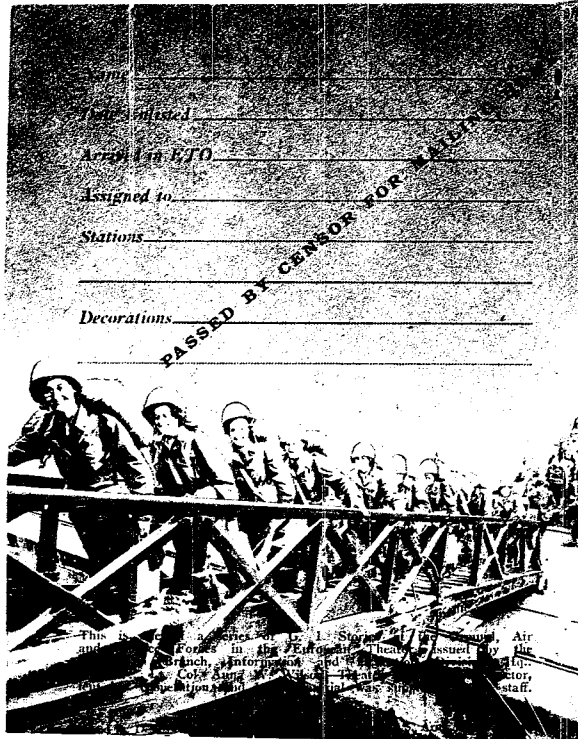
THE TEAM



Autograph







Name _____
 Date enlisted _____
 Arrived in ETO _____
 Assigned to _____
 Stations _____
 Decorations _____

THIS is your story—a record of the vital services performed by the Women's Army Corps in the European Theater. Your versatility and competence earned the highest praise from commanders of every unit to which you were assigned. No matter what task was given you, the result was always the same—a job well done. It is only on rare occasions such as this that an opportunity occurs to express my satisfaction and pride in your record. I thank you wholeheartedly and wish you continued success.



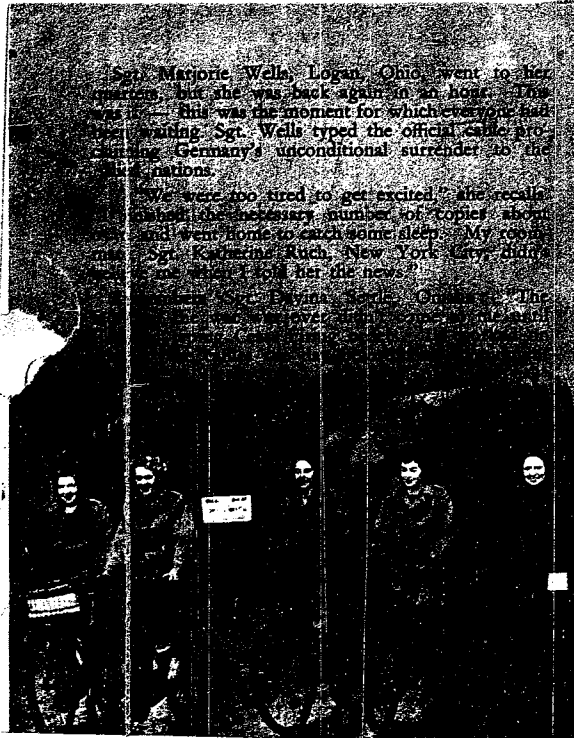
Walter B. Smith
 Lt. Col., Theater WAC Staff Director

The Story OF THE WAC IN THE ETO

MAY 7, 1945: Gen. Eisenhower's Forward Headquarters.

For two days and nights Allied and German generals had negotiated surrender terms inside the red brick schoolhouse. Reporters and photographers waited expectantly. Weary from pounding out vital messages, Wacs in the Secretary to General Staff section of Supreme Headquarters waited, too.

At 0100, Lt. Gen. Walter B. Smith, Gen. Eisenhower's Chief of Staff, told the Wacs to go home and get some sleep. The Germans weren't likely to sign that night.



Sgt. Marjorie Wells, Logan, Ohio, went to her quarters, but she was back again in an hour. This was the moment for which everyone had been waiting. Sgt. Wells typed the official cable proclaiming Germany's unconditional surrender to the Allied nations.

"We were too tired to get excited," she recalls. "I typed the necessary number of copies about 11:30 p.m. and went home to catch some sleep. My room-mate, Sgt. Katherine Ruch, New York City, didn't get up until I told her the news."

Sgt. Evelyn Scott, Chicago, The

we had to tear them up and change the date to May 7. After the signing we were busier than ever and typed Cease Firing orders to 137 Army Groups and units."

On V-E Day, 8000 Wacs could look back on long months of overseas duty. Only a few had been in on the surrender. But all had played an operational part in the war against Nazi Germany.

JULY 16, 1943: A GI band swung into "Lady Be Good" as the First Separate Battalion debarked at Gourrock, Scotland. Commanded by Lt. Col. (then Capt.) Mary A. Hallaren, Lowell, Mass., the 557 enlisted women and 19 officers comprised the first WAC battalion to be assigned to the ETO. First ashore was 2nd Lt. (then 1st/Sgt.) Virginia Rosekrans, Chicago. Greeting them was Lt. Col. (then Capt.) Anna W. Wilson, Theater WAC Staff Director, who had arrived in London in early April, 1943, to prepare for the thousands of Wacs to follow. Assisting Col. Wilson was Maj. (then 2nd Lt.) Selma L. Herbert, New York City.

Attached to the pioneer 8th Air Force, battalion personnel were assigned to Headquarters, 3rd Bombardment Div., 2nd Bombardment Div., 8th Fighter and Bomber Command and 3rd Bombardment Wing of the 8th Air Force. The Wing, under Maj. Gen. Samuel F. Anderson, later became the hard-hitting 9th Bombardment Division.

Six battle stars now adorn the ETO ribbons worn by Wac veterans of the 9th Bombardment Division. They were awarded for the Air Offensive over Europe,

Normandy, Northern France, Ardennes, Central Europe and Rhineland campaigns.

Wacs took over from WAAF and GI personnel. Within a week, telephone and teletype operators were working day, night and swing shifts. Flight control rooms were staffed by newly-trained women. Clerks organized files.

Like the rest of the army, GIs in Britain were openly apprehensive. For many, it was the first glimpse of American women in uniform. But doubts vanished when soldiers observed that the new women military apparatus — British and Canadian officers, sergeants, GIs, and Wacs — were doing a job that the rest of the world had never seen before.



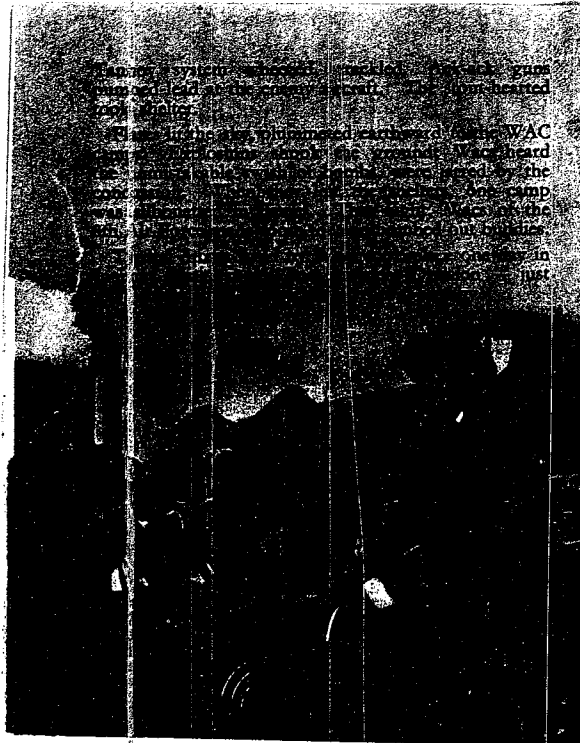
MUD, BOMBS, WORK

ERASE *Glamor*

As the tempo of war accelerated, Wacs arrived overseas aboard liners and cargo boats in ever increasing numbers. They were assigned to ETOUSA headquarters, to the Air Forces, to services mushrooming from SOS, Ordnance, Quartermaster, Transportation, Medical, Chemical Warfare, Engineers. They plotted aircraft and V-1s, teleprinted, operated switchboards, typed, filed, made maps — from air-sea rescue rooms they "brought home" lost planes and pilots. They assessed combat films, cooked, gave inoculations, drove jeeps and trucks, and sweated out missions from control towers. These were only a few of the 239 jobs for which Wacs were trained.

Whatever notions they might have had of life in the ETO, Wacs soon learned there wasn't much glamor. The clammy English dawn caused them to shiver in heatless Nissen huts and concrete barracks. Discipline was strict. Passes were scarce. There was mud — and bombs.

March 24, 1944: The Luftwaffe was still riding high. Air raid sirens moaned at two WAC camps, one housing SHAEF and Allied Service women, the other occupied by 8th Air Force personnel. The



"There's an enemy flight coming out of France," calmly announced Pvt. Bassie Moseley, Houston, Tex., as she adjusted her earphones. Before her was an interceptor board, a 12-foot square table marked with German and Allied air fields. Pvt. Moseley was stationed at a Marauder headquarters where she and other Wacs helped plot the movements of all aircraft in the area.

Next, she picked up a metal strip on which she began placing magnetized discs identifying the planes winging over the Channel. With a croupier-like stick, she pushed the marker and an arrow to indicate direction of flight into the Channel section of the map. Seconds passed. Pvt. Moseley moved the red arrow closer—closer to the coast. She nudged the red arrow to point northward, then quickly swung it back; the Germans had feinted a change of course. Now they were coming straight in.

Pfc Lola McCoy, Rensselaer, Ind., leaned forward to move her RAF markers—RAF night fighters rising to tackle the invaders. Sirens wailed. Enemy aircraft roared overhead. The tenseness in the flight control room was broken by a dull boom.

Pfc McCoy moved her RAF marker. "One Kraut had a fighter after him," she said. Pvt. Moseley pushed the enemy marker out over the Channel. Those in the room relaxed, laughed nervously.

"Tomorrow, you'll read in the papers that enemy raiders dropped a few bombs on the coastal area," Pvt. Moseley said.



American women helped whip the Luftwaffe. Unheralded and unsung — clerks, switchboard operators, stenographers and secretaries. Some held jobs close to Operations, such as Pfc Mary L. Finane, Vicksburg, Miss., who drafted weather reports on War Room maps.

"What's the dope on weather over Germany for the next three or four days?" was a question which ground as well as air forces invariably asked USSTAF's weather section. Pfc Finane's maps held the answer.

A hand-in-glove combination for Photo Intelligence was Lt. Lillian Kamphuis, Crichton, Ala., and Pfc Elizabeth E. Armstrong, Syracuse, N. Y. Pictures taken by airmen over targets determined the destruction or damage to oil plants, bridges, factories, or naval installations. Pfc Armstrong processed the film while Lt. Kamphuis studied the photos, catalogued the strikes.

As secretary to the Director of Operations, USSTAF, W/O Mae C. Merz, Nashville, Tenn., always had advance information on the 1000-plane assaults on the Reich.

Unit Meritorious Service Plaque awards were made to the 394th Signal Co., attached to the 9th Air Force Service Command and to the 21st Statistical Control Unit, 8th Air Force. Third Bombardment Div. received the Distinguished Unit Citation for pre-invasion blasting of strategic Nazi cities and targets.

The entire WAC unit with the 8th Air Force Service Command won a superior rating. S/Sgt. Bun Brusse, Houston, Tex., and T/Sgt. Dorothy La Valle, Winona, Minn., received Theater Certificates of Merit for outstanding service.

Largest single group of Air Force Wacs in the ETO was with the Base Air Depot Area. This depot was charged with furnishing all supplies and maintaining all aircraft parts of U.S. Air Forces and RAF in Europe. Wacs served as teletype operators, drivers, hospital technicians, photo laboratory technicians, rehabilitation workers, dental assistants, parachute menders.

Wacs never will forget the "Old Homestead" — 70th Reinforcement Depot at Stone, England — where incoming and outgoing Air Force personnel were processed.

There was always a husband, sweetheart, brother or friend turning up at the "Old Homestead." Sgt. Eunice O'Connell, Minneapolis, Minn., glanced up

from her typewriter July 16, 1944, to see her paratrooper brother, Cpl. Raymond O'Connell. He had just returned from France where he had taken part in the invasion.

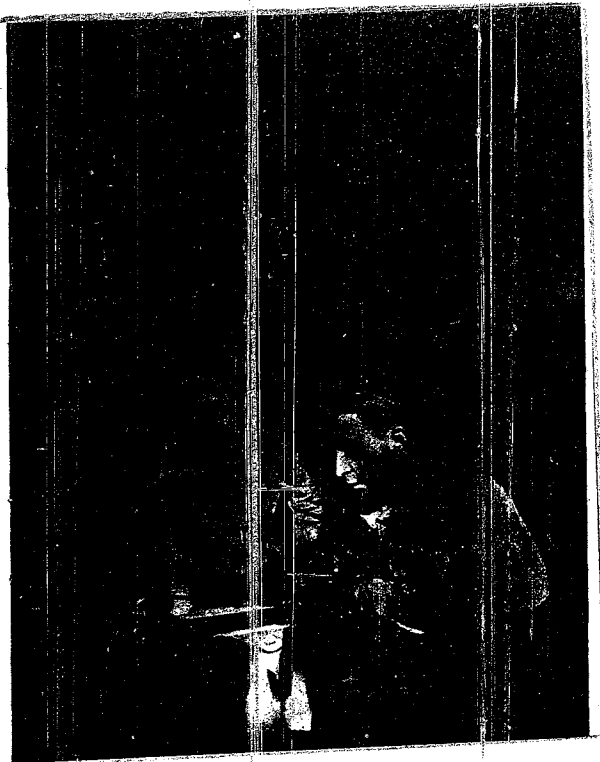
Hardship

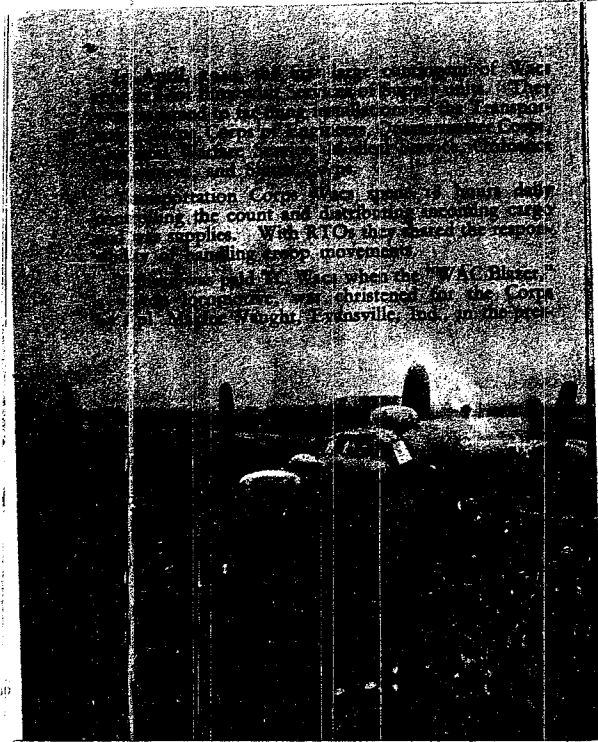
PLUS RESPONSIBILITY

THE Second Separate WAC Bn. arrived for duty in London with ETOUSA headquarters in September and October. Several hundred brisk-stepping Wacs joined the "paper work" Army in Grosvenor Square, already an American stronghold.

From NATOUSA, Gen. Eisenhower had brought the "famous five" captains: Ruth M. Briggs, Westerly, R. I.; Mattie A. Pinette, Fort Kent, Me.; Martha E. Rogers, Jackson, Miss.; Alene Drezmal, St. Paul, Minn.; and Louise Anderson, Denver, Colo. First Wacs to serve overseas, all are now majors, three still attached to his headquarters.

The Allied Women's Camp, under the command of Maj. Edith M. Davis, Royal Oak, Mich., provided an outstanding example of how women of several nations — WACs, WAAFs, WRNs, ATS and CWACs — lived and worked together. So successful was the arrangement that the women asked to remain together as long as possible.





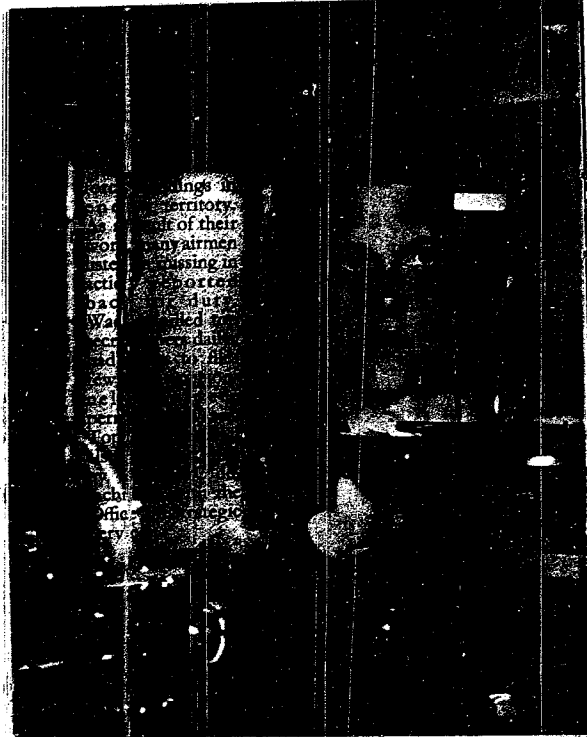
ence of Maj. Gen. Frank S. Ross, Chief of Transportation, ETO; Brig. Gen. Clarence L. Burpee, Second Military Railway Service CG; and Col. Wilson.

WACS like Cpl. Severine Britt, Portsmouth, Va., and Cpl. Marie Hennericy, Long Island, N. Y., translated French and German on maps for Engineers and helped chart invasion routes. Cpl. Nan Rice, Niles, Mich., who, as an engineer, had worked on the Army camp at Blackshaw Moor, England, helped collect secret information on tides. Surveys of the Army's utility needs — water, power, railroads — were a few of the jobs she tackled.

Large numbers of Wacs were assigned to First Base Post Office. It wasn't an easy task to get mail, some carelessly addressed, to the ever-moving soldier. APO Wacs seldom gave up the search for addresses. Little glamor could be attached to flipping letters into sacks racked up aisle after aisle, but it was a job that had to be done.

At Air Transport Command bases, Wacs took incoming calls and made reservations for travelers shuttling across the ocean. They drove 6x6 trucks, transporting baggage and mail from planes. In midwinter, Wacs joked about their appearance — they wore arctics and weather-soaked field trousers as they plodded across muddy airstrips — but they cheerfully accepted each assignment. This was the Wacs' war, too.

Military intelligence section Wacs had the specific mission of helping pilots find their way back after



Invasion-

WACS PLAY PROUD ROLE

JUNE 6, 1944: A shift of Air Force Wac teletype operators had just reported for duty on the midnight-to morning shift. Suddenly, teletypes tapped out the first words of the greatest military operation ever conceived.

Machines reeled off one field order after another. Virtually every bomber and fighter in the Command was being called out from secret air-fields throughout England. The invasion was on!

Field orders, annexes and bombing lines were relayed to American and British stations in the UK. The five Wacs on duty — Cpl. Eugenia Hall, Rideway, Pa.; Sgt. Carmen R. Brand, Staunton, Va.; Cpl. Elsie S. Wheeler, Ada, Ill.; T/5 Mary Denton, Decatur, Tenn.; T/5 Helen M. Sweeny, Chicago — stuck to their machines through those early morning hours, almost completely overwhelmed by the messages pouring from every high headquarters to air force stations, then on to combat wings. The pace was maintained until the shift was relieved at 0730.

As the Wacs stepped from the huge underground room into the sunlight, they raised tired eyes to a sky black with planes — bombers, fighters, troop carriers, gliders. They had helped put those aircraft there.

Throughout England Wacs looked up and felt the same pride. For weeks, Wacs at headquarters, Southern Base Section, 16, 17 and 18 Districts had worked long hours to help fill hundreds of craft with supplies and men. Every Wac in the Theater felt she was part of the military team striving for a single objective — invasion of the Continent.

Soon after the first beachhead was secured, WAC detachments began training programs designed to condition them for field living on the Continent.

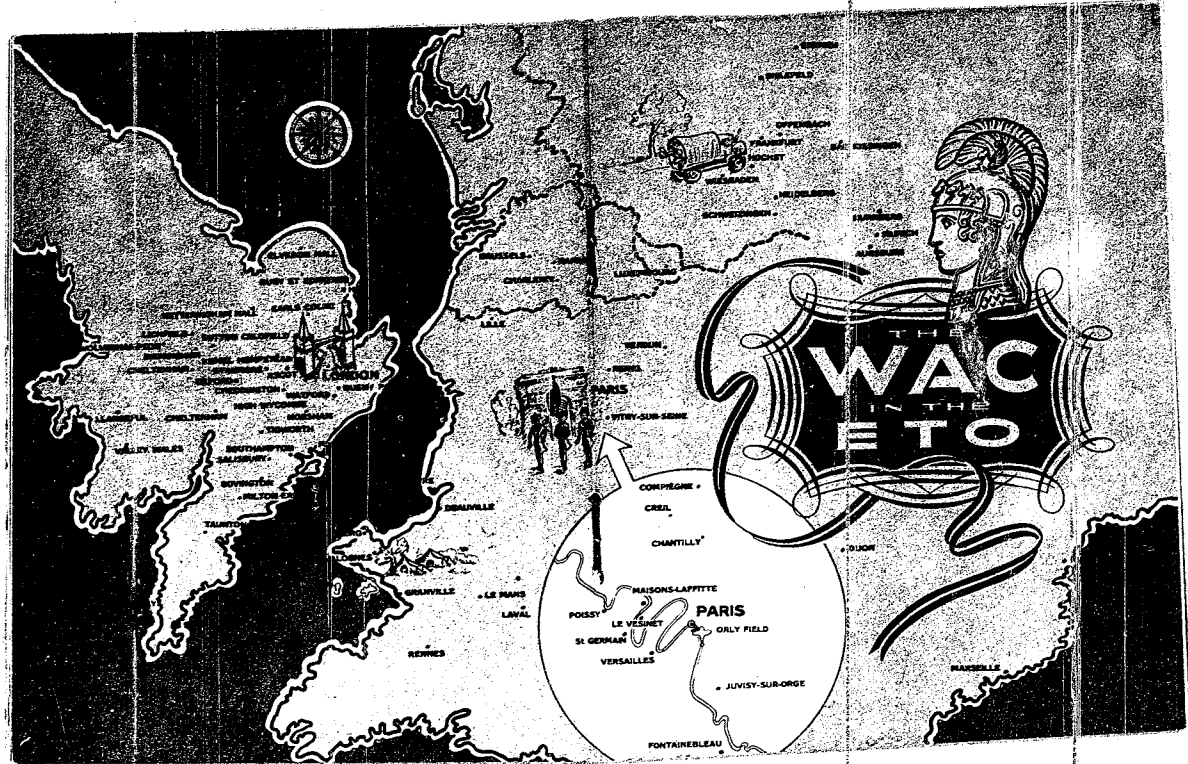
As casualties were brought in from the beaches in increasing numbers, Wacs in the Chief Surgeon's Office in London assisted in loading and moving hospital trains, prepared latest reports on battle casualties.

Flying to Normandy with a group of SHAEF officers on June 22, T/Sgt. Mabel Carney, Camden, N. J., became the first Wac to land on the Continent. She took dictation at a beachhead conference, returned to England the same night. Nine months later, Sgt. Carney was one of the first Wacs to enter the Reich.

Wacs continued to arrive in the Theater. In an effort to secure additional WAC personnel, enlistments were made available to American citizens residing in the United Kingdom. Lucille N. Hall, Auburndale, Mass., was the first woman in the ETO to be sworn in as a Wac. Approximately 150 Wacs were enlisted and trained in England.

Buzz-bombs didn't spare the Wacs. Wacs took







their share of hits, near hits and injuries. First to receive the Purple Heart Award for injuries from flying bombs were Pfc Dorothy E. Whitfield, Schenectady, N. Y.; Pfc Effie M. Gibbons, Lewiston, Idaho; Pvt. Margaret Johnson, Madison, Wis., and Pvt. Leona J. Gaylon, Odessa, Tex.

Another first came when three WAC officers arrived in England to attend the British Staff College, ATS Wing, at the War Office's invitation. They were Capt. Pauline Spofford, Miami, Fla., Capt. Janet C. Varn, Jacksonville, Fla., and Lt. Aileen M. Witting, Gonzales, Tex.

As Allied forces fanned out in Normandy, the first forward echelon of Wacs landed on Normandy beaches on D plus 38, following an urgent call for Headquarters and Communications Zone personnel.

Aboard a heavily-laden cruiser the loudspeakers blared: "WAC personnel, prepare to disembark." Wacs hooked helmet straps, grabbed gear, climbed down the ladder into a bouncing LCI. Ashore, they saw blackened steel skeletons of vehicles, smashed German and American equipment and mute rows of wooden crosses.

GIs waved from tents hidden under trees as Wac trucks jolted over shelled roads. French peasants looked up from digging in the ruins of bombed villages and smiled an amazed greeting at the American women under pack and helmet.



The 49 EWs and five WAC officers who arrived with Forward Echelon, Communications Zone headquarters, lived under canvas near chateau headquarters outside Valogné. They dug drainage ditches around their tents as Normandy skies poured rain for eight straight days. K and C rations, rationed Lister-bag water, mud and dust, helmet baths, became routine.

When water was a critical item, they rationed it to themselves. Recalled Cpl. Mary Relic, Cleveland, Ohio: "If we had only enough water to fill one helmet we used it to the last drop. First we'd brush our teeth. Then we'd bathe as best we could in the same cold water. Next we'd wash our hair — same helmetful

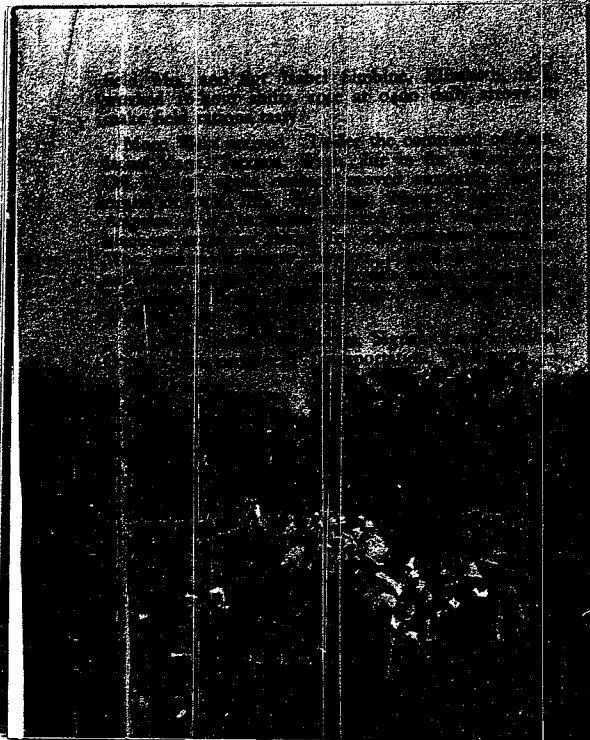
of water. The last step was to wash our clothes. And by that time there wasn't any water left."

Up front, battles raged. The titanic supply job on the Continent mounted; Wacs pitched in. Telephone operators donned earphones as fast as mobile switchboards were set up, worked long shifts day after day. In a chateau wine cellar in Area I, operators worked the board while rainwater swirled around their feet. S/Sgt. Sally McCaffrey, Jamaica Plain, Mass.; Sgt. Laura Carson, Chicopee Falls, Mass., and Cpl. Mary Nardy, Yorkers, N.Y., many others — some of whom had just been flown from the States — worked the long, hard grind, sweating out line repairs and heavy traffic on the long distance Area III board.

Paris— PAPER WORK AND PERFUME

In tents and pre-fabricated huts, with only a sputtering gas lamp and portable or makeshift equipment, Wacs typed, filed, kept records, reports, requisitions, statistics, moving up as more troops and supplies fed the advancing armies.

Chow became complicated at times. On a hill in a wooded pasture, M/Sgt. Helen Wilson, Pasadena, Calif., and a GI mess sergeant shared responsibility. Sgt. Wilson and cooks like Cpl. Hazel Curnutt, Spring



all had ever-mounting tasks as St. Lo, Bayeux, Caen became cities of rubble, names in the history of World War II. Wacs took over new duties as necessity dictated.

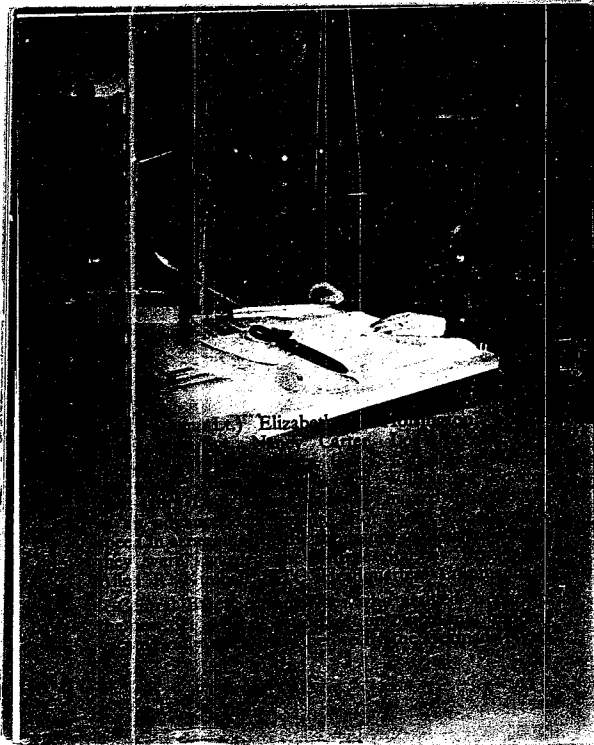
Supply clerks, map makers, draftsmen, typists, translators back in England, Engineer Wacs helped plan the newly-constructed roads over which they now traveled, the pipe lines supplying their water, the camps they now called home.

At the port base section in Cherbourg, forward headquarters, SHAEP, USSTAF and mobile 12th Army Group Headquarters in France, Wacs had close-up views of the over-all picture. They were a part of the Army that smashed forward across France.

The only Wacs attached to a ground force unit reached France in July, moved with 12th Army Group Headquarters which trailed close behind the fighting units. Ever advancing, they lived in tents, ramshackle buildings, whatever billets were found, travelled along the road that led to Wiesbaden, Germany, under their original CO, Capt. Alice Moroney, San Francisco.

With the liberation of Paris, Com Z Headquarters hit the road again. Overnight, tents emptied and typewriters, files and records were packed as Wacs and GIs left the Normandy countryside to establish the SOS nerve center in the French capital.

Six days after the Allies entered Paris, Aug. 31, 1944, six Wacs — Maj. Frances S. Cornick, Norfolk, Va.;



observed a strict 2000 hours curfew. Armed GIs escorted late-working Wacs from billet to office.

During the first days following the liberation, Paris was at a standstill: power, light, transportation facilities broke down; food supplies were nearly exhausted. But the French greeted the Americans with smiles, salutes and cheers just the same. Wacs, tired and grimy-faced from travel, smiled back.

THE machinery of Com Z and ETOUSA headquarters immediately swung into action, distributing men, guns, ammunition for armies now slashing through Belgium and Luxembourg. Morning, noon and night, the Champs Elysees was packed with GIs and Wacs going to and coming from offices near the Arc de Triomphe.

With winter's approach, busy Wacs found time to sample the wonders of Paris perfume shops and fashion houses, experimented with Parisian make-up and hairdos, struggled to master the language.

At Seine Base headquarters, Wac typists, switchboard operators, file clerks, drivers, and stenographers combed all possible sources to find hotel billets for battle-weary soldiers visiting Paris on 48-hour passes. Wacs worked in the Finance Office and in the Post Exchange.

Armies pushed on. As Allied-held territory increased, the strain on Signal Corps communications sections became greater. More and more Wacs were placed in

nearly every department, releasing technically trained men for more advanced echelons.

Scores of operators, members of the 963341 Signal Service Battalion, now under the command of Maj. Jane A. Stretch, Newtown, Pa., went on duty at telephone switchboards where German voices had been heard just a short time previously.

Wac draftsmen with the Transportation Corps pored over maps in the urgent mission of sending supply trucks and trains to the front. Their map tracings of France and Germany, showing all military rail and trucking routes, became the reference used by Planning and Control Division to route traffic to advancing American armies.

Day and night shifts of Wac typists and statisticians in the far-reaching, intricate Quartermaster system prepared the final dispositions for releasing huge tonnages of meat, K rations, blankets, wool socks, gasoline, and endless supplies which kept the Army forging ahead.

Known as "that Quartermaster Wac," Lt. Elaine R. Dickson, Kewanee, Ill., was responsible for the maintenance of clothing supplies for all American service women in the ETO. In addition to her other duties, she delivered combat uniforms to Army nurses in field hospitals, often just a few miles behind combat lines.

Wacs assigned to Com Z base sections and Seine, Normandy, Oise Intermediate and Delta bases wrote their own chapters to the biggest supply story in the



WACS

"THEY MET EVERY TEST"

DECEMBER, 1944: Under the weight of von Rundstedt's smashing counter-offensive Allied lines bent, curved back, but held. Calls swamped rear echelons for supplies, men. Wacs of the 302nd Transport Wing met the challenge. From 1630 hours, Dec. 24, until 1430 hours, Christmas Day, they worked feverishly to help get the needed reinforcements and materiel to the front. Their feat earned a commendation from Gen. Carl A. Spaatz, USSTAF CG.

Cpl. Faye Haimson, Chicago, cryptographer, decoded secret orders for the Bulge operation. Cpl. Beatrice Ratowsky, Brooklyn, was a stenographer in Operations; Sgt. Frances K. Karl, Chicago; and Pfc Sarah Hellinger, Philadelphia, kept telephone circuits open for emergency messages necessary to get 100 widely-scattered cargo planes to the front. Not a man or plane was lost in the move.

Despite the grim situation Wacs spent their first Christmas on the Continent in the American tradition even though a curfew was imposed and holiday events were cancelled.

Throughout the ETO, Wacs threw open their day-rooms to soldiers Christmas Day. One detachment shared its turkey dinner with 75 soldiers on convalescent

leave or on-pass. Wacs wrapped packages of candy, cigarettes, gum, cookies and gifts for wounded in hospitals in France and England. In Paris, a WAC choir sang at the Arc de Triomphe, then climbed into trucks which took them to hospitals where they sang for soldiers who had just been brought in from front line aid stations.

The 6888th Central Postal Directory Bn., first Negro Wacs to be sent overseas, was assigned to the First Base Post Office in February, 1945. The unit broke all records for its directing mill. Each of the two eight-hour shifts averaged more than 63,000 pieces of mail. Delayed letters and packages reached battle casual-





ties who had been months too far behind to catch up with them.

By early Spring, 1945, Wacs were filling every conceivable assignment. They drove Army trucks, transmitted photographs by radio, housed camps for enemy women PWs, plotted emergency landings for lost and damaged aircraft. In one case, Gen. Hap Arnold was Lt. Kay Spangenberg. Other projects were assisted by able WAC personnel.

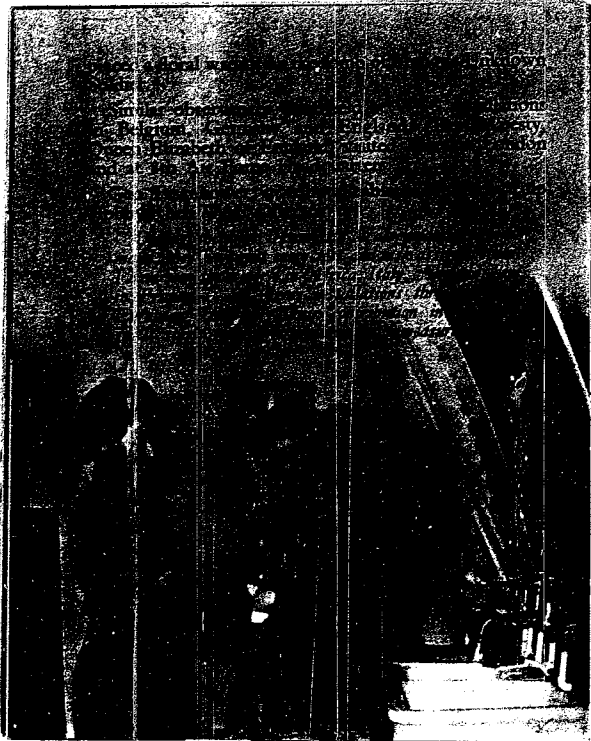
When the leave center in Brussels opened a team of WAC mess sergeants organized and ran the two huge Army messes, instructed mess personnel and Belgian cooks in the preparation and serving of food.

Sgt. Constance Delahoyde, Bath, N. Y., and Sgt. Margaret McCance, Palo Alto, Calif., worked in advisory capacities in scores of Army messes throughout France, Belgium and Germany.

WITH Army headquarters established in Germany, Wacs moved in with files and typewriters. Nine Wacs with the I Tactical Air Force, veterans of England and France, were the first to "occupy" Germany. They were: Lt. Juanita S. Goold, Madison, Wis.; Sgt. Billy Utecht, Houston, Tex.; S/Sgt. Loleta B. Moon, Atlanta, Ga.; S/Sgt. Odessa Dilbeck, Tulsa, Okla.; Sgt. Olga Kentro, Los Angeles; Sgt. Martha M. Hubbard, Cedar Rapids, Iowa; Cpl. Gertrude L. Pearson, Bronx, N.Y.; Cpl. Emily G. Nichol, Mount Fern, N. J.; and Pfc Grace G. Lawles, Copenhagen, N. Y.

When Germany collapsed, additional personnel were assigned to headquarters of armies and to reinforcement jobs designed to speed redeployment.

V-E Day brought a pause in the long grind. On May 14, 1945, Wacs and Allied service women stationed in Paris observed the third anniversary of the Women's Army Corps. Led by Maj. Mary Moynahan, San Antonio, Tex., approximately 2000 Wacs paraded down the Champs Elysees to the Place de la Concorde as they were reviewed by Lt. Gen. John C. H. Lee, CG, Communications Zone. The colorful spectacle followed a simple ceremony at which Lt. Col. Wilson



three years the Women's Army Corps has built for itself an impressive record of conduct and of service, and given the womanhood of America every right to be proud of their accomplishments.

Gen. Carl A Spatz, CG, USSTAF, echoed Gen. Eisenhower: "The Women's Army Corps has been of inestimable value to our Air Forces operating against Germany. Its members have worked devotedly, undertaking arduous tasks requiring exceptional performance. Their success as a part of the team is a matter of pride to all of us."

Shortly after V-E Day it was revealed that 3000 Wacs had 44 discharge points or more. In July, the first group having upwards of 70 points was flown to the States to be discharged.

Those remaining in the ETO carried on. In Berlin, a detachment of secretaries, typists, telephone and teletype operators became part of headquarters personnel administering the American occupied section of the city. The detachment formerly was assigned to the First Allied Airborne Army.

When Pres. Truman, Prime Minister Churchill and Marshal Stalin met at Potsdam in mid-July, 1945, 27 Wac telephone operators of the %3341st Signal Service Bn. were assigned to handle the multitude of telephone calls. S/Sgt. Edith Royer, Library, Pa., was chief operator.

Lt. Col. Anna W. Wilson left the Theater July 8 for an assignment with the War Department and Lt.

Col. Mary A. Hallaren, became Theater WAC Staff Director.

The record of the Women's Army Corps in the ETO is not one of any single branch of service or special group. It is a story of all the Wacs who wear the patch of the Ground Forces, the star of the Services of Supply, the wings of the Air Force.

Wherever the armies went the Wacs went with them—London, Marseilles, Paris, Brussels, Frankfurt. Wacs lived in villages, in camps, woods and fields, witnessed the devastation of war. They shared in the hardships of the soldier, rejoiced in his advances against a stubborn, fanatical foe. There was a stirring story of American women who worked to help fighting men achieve a complete and smashing victory in Europe. They accomplished their mission.



The Team

Wacs in the ETO had a variety of assignments and were working with the following:

- Hq. USSTAF
- Air Tech Serv. Command of Europe
- Base Air Depot Area
- 302nd Transport Wing
- 70th Reinforcement Depot
- 1st Tactical Air Force
- Hq. 8th Air Force
- Hq. Eighth Fighter Command
- Eighth Air Force Service Command
- 1st Air Division
- 1st Air Division
- 1st Air Division
- 21st Base Post Office
- 688th Central Postal Directory
- Military District Delta Base
- 16th Reinforcement Depot
- WAC Detachment, MIS
- United Kingdom Base
- 1400 AAF Base Unit, EDATC
- 1402 AAF Base Unit, EDATC
- 1406 AAF Base Unit, EDATC
- 1407 AAF Base Unit, EDATC
- Office of Strategic Services
- 1st Base Post Office
- Army Airway
- Service
- Eighth
- Eighth
- General
- General
- Hq. USSTAF
- Hq. USFA
- Theater Service Forces
- Chemor Base Section
- Hq. and Hq. Sqdn.
- Depot Group
- 97th Airdrome Sqdn.







CENSOR FOR MAILING HOME



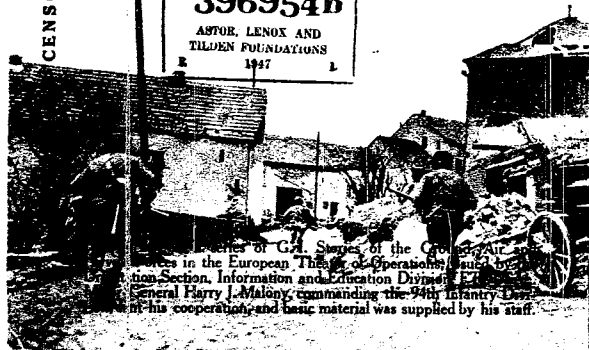
*To the men of the 94th Infantry Division:
This short history of the division is little more than a record of the fighting which you men have done since arriving in Europe. It can only imply the many brave deeds performed, makes no reference to hardships patiently endured and can only hint of the magnificent fighting spirit which has carried you through the toughest battles of the Western Front.*

It is my prejudiced but well-founded belief that the three actions of smashing the Siegfried Switch Line — clearing the Saar-Moselle Triangle which culminated in the capture of Trier — forcing the Saar River bridgehead, and the 10-day drive to the Rhine were the outstanding actions of Third Army's advance to the Rhine.

I congratulate you on the record you have established. The road to victory has been considerably shortened by your proved fighting capabilities and the will to win.

Harry J. Malony
Major General, Commanding

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TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
1947



This series of G.I. Stories of the Ground Air Forces in the European Theater of Operations, issued by the Information and Education Division of the War Relocation Authority, was prepared under the direction of General Harry J. Malony, commanding the 94th Infantry Division. His cooperation and basic material was supplied by his staff.

THE STORY OF THE *94th Infantry* DIVISION

FEB. 19, 1945: Fresh from its "private" war of battering the Siegfried Switch Line of the Saar-Moselle triangle and reminiscent of its "forgotten" war in Brittany, the 94th Infantry Division now poised itself for an all-out attack.

The entire division was in on the kill. The 301st, 302nd and 376th Inf. Regts., 319th Engrs., 94th Recon Troop, 319th Medics, and division headquarters' Defense

45X1080

Platoon, pooled efforts to smash the Switch Line, guarding Third Army's lane to the heart of Germany.

The three regiments jumped off promptly at 0400. Withheld to add surprise to the doughs' attack, artillery broke loose 30 seconds later with the first of 15,000 shells which bombarded Germans that day.

On the left, the 376th pulled stakes near roofless Sinz and struck east through Adenholz Woods, getting protection on its left flank from the Recon Troop, Defense Platoon and members of the 465th AAA Bn., serving as foot-troops. In the center, the 301st took off from Butzdorf and headed northeast across the ridge line running between Borg and Munzingen. On the right, the 302nd began work on pillboxes between Borg and Oberleuken, then struck north and east.

Germans, who had defended the area with all the tenacity of Nazi fanaticism, wilted before the 94th's unleashed power. Surprise was complete. The attack gained momentum with every yard advanced. Second Lt. Rollin Voit (then S/Sgt.), Appleton, Wis., described the going through the Adenholz Woods: "The marching fire demonstration put on by our doughs was a thing of weird beauty. The men seemed to forget about mines or opposing fire as they kept their M-1s hot. The roar of TD guns behind and to the sides was a pleasant feeling, and the tanks which opposed us were soon out of commission."

Mine fields as thick as a GI loaf of bread fronted the 301st but the orders were to advance. To the men

of Baker and Charlie Cos. there was a job to be done; they did it. Second Lt. Howard Johnson, Athens, Ill., who joined the division the previous day and advanced from platoon leader to company commander in a matter of minutes said: "The Kraut artillery and mortar were adding to the misery caused by the mines, but I reckon you can say that we just got mad and my men headed directly into the fields and made it. We realized that once the high ground of the ridge was taken, the job would be licked, and the artillery silenced for the lack of observation."

In the 302nd area, Capt. Thomas A. Beard, Chicago, Ill., Able Co. CO, led his unit in knocking out remaining pillboxes. Direct fire from TDs and frontal charges by the doughs wiped out the obstacles. The regiment drove ahead on its way to the Saar River.

By nightfall, Munzingen and Kehlengen had fallen to the 301st, the 302nd had taken Oberleuken, and the





the 376th had established a base for the next day's operation. Eight hundred and seventy-two prisoners had been dragged from pillboxes, bunkers, machine gun nests and sniper holes. The Germans had been beaten on their own ground, their steel and concrete shelters twisted into blackened wreckage, their mine fields nullified by American doughs.

Next day, 376th and Recon Troop were attached to the 10th Armd. Div. to clear the way for the tanks. The Recon Troop and headquarters' Defense Platoon captured Thorn after a sharp 40-minute clash. The victory was somewhat ironical for Defense Platoon men. Being attached to the division headquarters made them ineligible for the combat infantryman's badge, but someone said: "For weeks the Germans wouldn't let us walk guard in peace back at division by shelling us all hours of the night. It was a distinct pleasure to help pour some lead into them for a change."

To the east, Lt. Col. Francis Martin's 2nd Bn., 376th, launched an attack against Kreuzwiler and in two hours

knocked out the town. Other battalions of the 376th resumed battering remaining fortifications of the Switch Line. By the time the tanks came charging up, the path was cleared. Tankers and 376th continued pushing up the western part of the triangle.

Headed for the Saar, the 301st and 302nd swept aside all opposition. Hilly terrain offered Germans a good spot for artillery and anti-tank guns in covering roads and likely routes of approach, but doughfeet were determined to reach the Saar and artillery guns weren't going to stop them. One squad of the 301st knocked out six 88s and their crews in a stretch of 200 yards. At the day's end, Kollesleuken and Freudenburg had fallen to the 301st, Weiten to the 302nd, and a task force commanded by Lt. Col. John W. Gaddis, Olney, Ill., composed of the 1st Bn., 301st, and 3rd Bn., 302nd, practically erased Orscholz from the map, thus squaring 1st Bn.'s account with the village. The attack hit Orscholz from the north and the pillboxes which guarded the town's southern approaches were useless. For the division, the day represented a 4000 yard gain on a 5000 yard front.

Taking advantage of the enemy's confusion and disorganization, the 94th drove the remaining 5000 yards to the banks of the Saar. The 301st and 302nd captured Taben, Rodt, Hamm, Kastel, Stadt, Trassem, Perdenbach, and Keuchingen, and cleared the fortified area south of Orscholz. Some pillbox commanders elected to add the direct fire of 155s to their daily ration, but couldn't stomach the incoming iron.

Smashing THE SIEGFRIED SWITCH LINE

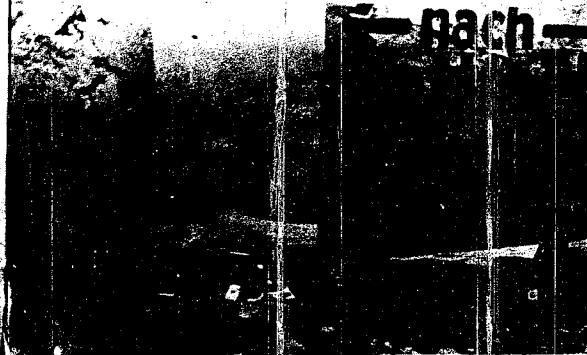
WITH the west bank of the Saar River cleared, Gen. George S. Patton, Jr., Third Army chief, decided to storm the defenses of the Siegfried Line on the opposite side of the swiftly-flowing river. In a speedily-planned action, the 301st and 302nd celebrated George Washington's birthday by paddling against the seven mile-an-hour current to establish bridgeheads at Serrig and near Taben. As German artillery and mortar fire poured in, engineers worked unceasingly to erect bridges. Doughts who had crossed the river needed heavy equipment and supplies. Bridges were vital.

Division artillery liaison pilots took exception to the idea that bridges were the only means of supplying infantrymen. Maj. Arnold W. Samuels, Columbus, Ohio, Ass't G-4, gathered two and a half truckloads of ammunition, blood plasma, rations and radio parts, hauled them to the airstrip. Maj. Arthur Middleton, Weyanoke, La., Air Officer, and his Cub pilots volunteered to drop equipment over the bridgehead.

Throughout the afternoon and into the night, Cubs flew over the site as pilots shoved equipment from windows of the tiny planes at 20-foot levels. Although it was the first night flying for some pilots, all landings were made

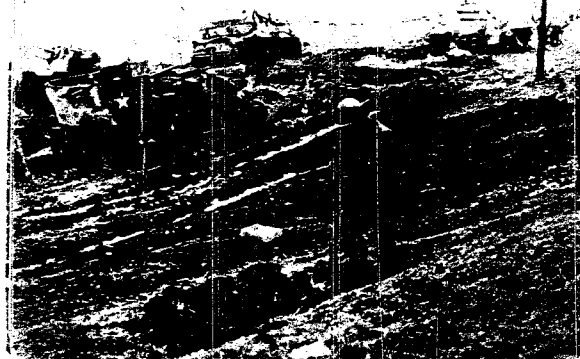
without mishap. C-ration cans filled with gasoline lighted edges of the strip as 1st Lt. James D. Hatchard, St. Louis, guided the pilots in by radio.

Despite the lack of bridging facilities, the 302nd had two battalions across at Taben and had begun the rugged operation of scaling almost sheer cliffs, peppered with pillboxes, sniper positions and raked by enemy fire. The 301st shoved across one battalion and by nightfall had cleared half the town of Serrig. A house-to-house scrap raged from the river's edge to the top of the ridge east of Serrig. Pillboxes camouflaged as houses opened up at point-blank range, and machine gun and artillery fire splattered the entire area. Doughts who "mouseholed" their way completely through the town got their first look at it in the daytime from the ridge.



In four days of hammer-like blows, the 94th, along with the 10th Armd., had smashed the Siegfried Switch Line, had cleared completely all resistance in the Saar-Moselle triangle, and had wedged a hole in the main Siegfried Line on the east bank of the Saar. The total PW count for the three regiments was 2117. Maj. Gen. Harry J. Malony, Division Commander, was awarded the Bronze Star by Lt. Gen. (then Maj. Gen.) Walton H. Walker, XX Corps Commander, in recognition of his troops' fighting qualities and the planning behind the attack.

With engineers throwing up bridges as fast as the equipment could be moved in, the division began clearing the way for the attack on Trier, key communications city at the junction of the Saar and Moselle rivers. Third Bn., 301st, and 1st Bn., 302nd, mopped up Serrig by



Feb. 23 and three more battalions crossed the river to take up the fight.

Doughs continued to use assault boats and a foot-bridge to make crossings. To protect troops advancing north from Taben, 1st Bn., 301st, took up positions along Hoherberg Ridge, on the south flank of the division. Despite an extended front and strong enemy artillery the battalion held the line to permit the two bridgeheads to link. For two days these infantrymen fought without transportation or tank destroyer support.

Meanwhile, the 376th again prepared to blast the way for tanks. Near Ockfen, the regiment established a bridgehead by the use of assault boats and began elimination of the fortified area protecting approaches to Trier. Two hundred and ninety pillboxes were destroyed, 155 captured in a 10 square mile area, and the towns of Ockfen, Schoen, Kommelingen, Wiltingen and half of Beurig were captured.

One shot was all that was needed by 2nd Bn., commanded by Major Thomas E. Kelley, to take Wiltingen. The major called upon Psychological Warfare to see if the Germans would listen to verbal reasoning as well as the lead variety as the battalion approached the town. Setting up loudspeakers, the announcer, Sgt. Richard Ury, San Mateo, Calif., told Germans to show signs of surrender with white flags if they wanted the town spared and sought to escape annihilation.

Silence and inactivity were the only results until two Germans made a break from a pillbox. A direct hit on



of white flag from pillboxes and from windows. Civilians dashed for the town church as directed. Doughs marched into Wiltingen without further shooting.

Tanks of the 10th Armd. Div., racing behind the swift-moving infantry, crossed over the Saar on 94th bridges, then pounded along to the southern edge of Trier after the 376th had taken the last bridge over the Moselle intact. Doughs moved on to the city's north side.

Once the route to Trier was cleared and the south flank anchored, the 94th began expanding the bridgehead eastward. Paschal, Hentern, Lampaden, Obersehr, Peltingen and Zerf fell to the 301st and 302nd as the 376th returned to the division March 3 in time to help repel a pair of counter-attacks which caused the Germans heavy casualties. One counter-thrust, paced by the enemy's 6th SS Mountain Div., penetrated the 94th's lines to effect the most serious threat to the bridgehead.

East of Lampaden, troops of Lt. Col. Otto Cloudt's 2nd Bn., 302nd, were cut off but rallied to all but annihilate the Germans. Sgt. Woodrow Boyett, Wetumpka, Ala., 356th FA Bn. liaison section, was taken prisoner while checking a phone line during the breakthrough. For two days Boyett administered aid to more than 25 GIs who had been caught in ambush, destroyed the gun sight on a tank the Germans wanted to use, dared the fluid situation to attempt a truce to evacuate the wounded. He then feigned a wound as Germans withdrew so he could bring back two truckloads of his comrades.

Ten Days TO THE RHINE

MARCH 13, 0259 hours: Front lines of the 94th's Saar bridgehead were quiet except for the muffled shuffling of packs and soft orders from Brig. Gen. Louis J. Fortier's fire direction centers to the firing batteries. At 0300 the entire perimeter blazed with the firing and bursting of shells from Army, corps and division artillery. Out in front of the doughs, the Germans had dug in well, had brought up self-propelled guns, had their own big guns to shoot. But the 94th Div. was on its way again with the Rhine as its objective. With the 302nd and 301st pushing forward in separate drives, the 376th in reserve, the regiments crossed the small Ruwer River

on bridges thrown up by the 319th Engr. Bn. and advanced 3000 yards, taking the towns of Burg-Heid, Schondorf, Bonnerath and Holzerath.

Despite stubborn resistance, which was the Germans' last stand west of the Rhine, the twin drives roared ahead. Two days later, enemy resistance began to crack as the 301st and 302nd registered gains of six miles, overrunning Schillingen, Kell, Gusenburg and Reinsfeld.

The 94th began spearheading the Third and Seventh Armies' drive to the Rhine March 16. A huge pincers movement developed as Third Army forces swept down from the XII Corps bridgehead to the north while the Seventh crashed forward from Alsace-Lorraine. In the center, striking due east, was the 94th. Remaining German defenses crumbled before the might of 13 American divisions.

When the 94th jumped off from the Saar bridgehead it set out to clear the way for the 12th Armd. Div., waiting in the rear. But once the 302nd and 301st cracked



Bumming rides on buses and trucks, the 302nd doughs chased the Germans all the way to the Rhine before the tanks finally caught up. The 376th, which had relieved the 301st at Birkenfeld, raced forward eight days before the armor went through its lines on the outskirts of Ludwigshafen.

March 15 to 22 was a hectic week for the division. Germans were in full retreat; the 94th was in full chase. Time and again, artillery was forced to pass up targets because ammunition trains couldn't keep pace with the drive. The 94th Recon Troop, operating on the south flank, bagged seven towns and more than 800 PWs in one day. Roads leading west were jammed with Germans, the bulk of the 13,434 prisoners, some unescorted, who surrendered during the 10 days. Villages and towns were a maze of white flags. In some towns, residents tore down roadblocks to make two-lane traffic for overtaxed supply lines.

A combat command of an armored division stopped at the entrance to one town and told Division Provost Marshal, Maj. James P. Gwynn, Tallahassee, Fla., that he'd better get out of the way because tanks were prepared to blast the town to pieces. The major hurriedly explained that the town had been taken two days previously by the 94th. The explanation brought a cease fire order.

The division CP moved once a day in an effort to keep pace with doughs, but it was of no use. About the time engineers would issue one set of maps, a call from the 302nd or 376th would set division to worrying where the next set was coming from. First Lt. George V. Lambert, New York City, executive officer for Charley Btry., 356th FA Bn., surprised his cannoneers by giving an "action rear" order near Baumholder to knock out a pocket, one of many formed by the multi-pronged attack.

Cooks at division headquarters mess had their worries, too. "Queenie," mascot of the beans and potatoes boys



had just given birth to an eight-pup litter at Burg-Heid and the men feared the pups wouldn't stand the day-to-day jumps. But all eight and the mother made out. Pups were named for each town taken. Pfc's Richard Maitlen, Muncie, Ind., and Edward Maryanovich, Superior, Wis., Gen. Malony's orderlies, captured five PWs during a convoy break.

Maj. Frank Bayles, Salt Lake City, Ass't G-5, attached himself to the 376th in order to keep military government up with the advance. When he asked the burgomaster at Oggersheim for an interpreter, a 21-year-old brunette from Brooklyn turned up for the job. The major was almost ready to believe the story about the tunnel under the Rhine.

Climax of 195 consecutive days of combat for the 94th was the capture of the industrial city of Ludwigshafen, one of Germany's prize chemical producing centers, by a task force under Brig. Gen. Henry B. Cheadle, Ass't Division Commander. The task force consisted of the 376th and a combat command of the 12th Armd. Div., aided later by the 301st. Euttoning up of the city with its block-long buildings, concealed anti-tank guns and cellar strongholds required 24 hours. Gen. Cheadle announced the fall of the city at 0800 March 24 although scattered resistance remained.

In 33 fighting days, from Feb. 19 to March 24, the 94th had moved 123 miles, taken more than 17,000 PWs, broken the Siegfried Switch Line, breached the main Siegfried Line by establishing a bridgehead over the Saar River and then smashed 85 miles to the Rhine.

ON D PLUS 94,

94th GOES TO WAR

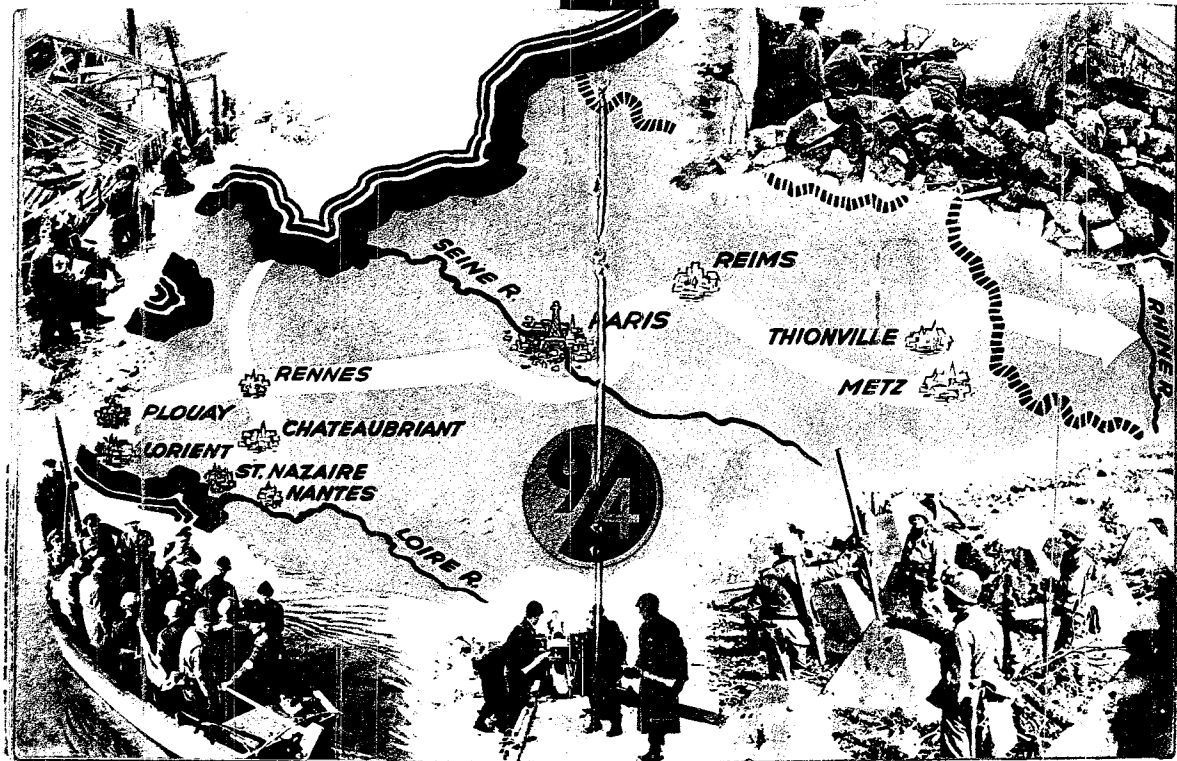
THE 94th Inf. Div. was activated Sept. 15, 1942, at Fort Custer, Mich. Maj. Gen. Harry J. Malony, division commander, outlined his objectives to the cadre, which came from the 77th Inf. Div., following a simple ceremony.

Because Fort Custer offered neither artillery ranges nor areas large enough for division maneuvers, the cadre moved to Camp Phillips, Kansas, in November. First fillers arrived Dec. 6 and troops from all over the country poured in at the rate of 1000 a day, as the usual turmoil of fitting men into the Army almost spoiled Christmas. However, Gen. Malony directed that the holiday be observed and the service and officers' clubs were a galaxy of color and Santa Clauses.

A swirling snowstorm greeted the opening of basic training Dec. 28. Two years later, almost to the day, the 94th stepped into the Western Front and the McCoy with targets and sights obscured by snow, a situation in which the first training the division received stood it in good stead.

Camp Phillips proved it could be just as hot as it was cold when summer and dust replaced winter and slush.







A division review in honor of the late Lt. Gen. Lesley J. McNair, then Army Ground Forces Commander, in June, 1943, resulted in the reviewing officers and spectators being unable to see the marching troops because of a dust storm.

But there was one nice thing about Camp Phillips. Most young artillery officers amazed Gen. Fortier with their uncanny judgments of range until the general realized the tree-lines used by Kansas homesteaders to measure off mile-square tracts were better than range-finders for getting a bead on a target.

In July the division moved to the Tennessee Maneuver Area. By fall the Italian campaign was going full blast and the need for trained reinforcements was desperate. The division sent 1500 men to POEs on the first call and later another 500. Despite the loss of its best-trained troops, the division and regimental staff officers were commended for the actions of the division during the remaining maneuver problems.

Other than the loss of so many men, maneuvers were the usual rat-race of working on a problem from Monday through Thursday or Friday, followed by a brief holiday in Nashville or Chattanooga. River crossing training was to come in handy later in the Saar and Ruwer river attacks.

With maneuvers over and POE rumors bandied about, the 94th shifted to Camp Forrest, Tenn., to facilitate the movement of troops to transportation centers for the initial furloughs.

In December, the 94th moved to Camp McCain, Miss., 100 miles south of Memphis, for an extensive post-maneuver training program. Rain, mud, heat and dust were ideal for training for combat's lack of comfort. But when it came time to leave McCain for the POE, the boys said the hardest part of the deal was trying to get to Memphis before all the hotel rooms, bottled goods and steaks were gone. Also, trying to sleep in the unheated cars of the Illinois Central Special back to camp Monday mornings was good training for the 30 days some members of the division spent on Liberty ships in crossing the Channel from Southampton to Utah Beach.

While at Camp McCain, the 94th was selected by the War Department to experiment on the six-gun artillery battery. For five months the division worked on all problems with the six-gun batteries, but orders for overseas movement came before results of the training could be evaluated, requiring a large part of the artillery to be shipped out. However, the division benefitted by gaining specially trained NCOs.



A large part of the training at McCain involved combat team tactics, with emphasis on the individual. With the announcement of the Expert Infantryman Badge regulations, the regiments concentrated on qualifying as many as possible. With the 376th first under the wire, all three regiments qualified for Expert Infantry Regiment, making the 94th the first in the Army to be an "Expert" division. The presentation of regimental, battalion and company streamers was held July 15, 1943, in the last division review held in the States.

Preceded by an advance party, the 94th departed from Camp McCain and headed for the POE, during the week of July 22. With a couple of shots in the arm, the division took advantage of the lag at the POE to see New York City.

Signal Corps photographers made a pictorial record of the division being processed through the POE, and in January, 1945, Collier's Magazine depicted how an outfit says goodbye to the States. The division sailed Aug. 5, debarking in Scotland Aug. 12.

After three weeks in England the 94th sailed for France. Throughout September, 1944, the Channel was unusually rough, and every kind of craft was used to transport the elements of the division. Div. Hd., 94th Recon Troop, and staff of the 301st went ashore Sept. 6 after a week spent on the Channel. For as long as a month later, some units of the division were lying off Utah Beach, munching C-rations, lacking smokes, hoping for a chance to land.

On D plus 94, the 94th piled ashore on Normandy's Utah Beach. Gen. Patton's Third Army was loose and headed for the German border; the British had smashed through Belgium and parts of Holland. Shore MPs hollered "Army of Occupation," but grinning doughs paid no attention. There was fighting to be done in the direction of Germany and they knew they had been well-trained for it.

Far from the main brunt of the fighting was a sector in which the Germans hadn't been eliminated; it was in this direction the 94th headed.

FIRST ASSIGNMENT : THE "Forgotten" FRONT

WHEN Third and Ninth Armies broke out of the Normandy beachhead and began the wild drive to the German frontier, Nazi columns spread to all points of the compass, principally Brest, Lorient and St. Nazaire, famed as submarine ports and well-protected from aerial bombardment with flak guns and concrete emplacements. Shipping still was a vital problem to the Allies, so the Americans went after Brest, where many Yanks in World War I first saw France, taking the city after six weeks of the hardest fighting of the war. With the demand for

men and supplies desperate, the high command decided to lay siege to the pockets of Lorient and St. Nazaire.

This assignment fell to the 94th, and it wasn't long before the division found itself in the midst of a strange type of warfare. Taking over the job previously handled by the 83rd Inf. and the 6th Armd. Divs. on a loose front, the 94th had to establish its own front lines, sweat out a low priority on supplies, and figure out a way to beat 60,000 Germans and cover 450 air-line miles of front with one division.

Gen. Malony established his "forgotten" front by putting Brig. Gen. Louis J. Fortier, Div Arty Commander, in charge of the Lorient pocket. Brig. Gen. Henry B. Cheadle took over the St. Nazaire sector. Gen. Malony set up headquarters at Chataubriant, and the complete pocketing of the Germans inside the "flak" cities was begun.

With the bulk of the German artillery concentrated in the Lorient sector, and because of suitable terrain, Gen. Fortier had the 301st, 356th and 390th FA Bns. with him to back up the 301st Inf. and, for most of the time, a battalion of the 302nd Inf.

Faced with a wide perimeter, Gen. Cheadle deployed the 376th and 302nd Infs. to the best advantage in the St. Nazaire sector, with the 919th FA Bn. providing the bulk of the big gun support.

The 94th Recon Troop was assigned the job of maintaining contact with the two sectors and keeping watch over sea traffic between the pockets by manning an island outpost under top secrecy for more than three months.

Faced with the long front and thin lines, the 94th was in no position for large-scale operations. However, the patrolling and counter-battery kept forces of both sides on constant edge.

Typical of the fighting was the stand put up by Pfc Dale Proctor, Omaha, Nebr., 301st. Manning an OP as a forward observer, he was mortally wounded while adjusting fire on a German patrol. Although hit by shrapnel, Proctor placed effective fire on Germans, then called his platoon CP with, "Sarge, you'd better send an aid man up here in a hurry. Someone's badly hurt." He was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross posthumously.

Pfc Herbert Austin, Indianapolis, 301st, was acting as point for his squad on patrol near Pont Scarf when machine guns opened up. Austin grabbed a sub-machine gun and charged three nests with an abandon which won him the admiration of his buddies and a DSC.

S/Sgt. Edward Love, Indianapolis, supply sergeant with the 94th Recon Troop, was on his way to relieve an outpost manning the ocean lookout when Germans

stormed the site. As his lightly-armed French naval craft approached the island, German E-boats set fire to and sank the boat. Although wounded, the sergeant fed ammunition to a French sailor who continued to fire the 37mm gun as the boat settled in shallow water. Loye was taken prisoner and spent seven days in a German hospital before he was released by the Germans "on credit" pending a prisoner exchange scheduled for Dec. 28.

Special Troops really earned the title in the Brittany campaign. The 94th Signal Co., which had to beg or borrow operational equipment when the division first landed, because of unloading delays in the Channel, set up and maintained more than 2000 miles of lines, utilizing U.S., French and German equipment. Message center jeeps qualified for so many "1000-mile" checks that, as long as motors started on cold mornings, inspections were dispensed with.

The 94th QM Co. had a terrific job. Establishing two railheads, then adding a third to meet increased demands, the division was supplied quickly and efficiently, despite the handicaps of decreased personnel and transportation. A central ammunition dump located near Vannes was able to keep the various units supplied without line outfits using their own transportation. The truck platoon hauled supplies, switched troops to reserve areas and moved into the line, displaced command posts, travelled hundreds of miles for ammunition, wherever it could be found. Most of the vehicles passed the 15,000-mile mark before requiring repairs.

The 319th Engrs. was split to give support to both pockets. Able Co. went to Gen. Fortier's Lorient pocket. H & S, Baker and Charlie Cos. joined Gen. Cheadle at St. Nazaire. Heavy traffic over the light-surfaced Brittany roads and the constant rain required continuous work by the engineers. When the 3rd Bn., 301st, launched the attack on Quiberon Peninsula to split the German lines, Able Co. performed excellently in clearing thick mine fields so doughs could make their three-pronged charge on the fortifications.

The 319th Medical Bn. also was required to divide equipment and personnel when it established two clearing stations to serve the sectors. One station operated near Nozay; the second set up shop in the vicinity of Plouay. Long channels of evacuation made it necessary for equipment, such as ambulances, to be in tip-top shape at all times; not once did the equipment fail. Company aid men became accustomed to hauling wounded as far as three miles on a stretcher.

Behind all this, command staffs worked night and day



to keep operations smooth. There wasn't a single T/O or T/E in the division that applied to the situation. French guerrillas who wanted to be soldiers needed supplies and training; the French civilian population presented problems due to refugees and bombed-out public utilities; the rapidity of underground communication necessitated unceasing vigilance.

Gen. Malony constantly was faced with the threat of an attempt by the Nazis to join the two pockets. Map disposition pins which should have represented regiments signified battalions and even companies. The reserve battalion was just as likely to be 75 miles away as 25 miles in case of need.

However, when the division finished 111 days of combat in Brittany, the two pockets had been very thoroughly pinned up. Blain and several other French towns had been liberated to ease the civilian situation. Twenty-nine battalions of French infantry had been trained and uniformly equipped to help in the defense of the area. Several thousand new German graves represented the fighting qualities of the 94th against overwhelming odds.

DURING the Brittany campaign three PW exchanges were made by the division which resulted in the liberation of 140 Allied soldiers, including 89 Americans, 32 French and three British. Among the British freed was Capt. Michael R. O. Foot, son of Brigadier R. D. Foot, chief of London's defenses against robot bombs and enemy aircraft. Andrew G. Hodges, the division American Red Cross Field Director, on a trip inside the German lines learned that the Germans would be willing to conduct a PW exchange at Lorient. Reporting this information to the Chief of Staff, Col. Earl C. Bergquist, St. Paul, Minn., Hodges was directed to act as an intermediary. Col. Bergquist, Lt. Col. William H. Patterson, Erie, Pa., Division G-1, and Hodges were in charge of the exchanges held Nov. 16 at Lorient and Nov. 29 at St. Nazaire. Maj. James H. Muhn, Ass't G-1, handled the final exchange Dec. 28 at Lorient. The division recovered every man except one who had been taken prisoner during the four months of fighting.

The 94th - VICTORY TEAM

WHEN the 94th Div. sped northward from the Brittany peninsula New Year's Day, 1945, it found itself in the thick of the coldest winter in Europe in years and the hottest fighting on the Western Front. The shift came in answer to Gen. Patton's request for an infantry division to help hold the Third Army front while forces in the north part of the Army zone whittled the neck of von Rundstedt's Ardennes salient.

Southeast of Luxembourg City, itself endangered by Rundstedt's wild gamble, Germans had thrown up what came to be known as the Siegfried Switch Line to protect the bulge of the German border and to act as a buffer to the main Siegfried Line east of the Saar River.

Beginning near Wies and Nennig on the Moselle river, running through Sinz, Butzdorf, Tettingen and Oberleuken in the center of Triangle and extending to Orscholz, the southern hinge, the Switch Line was a maze of pillboxes, bunkers, shelters, communication trenches, anti-tank ditches, mine fields, zeroed-in forests and dragon's teeth. Snowdrifts and frozen ground added to the dough's problems. Artillerymen often had to heat breechblocks to fire.

The division was ordered to dig in and sit tight as the main effort of Gen. Eisenhower's forces concentrated on eliminating the bulge. All along the Western Front

Allied lines had been pulled back to offset the effects of the German counter-offensive, thus cutting down the prospects of another Nazi drive.

By Jan. 7 the division had taken up positions along a line that included Dreisbach, Nohn, Mittel, Hellendorf, Borg, Wochern, to Besch. The 376th occupied the left zone along the Moselle and the 301st the right. The 302nd Combat Team returned to the division Jan. 10 after assisting the 28th Inf. Div. in manning defensive positions in northeastern France.

With the bulge whipped, Gen. Patton's Third Army began a series of limited objective attacks along the Army front to probe for possible routes of an all-out offensive. The 376th launched the first attack by the 94th Jan. 14, capturing the towns of Tettingen and Butzdorf. Catching the enemy off guard, the battalion continued its assault the next three days and grabbed Nennig, Wies and Berg. The first crack had been made in the Switch Line.

Despite weather which made the use of tracked vehicles extremely hazardous, a combat command of the 8th Armd. Div. joined the 94th on Jan. 19 and hooked up with the 302nd, which had relieved the 376th. The 302nd had the job of gouging a hole in the Switch Line so tanks could barrel through and cause havoc in the less fortified zones. Germans, attempting to break up these attacks, came back to recapture half of Nennig Jan. 22, fighting with tanks and infantry. Despite this temporary setback, Gen. Malony organized a team composed of the 302nd, 2nd Bn., 376th, an armored infantry battalion of the 8th

and regained Nennig, leaving only a few cellars in the entire town habitable. The odor of cordite permeated the area of Nennig for weeks afterward as result of the heavy firing by both sides. Adverse weather hampered operations; but the battles continued. A breach of the anti-tank defenses was effected near Berg Jan. 24.

It was in this fighting that T/Sgt. Arnold Petry, Long Beach, N. Y., led 22 men through seven days of horror, completely surrounded by the enemy, and brought them out in fighting trim. During the week, the men were fired on by both American and German artillery, subsisted on seven cans of C-rations, warded off trench foot, and repelled six attacks by German infantry.

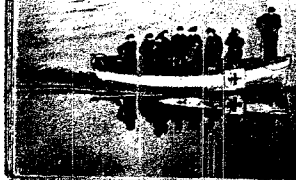
Renewing the assault Jan. 26, elements of the 302nd and 376th and the combat command advanced front lines 1500 yards, retaking Butzdorf. Next day, Germans were pushed back another 1000 yards after 12 hours of fierce fighting. After this action the combat command was relieved and the 301st replaced the 302nd. The 301st closed out the month of January by taking Bubingen.



The 302nd began the job of clearing out the Campholz Woods Feb. 2. First Bn. launched an attack which mopped up the woods and garnered more than 150 PWs. In the next three days, continuous counter-attacks by tanks and infantry were repulsed, pillboxes cleared.

In combatting a counter-attack by tanks of the German 11th Panzer Div., Pfc Virgil Hamilton, Joplin, Mo.; Cpl. Bernie H. Heck, Danvers, Ill.; and Cpl. Earl Vulgmore, Shallow Water, Kan., rear echelon soldiers at the time, won Silver Stars for knocking out with a bazooka — a weapon they never had previously fired — four German tanks attacking on the road to Butzdorf. Using the only 12 rounds of ammunition available, the group blasted the first tank at 40 yards, the last at 150 yards.

On Feb. 7 the division set the stage for the big offensive when the 301st stepped out and took Sinz in a bloody scrap and added pillboxes southeast of the town for good measure. The 302nd lashed out eight days later, with the aid of a heavy artillery concentration, to knock out pillboxes east of the Campholz Woods. Germans made a determined bid to retake the pillboxes that night but suffered heavy losses, including nine tanks, in regaining the ground.



However, printed facts hardly describe the story of those first five weeks on the Western Front. The nights of hand-carrying supplies; miserable days and nights huddling in foxholes filled with slush and water; dodging mortar and artillery shells which came at the slightest movement or sound.

Engineers toting dynamite hundreds of yards to pillbox locations taken, lost and retaken; house-to-house and corner-to-corner fighting and moving in on artilliered targets; dodging mine fields; fighting with the realization that taking a town didn't mean the end of incoming artillery and mortar fire.

It was pure hell along the Moselle.

THIS is not the full story of the 94th. Volumes would be required for that. Actions of the leaders played a vital part in the division's success. Such officers as Col. Roy N. Hagerty, 301st; Col. Earle A. Johnson, 302nd; Col. Harold H. McClune and Lt. Col. Raynor E. Anderson, 376th; Lt. Col. Hal S. Whitely, 356th; Lt. Col. Samuel L. Morrow, Jr., 301st FA; Lt. Col. James M. Caviness, 919th; Lt. Col. Robert G. Crandall, 390th; Lt. Col. Noel H. Ellis, 319th Engrs.; Lt. Col. Mathew A. Surell, Jr., 319th Medics; Lt. Col. Otto B. Cloudt, Lt. Col. Frank Norman, Lt. Col. William A. McNulty, Lt. Col. Russell M. Miner, Lt. Col. George W. Brumley, Lt. Col. Benjamin E. Thurston, Lt. Col. Arthur W. Hodges, Jr., Lt. Col. John W. Gaddis, Lt. Col. Francis Martin, Lt. Col. Francis V. Dohs, Lt. Col. George F. Miller,

Maj. Gilbert M. O'Neil, Maj. Earl L. Meyers, Maj. Thomas E. Kelley, Maj. Robert R. Miller, Maj. Eskel N. Miller, jr., Maj. John R. Dossenbach and Maj. Harold V. Maixner constantly were with their officers and men to get the most done.

The advances, gains, hard knocks and deeds of the 94th as recorded here have constituted teamwork on the part of many units as well as individuals. The help given by the 774th TD Bn., 81st Chemical Mortar Bn., 1301st Engr. (C) Bn., 748th Tank Bn., 81st Smoke Generator Co.; 465th AAA (AW) Bn.; 15th Cav. Ren. Sqdn.; 704th TD Bn.; 205th FA Gp., 3rd Cav. Gp., and 688th FA Bn. played a vital role in the division's scope of action.

To whatever new job the 94th is assigned, wherever duty calls, the division, proud of its achievements, is "On the Way" to Victory.



The Team

Name _____

Date Enlisted _____

Assigned to 94th _____

Battle Actions _____



AUTOGRAPHS

Photos: U.S. Signal Corps

Dräger - Paris





Story of the 97th INFANTRY DIVISION

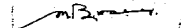


THERE is space in this small booklet to recount only a few of the numerous instances of skill, initiative and determination displayed by you, the members of the 97th Infantry Division in combat in Europe.

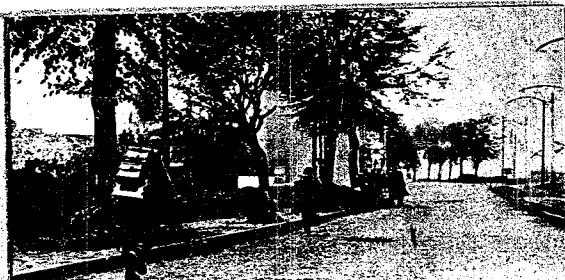
In our engagements in the ETO, your valor and determination never slackened. The concerted drives of the 97th Division never faltered. While much of your work was spectacular, let me record that the principal measure of success is attributable to the workmanship and the professional approach by all ranks to the varied tasks assigned them. As Commander of this Division, I congratulate you for the magnificent job you performed in the Battle of the Ruhr Pocket and repeated in the Czechoslovakian campaign.

With the background of training for the Pacific Ocean Area which so fortunately we have, we rightfully regard V-E Day as furnishing for us just a brief pause for re-adjustment before a drive for final victory.

The 97th Infantry Division will be ready for its next task. My confidence in the wearers of the Trident being well founded, is unlimited.


Brigadier General, Commanding

This is one of a series of G. I. Stories of the Ground, Air, and Service Forces in the European Theater, issued by the Operations Branch, Information and Education Division, Hqs., G. I. C. E. I., Brigadier General M. B. Halsey, commanding the 97th Infantry Division, lent his cooperation, and basic material was supplied by his staff.



THE STORY OF THE **97th** INFANTRY DIVISION

MAY 6, 1945: Deep in the heart of Czechoslovakia, the fighting men of Brig. Gen. M. B. Halsey's 97th Infantry Division grimly slashed ahead to Pilsen against sporadic Nazi resistance.

Exploding 88s, chattering German machine guns and whining sniper bullets offered proof enough that the war wasn't over, even if the end were in sight.

While America prematurely celebrated Germany's unconditional surrender, members of the Trident Division fully were aware of Field Marshal von Kesselring's declaration that his Seventh Army never would surrender; that the SS coordinator for the Czechoslovakian area repeatedly emphasized the Nazi defenders would "fight

to the bitter end; " that the German-controlled radio in Prague still called upon all Nazis to resist Allied forces by every available means.

At this very moment, the 97th was the point of a wedge—a wedge relentlessly hammering Kesselring's defending forces. On its left flank was the famed 1st Infantry Division; on its right, the veteran 2nd Division.

As this powerful striking force regrouped, ready to lash ahead, the end came. At 0816, May 7, the order flashed: " Halt in place! "

But even as men of the Trident Division waited for the official announcement of the surrender to come from Washington, London and Moscow, a lone German fighter plane swooped down to strafe the CP of the 3rd Bn., 303rd Regt.

The 97th had learned the hard way that Nazis die hard. It was with grim satisfaction that this new division also learned that Germans die.

During its brief combat history, the 97th proved its effectiveness by capturing 48,796 prisoners and occupying more than 2000 square miles of " sacred soil. " Among cities captured by the division were Dusseldorf, one of the great industrial centers in the Ruhr-Rhine valley; Solingen, headquarters for one of the world's largest manufacturers of cutlery; Siegburg, home of the Glockner Machine Works; Leverkusen, location of the I. G. Farben Industry, one of the world's largest chemical works;

Cheb (Eger), first major Czechoslovakian city liberated by American forces.

The 97th Inf. Div. is relatively new in the annals of military history. It originally was organized in September, 1918, but was demobilized Nov. 20 of the same year and reconstituted an organized reserve unit. The 303rd Inf. Regt. and the 303rd FA Bn. are the only elements now with the division that boast battle streamers from World War I.

The 97th's story in the present global conflict begins with its reactivation Feb. 25, 1943, at Camp Swift, Tex., under the command of Maj. Gen. Louis A. Craig, and extends through V-E Day in Czechoslovakia. Gen. Halsey assumed command Jan. 23, 1944, and it was under his leadership that the 97th established an admirable record in the Battle of Germany.

The division was new when it landed at the French port of Le Havre, but it was well-trained. That training paid dividends. It is a long way from the swamps of the Louisiana maneuver area to the woodlands north of the Sieg River, but methods and tactics were the same.

The precision and skill that enabled Div Arty to score bull's-eyes in firing problems at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., produced direct hits on enemy installations in the Ruhr Pocket.

Practice landings on the sunny beaches of California

near Camp San Luis Obispo were not unlike the crossing of the Sieg River in the face of fire from the German 3rd Paratroop Div.

The Neptune's Trident, distinguished insignia of the 97th Division, originally was designed to represent Maine, Vermont and New Hampshire, the states from which division personnel first was drawn in 1918. Now it represents the courage, initiative and skill of its fighting men who came from every state in the Union.

Maine and New Hampshire are bordered in part by the Atlantic Ocean, hence Neptune's Trident imposed on a Saxon shield. The blue symbolizes the numerous fresh water lakes scattered throughout the three states; the white of the border and Trident represent the snows that cover these states' mountains.



First Strike AGAINST THE FATHERLAND

AT 1725, March 28, 1945, division headquarters rolled across the German border a few miles west of Aachen. A short time later, it passed through the streets of the battered city which Hitler once said never would be taken by the Allies.

The division's first assignment was taking up defensive positions along the western bank of the Rhine River opposite Dusseldorf. Here, 97th doughs captured their first prisoners, killed their first Nazi soldiers.

The 389th FA Bn., commanded by Lt. Col. Lawrence G. Kiely, Billings, Mont., fired the first round against the enemy. A 155mm howitzer shell demolished an installation in the suburbs of Dusseldorf.

The 303rd, a light artillery battalion, commanded by Lt. Col. Joseph W. Redding, Jeannette, Pa., fired on an enemy gun emplacement across the Rhine in Div Arty's first combat mission. One less German gun emplacement was the result of that round. Members of the gun crew were S/Sgt. Sherman Girdler, Somerset, Ky.; Cpl. James K. Allen, Chicago; Pfc Michael L. Nocera, Exeter, Pa.; Pfc Alfred C. Barnow, Boston; Pfc Jack R. Clarke, Inde-

pendence, Kan.; Pfc Marion D. Myler, Ironton, Ohio; Pfc Remundo Garcia, Phoenix, Ariz.; Pfc Chester S. Pomeranz, Bronx, N. Y.; Pvt. Roy R. Ulness, Strum, Wis.

The 922nd FA Bn., under the command of Lt. Col. William V. Feñton, Lakeland, Fla., and the 365th FA Bn., under Lt. Col. Alfred E. Graham, Oklahoma City, Okla., fired numerous missions across the Rhine, destroying road junctions and blasting enemy gun emplacements.

During the first week of April, the 97th entered its second phase of the war—the Battle of the Ruhr Pocket.

The division moved south, crossing the Rhine near Bonn to establish positions along the southern bank of the Sieg River which runs at right angles to the Rhine. The division front extended eastward from the Rhine approximately 30 miles.

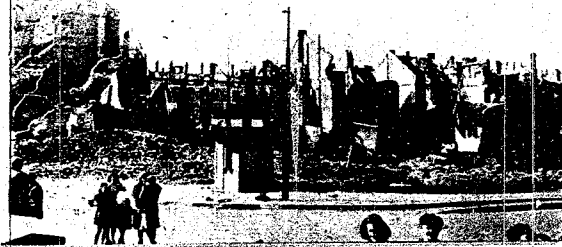
On the north bank of the Sieg and facing the 97th was the German 3rd Paratroop Div., which later proved to be one of the toughest and most fanatical units in the entire Ruhr Pocket. In addition, German forces opposite the 97th sector consisted of the 353rd Inf. Div., 59 Inf. Div. and 7th Flak Div.

A brisk exchange of mortar fire began as soon as the 97th went into the line along the river front. Initiative and skill favored the Trident. Capt. Glenn B. Peterson, Alta, Ia., and 2nd Lt. Jack M. Silverman, Bayonne, N. J., 303rd, located an enemy mortar by determining the trajectory of a dud.

The two officers rushed to a nearby house when an enemy shell pierced the roof and an exterior wall before burying itself in the floor without exploding. By placing a long stick in the floor and pointing it along the line formed by the holes in the wall and roof, they ascertained the azimuth and elevation of the shell. A series of division 81s whammed back along the same route taken by the dud. The enemy mortar failed to return the fire.

The incident typified the initiative of 97th officers and men as they held positions along the Sieg. Then came the order from XVIII Airborne Corps, First Army. It meant one thing—attack!

The 97th was poised for its first major action. What doughs lacked in experience they made up in courage and determination. A typical infantryman's attitude was that of Pvt. Remsen Hunnewell, New York City, 303rd, who said prior to the jump-off: "I'm raring to go. I don't think any of us are nervous. We're just tired of waiting."





97TH *Buttons Up* THE RUHR POCKET

APRIL 7, 1945, 1100 hours: The relative silence was shattered by booming howitzers and a "claud-burst" of 105 and 155mm shells pouring down on enemy positions across the river from the 386th Regt.'s sector. For 30 minutes all four Div Arty battalions laid down concentrated fire. Then, as suddenly as it started, the preparation stopped.

At exactly 1200, the 386th Combat Team, under the command of Col. Samuel M. Lansing, spurred forward, crossing the Sieg in engineer assault boats. Resistance was light because the enemy's main defenses still reeled from artillery's punishing blows. Casualties were negligible. Training, coupled with surprise, paid off.

Once on the opposite shore, the 386th CT immediately regrouped and pressed the attack northward. The first

step in the 97th's initial major combat mission was successful. The right flank of the division front poked forward.

Next day, the 387th Combat Team, commanded by Col. William D. Long, jumped off to cross the Sieg in the central sector of the division's front. The crossing was effected against light enemy resistance. Main support of the crossing was furnished by the 922nd Light Artillery Bn. The unit consolidated and the second 97th spearhead stabbed northward into the Ruhr.

On the left flank, Col. William B. Forse's 303rd Combat Team awaited the command to attack. The order was given April 9. The Arty again laid down a heavy



concentration of fire and, at 1800 hours, 303rd infantrymen struck across the river. The crossing was made against medium resistance but the clearing of Siegburg, directly in the 303rd's route of advance, and the buttoning up of the Glockner Works at Troisdorf, near Siegburg, resulted in one of the toughest battles of the Ruhr Pocket campaign.

The regiment ripped through two-thirds of Siegburg during the first five hours of the attack. Doughs used grenades, machine guns and small arms fire to stifle the German 3rd Paratroop Div's bitter resistance. However, Col. Forse's troops cleared virtually all of the city by nightfall and a CP was established in the southern part of the town.

The attack continued the following morning with rapid progress until the 303rd reached the Glockner Works, a machine factory. Co. G was assigned the mission of cleaning out the factory as the remainder of the division carried the assault into Troisdorf.

One platoon was immediately cut off as it entered the factory buildings. The remainder of the company soon was forced to withdraw to the north side of the area. Battalion headquarters rushed additional forces to the rescue when it learned the job was too much for a rifle company. Meanwhile, the isolated platoon sustained casualties. Several men were killed or wounded. Heroism was commonplace.



Pfc Clyde T. Crouch, Dunn, Pa., platoon aid man, was killed while braving enemy fire in an attempt to administer first aid to one of the wounded. Pfc Donald E. Rappaport, Evanston, Ill., was injured by a concussion grenade when he attempted to rescue Crouch.

Under the leadership of Sgt. Leslie Fishman, Los Angeles, the platoon took up defensive positions in a house inside the factory grounds at twilight. Pfc Maurice A. Stack, Doniphan, Mo., applying his knowledge of first aid, was instrumental in saving the lives of three wounded men.

The night was a long nightmare for the platoon. German 88s bombarded the vicinity incessantly. To leave the building meant death or capture. Members of the platoon repulsed repeated Nazi attacks.

Sgt. Fishman undertook a desperate gamble next

morning. Disregarding enemy fire, he made his way to an underground enemy bunker which offered protection to approximately 70 Germans. Second Lt. David W. Christianson, a company officer who was cut off with the platoon, soon joined the sergeant and the pair persuaded the Nazis to conduct them to enemy headquarters.

Admitting they were hopelessly surrounded but warning the Germans that more Americans were on the way, Sgt. Fishman and Lt. Christianson effected the surrender of six officers and 170 men. This action led to the capture of the factory without further casualties. Sgt. Fishman was awarded the Silver Star for his outstanding leadership.

Meanwhile, the remainder of Co. G, reinforced by other elements of the regiment, battled the enemy in the



tunnels and rooms under the factory building. Under the command of Capt. Thomas W. Mellen, Burlingame, Calif., Co. G turned flame throwers on the Nazis just as the garrison surrendered.

With Siegburg cleared and the Glockner Works captured, the company rejoined the 303rd, pressing rapidly forward several miles further north.

The 97th's three spearheads now drove into the heart of the Ruhr according to plan. The pattern formed by the triple-thrust resembled a giant Trident pointing northwest in the general direction of Dusseldorf. All four battalions of Div. Arty crossed the Sieg. Many enemy guns and vehicles still smoldered as infantrymen pushed ahead.

Back at the Sieg River, the 322nd Engr. Bn., commanded by Lt. Col. Erland A. Tillman, Fort Collins, Colo., undertook the tremendous job of building an adequate number of bridges to accommodate the flow of supplies and reinforcements across the river.

During the first five days of the operation, the 322nd, assisted by the 1052nd and 1024th Engr. Bns., constructed five treadway bridges, two infantry support bridges and six infantry support rafts. In addition, two blown bridges were repaired and one railroad bridge was planked. Engineers also were faced with the task of clearing mine fields. At times, they fought as infantrymen to accomplish their mission.

Co. B, commanded by Capt. Edward F. Gerrity, captured the first German general for the division. A squad under Sgt. Oliver Roach, Kenton, Ohio, was pushing along a road when it fell upon a group of Germans. The Krauts immediately dispersed and opened fire on the engineers. After a brief skirmish in which one German was killed and another wounded, Maj. Gen. Freiherr von Ulsar-Gleichen, who had served as military commander at Dusseldorf for two and a half years, surrendered with his men.



TRIDENT'S PRONG *Stab* DUSSELDORF

ALL three combat teams slashed ahead in near perfect coordination despite extremely difficult terrain and fanatical resistance in densely-wooded areas.

Col. Lansing's 386th CT had a tough nut to crack when it moved into the town of Drabenderhoehe. Germans produced intense fire with 88s, 20mm guns, 40mm dual-purpose flak guns, small arms and automatic weapons.

From a defensive standpoint, the town was ideally situated. Perched atop the highest hill in the area, Drabenderhoehe, communications center and roadnet hub, loomed as the greatest single threat to the 97th's advance. In order to prevent a wide gap from developing on 2nd Bn.'s flank, a single company was given the job of taking the town. The assignment fell to Co. C, commanded by Capt. Llewellyn R. Johnson.

Co. C attacked, but after a short, fierce battle was thrown back with heavy casualties. After the 365th Bn. laid down an artillery barrage, Capt. Johnson's company again surged forward, this time with complete success.

The battle was brief, but it produced heroism unexcelled in other battles of the Ruhr. Capt. Johnson moved out in front of his troops and led an advance over

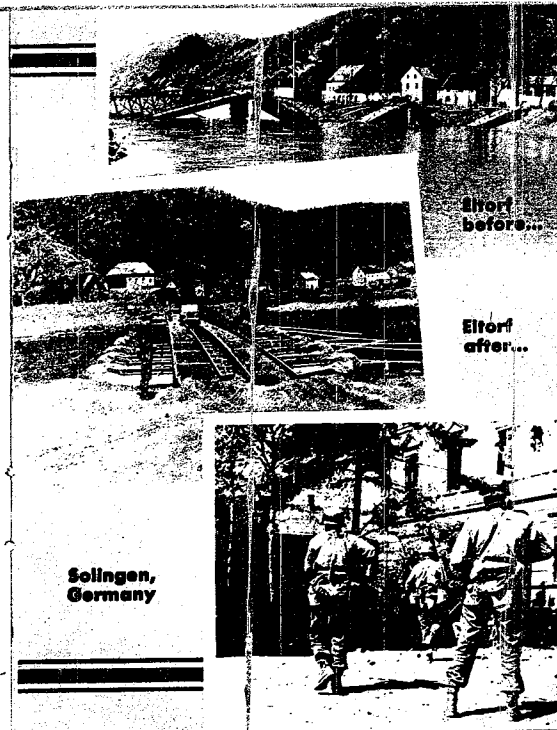
1500 yards of fire-swept terrain in the attack that took the town. He was awarded the Silver Star for this action.

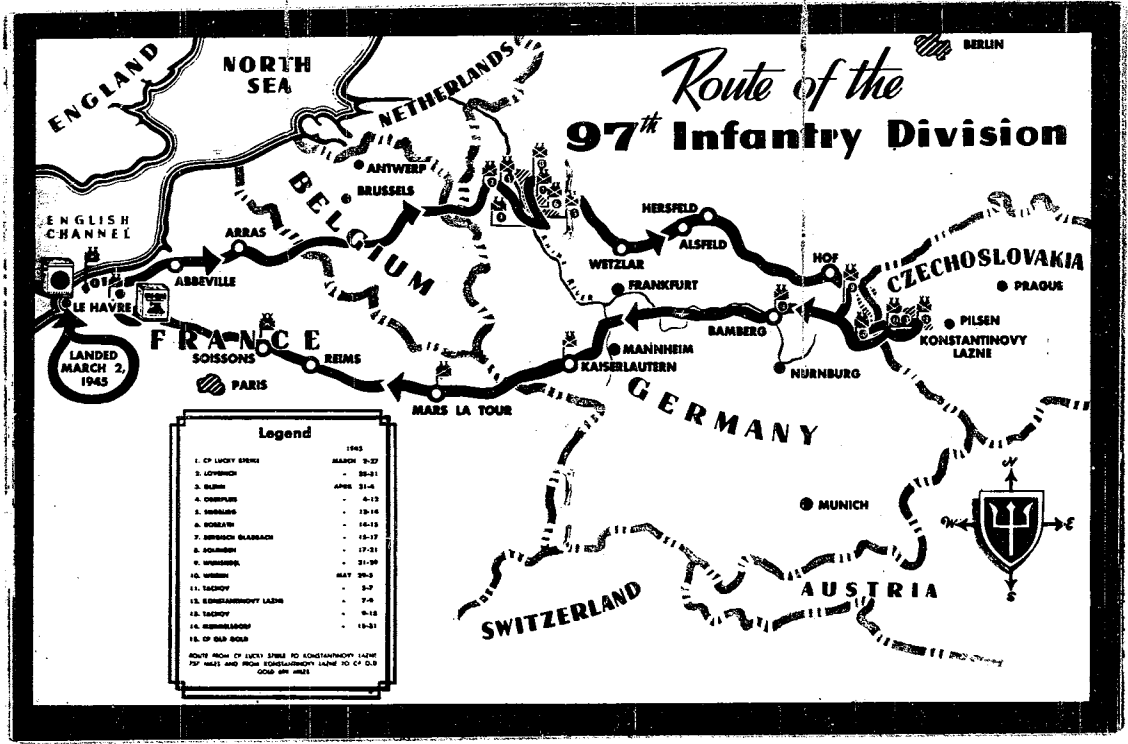
T/Sgt. Merlin C. Godsell, Hales Corner, Wis., 386th, also played an important part in the capture of Drabenderhoehe. In the first attack, fire from enemy automatic weapons isolated approximately half a rifle platoon. The sergeant, acting leader of the platoon, regrouped and rallied his men, advanced in the face of heavy enemy fire, to knock out four enemy automatic weapons. Destruction of these weapons resulted in an unprotected enemy flank, which Capt. Johnson exploited to capture the town.

Although Col. Long's 387th CT made rapid progress against strong points in the central sector of the division front, the enemy offered stiff resistance in wooded areas. Each town was a battle in itself. But the courage and determination of the men made them equal to the task.

One of the outstanding incidents of courage, loyalty and devotion displayed in the entire campaign occurred in the small German town of Allner when Co. F, 387th, met heavy enemy resistance as it moved in. During the fighting, 1st Lt. Guy A. Ringbloom, Minneapolis, Minn., saw one of his platoon fall, completely exposed to enemy fire.

Disregarding personal danger, the lieutenant made his way to the wounded man and attempted to move him to a place of safety. He was mortally wounded as he assisted the injured dough out of the line of fire.





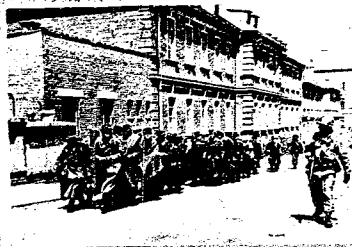
**Entering Cheb (Eger),
Czechoslovakia**



**German Traffic
Guide: Cheb**



**Sudeten
Germans**



Pfc Glen R. Speidel, Burlington, Ia., another member of the lieutenant's platoon, was concealed from enemy observation and fire when the officer fell. He immediately left his position for the fallen platoon leader, but was killed instantly as he attempted to drag the wounded officer to safety.

On the left flank, the 303rd whipped north from Siegburg against relatively light resistance. On April 14, the regiment was in the vicinity of Leverkusen, site of the I. G. Farben Industry.

Div Arty bombarded the town, then infantrymen closed in. A few hours later the 303rd continued its advance, leaving the industrial center a pile of smouldering rubble.

On April 16, all three combat teams crossed the Wupper River and advanced against steadily increasing enemy resistance. The 386th reached the outskirts of Solingen as the 303rd advanced through Hilden, and the 387th pushed approximately 4000 yards north of the Wupper. In close support of these rapid advances, Div Arty fired 97 missions, a total of 3000 rounds.

The main German defenses rapidly were disintegrating. Large masses of Nazi prisoners surrendered everywhere.

The 386th attacked Solingen on the morning of April 17, occupied the city one hour after launching the assault. Before the day was over, roads throughout the entire division area were clogged with PWs. Div Arty was



charged with handling the prisoners so that communications and transportation could be cleared back of the advancing troops.

Both the 386th and 387th CTs pressed on to the Rhine River in an attempt to cut the escape route for German forces left in the division sector. Meanwhile, the 303rd neared the outskirts of the final objective—Dusseldorf.

This huge industrial city, nerve center for the entire Ruhr-Rhine district, rested on the east bank of the Rhine. Government center of the entire area, Dusseldorf's peacetime population was 400,000 to 500,000.

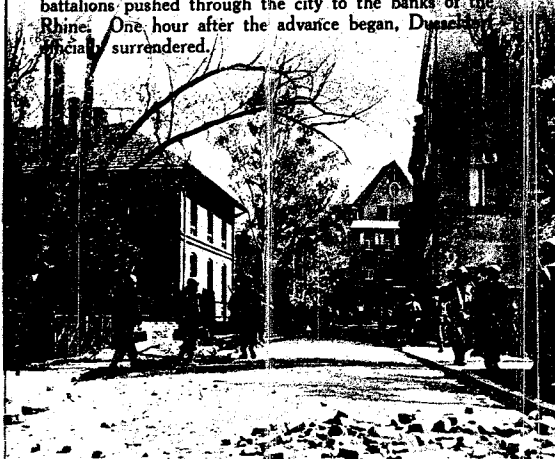
As the 303rd prepared to attack, a "free" movement gained momentum within the city. The purpose of the action was to salvage the remnants of the once proud industrial center.

Third Bn., 303rd, commanded by Lt. Col. Victor Wallace, received official credit for its capture. The battalion had established a CP in the city's outskirts late April 16. The attack against the city was to begin the following day. Early in the evening, two representatives

of the "free" movement visited the CP, promising the city's surrender without further resistance. Notified of the action, Gen. Halsey went to the CP where arrangements were completed.

Early April 17, elements of 3rd Bn., accompanied by the general, rolled into Dusseldorf and went directly to the police praesidium, headquarters of the Gestapo and city police.

Meanwhile, elements of the regiment's other two battalions pushed through the city to the banks of the Rhine. One hour after the advance began, Dusseldorf officially surrendered.



10 Fighting Doughs - 10 POTENTIAL HEROES

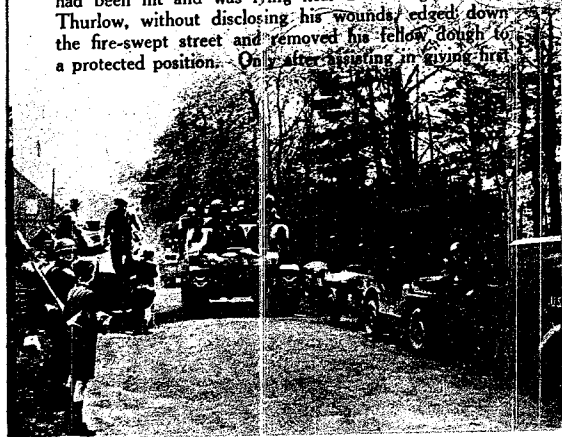
DURING the lightning 10-day campaign, the Trident Division had driven forward along a front varying from 20 to 30 miles in width, over extremely difficult terrain, to clear nearly 1000 square-miles of enemy territory, and had taken literally thousands of German towns and cities. In addition, the 97th had captured or destroyed more than 2000 German vehicles, 109 88mm guns and truckloads of small arms, automatic weapons and ammunition.

The campaign, which lopped off a huge slice of the Ruhr Pocket in the angle formed by the convergence of the Sieg and Rhine Rivers, cost the German Army 21,791 prisoners, plus an undetermined number of killed and wounded.

The first major combat mission proved the division's worth under fire. In the short period of 10 days, green troops had become hard-fighting veterans. During those bitter days in the Ruhr, many heroes were born. Some of them were not present for the final count. One officer said, "Wherever there were 10 fighting doughs, there were 10 potential heroes."

When Co. K, 303rd, was held up by heavy enemy artillery and automatic weapons fire, Pfc Max T. Valdez, Taos, N. M., located a machine gun and, with only one hand grenade, crawled up to the enemy gun and knocked it out, killing three of the crew. The action allowed his company to continue the advance and seize its objective without casualties.

While leading a machine gun squad in an attack through Kaltenberg, Pfc Hughie A. Thurlow, Midland, Mich., Co. A, 386th, was wounded. Noticing one of his buddies had been hit and was lying near a burning building, Thurlow, without disclosing his wounds, edged down the fire-swept street and removed his fellow dough to a protected position. Only after assisting in giving him



aid to this and other wounded men did he reveal that he had been hit.

Capt. Mettauer E. Davidson, Raleigh, N. C., Co. B, 386th, was awarded the Silver Star for outstanding courage and leadership in the fighting at Stein, Germany. In attacking the town his company was held up by strong automatic weapons and self-propelled gun fire from an enemy road block. During the attack against the obstacle, the captain suffered severe wounds in both legs and his right arm. Refusing medical aid, he adjusted the fire of his 60mm mortar section on the position. When fire failed to silence the enemy defense, he gave orders to an 81mm mortar platoon which neutralized the obstacle and enabled his company to capture the town.

At Schaaren, Germany, 2nd Lt. Cecil L. Eyestone, Burrton, Kan., 387th, was leading a Co. C platoon in destroying an enemy artillery position which was holding up the company advance. While establishing a base of fire, he was struck in the face by shrapnel. Despite this wound, he took charge of the assault squads and led the attack. Forty yards from the German emplacement, the lieutenant received a severe wound in his leg, but he continued to pace his men in a charge. Considerable enemy were killed or captured when the position was overrun. Lt. Eyestone refused medical attention for himself until the other wounded members of his platoon had received proper care.

In the same battle, Pfc Francis S. Compton, Grafton, Ill., an automatic rifleman with Co. C, 386th, was seriously wounded in the right shoulder by shell fragments as he moved into position to establish a base of fire. Unable to operate his weapon, he gave it to his squad leader and continued to advance with others. During the remainder of the engagement he assisted in locating enemy targets and in carrying and passing ammunition for the weapon.

There were others, such as 1st Lt. Joseph R. Wimsatt, Co. L, 386th who, with a single rifle platoon, surprised and captured two enemy artillery platoons, four artillery pieces, three automatic weapons and forced an armored vehicle to withdraw.

Pfc Alvin J. Caprara, Co. B, 387th, firing his machine gun from the hip, charged into the midst of enemy forces that pinned down his company at the approaches to a town. Completely on his own, he broke through the outer defenses of the town, continued down the main street and pumped heavy fire into the buildings. His



squad moved in and occupied the town without opposition.

Pfc John Hedrick, Co. F, 303rd, seized an abandoned assault boat while under heavy enemy fire and used the craft to help ferry troops across the Sieg River.

Pvt. John O. Beauchamp, Jr., Co. L, 386th, raised himself to his knees in the thick of battle and fired at an enemy emplacement in order to point it out to his comrades. He was killed by a burst from a hostile gun.

A prize example of initiative and leadership was displayed by 1st/Sgt. Ralph W. Colver, Co. C, 387th. The mission of his five-man patrol was to mop up Ober Wintershide. After passing through the town, the patrol discovered an enemy artillery battery of three guns, fully manned, and protected by automatic weapons. Sgt. Colver decided to attack. He placed his men within 100 yards of the guns and opened fire on the crews and a nearby ammunition dump. Taken completely by surprise, the enemy frantically attempted to depress its guns and turn them on the patrol, but the ammunition dump, struck by the patrol fire, exploded. The German positions were demolished, several Nazis killed.

Although it was the infantrymen who drove into the very teeth of enemy defenses, they were not without support. Light artillery battalions blasted paths before them, knocking out heavy weapons emplacements and fortified positions. The 303rd Bn. supported the drive of the 303rd Regt., while the 922nd backed up the attacks

of the 387th. On the right flank, the 365th supported the 386th Regt. The 389th, a medium artillery battalion, slammed its 155mm shells with deadly accuracy wherever enemy positions were toughest.

Supply was one of the biggest problems of the operation. With every mile the 97th troops advanced, supply routes became longer, more difficult. Lt. Col. Ward T. Blacklock, Austin, Tex., and his "Cargo Jockeys" overcame all obstacles and kept a steady stream of supplies rolling from Bonn, across the Rhine, and the Sieg to the fighting men deep in the heart of the Ruhr Pocket.

The performance of the 97th QM Co., under Capt. Elwood G. Lohela, Jackson, Mich., was exemplified by ten men who worked on a camouflage project in conjunction with the British Second Army on the west bank of the Rhine.

These men were 1st Lt. Thomas L. Wilson, Paris, Ill.; Pfc George Dehn, Mishawaka, Ind.; Cpl. Curtis E. Emerson, Wolverton, Minn.; Cpl. Norman M. Andrews, David, Calif.; T/5 Bernard L. Pendleton, Campbellsville, Ky.; Sgt. Sylvester V. Sineri, Mt. Kisco, N. Y.; T/5 Jonathan E. Smith, Falmouth, Ky.; Pfc Robert E. Waldron, Doylestown, Ohio; Pfc Hiram B. Van Akystyne, Albany, N. Y., and T/4 Harmon Taylor, Arlington, Tenn.

The unit worked under enemy artillery fire to complete one of the largest camouflage operations of the war. Commending their work was Maj. George Dobson Wells

of British Second Army Main Headquarters, who wrote: "On behalf of their British colleagues alongside whom they have worked most willingly and efficiently, I wish to express sincere appreciation of their cooperation."

Playing a vital role in the Ruhr campaign was the 97th Recon Troop, under the command of Capt. John J. Swainbank, St. Albans, Vt. Besides its customary reconnaissance and patrolling duties, the unit once was charged with protecting the entire left flank of the division.

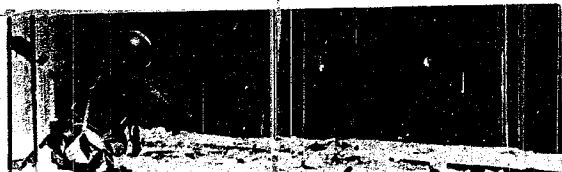
Contributing to the 97th's success were such units as the 97th Signal Co., under the command of Capt. Sanford M. Kaat, Grand Rapids Mich., and the 797th Ordnance Co. Division ordnance officer was Lt. Col. Melvin B. Harris, North Bergen, N. J.

An outstanding performance was turned in by members of the 322nd Medical Bn. The medics, in the detachments as well, were equal to every task. Individual initiative and heroism were commonplace.

On one occasion, Pfc Jack L. Cotter, Sandusky, Ohio, and Pfc Russell W. Fox, Andes, N. Y., cut off from the rest of their units on the north side of the Sieg, set up an aid station where they continued to administer first aid.

In another campaign, 12 medics were captured. Freed by 97th doughs a few days later, they spurned a rest period in a rear area in favor of resuming their duties.

Lt. Col. Leslie P. Herd, Elizabethton, Tenn., was CO of the 322nd Medical Bn. during the Ruhr Pocket fighting.



On the March WHEN THE BELL RANG

WITH the end of the Battle of the Ruhr Pocket, the 97th was ordered to the Third Army sector along the Czechoslovakian border. Its mission was to protect the left flank of Gen. Patton's spearhead, plunging southward toward the National Redoubt.

The major offensive action for the 97th was the seizure of Cheb (Eger), war factory, administration and communications center, site of a large airport.

Division headquarters moved to Wunsiedel, Germany, and the combat teams took up positions along the Czechoslovakian border. The 97th became operational under XII Corps, Third Army, April 23, 1945.

Two days later, 3rd Bn., 387th, jockeyed into position at dawn. At 0900 the attack on Cheb got under way, spearheaded by Co. I, commanded by Capt. Harold F. Selesky, Rochelle Park, N. J., and Co. K, under Capt. John R. Wilson, Sikeston, Mo.

Doughs met strong resistance from mortars, machine guns, small arms, 88s and rockets as the attack swept into the southwest section of the city. Mine fields and booby traps also impeded the advance. But despite stiff opposition, doughs drove ahead and by 1800, nine hours after the attack began, they were in the center of the city. Most of the enemy garrison defending Cheb withdrew before the advancing infantrymen. Only scattered sniper resistance remained.

Partial credit for the capture of Cheb goes to 2nd Bn., 386th, commanded by Lt. Col. Dale B. Lillywhite, Los Angeles. The 386th had been advancing only a short distance north of the 387th and along a parallel course. Before the 387th succeeded in penetrating strong defenses in the southwestern sector, elements of the battalion entered the city's northwest corner. This advance constituted a pincers threat. As soon as contact between the two units had been established, the 386th withdrew from the city.

Direct artillery support for 387th troops was furnished by the 922nd FA Bn. The 775th, 771st and 731st FA Bns. supported both 387th's and 386th's advances.

Cheb was the first major Czechoslovakian city to be liberated by American forces. It was one of the 37 towns and cities that fell to 97th Division troops in the first two days of fighting along the Czechoslovakian border.

Despite bad weather, which slowed operations in the

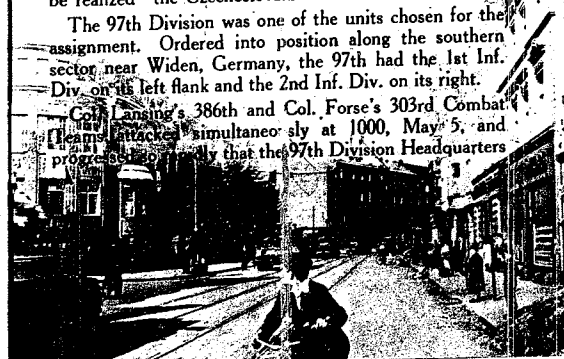
entire sector, 3rd Bn., 387th, made preparations to attack dug-in enemy positions at the Cheb airfield. Following a 30-minute artillery barrage supported by tanks from the 782nd Tank Bn. and by two platoons of the 820th TD Bn., 3rd Bn. attacked at 1500, April 28. Within a few hours, the airfield was overrun and secured with extremely light casualties to 97th troops. More than 600 prisoners were taken in the brief engagement.

By now, German troops in Italy, Austria and northern Germany were surrendering by thousands. Soviet forces had taken Berlin; Hitler was reported dead.

However, one more phase remained before the complete and utter defeat of all German forces in Europe could be realized—the Czechoslovakian Pocket.

The 97th Division was one of the units chosen for the assignment. Ordered into position along the southern sector near Widen, Germany, the 97th had the 1st Inf. Div. on its left flank and the 2nd Inf. Div. on its right.

Col. Lansing's 386th and Col. Forse's 303rd Combat Team attacked simultaneously at 1000, May 5, and progressed so rapidly that the 97th Division Headquarters



was able to follow across the Czechoslovakian border four hours later. Consequently, the 97th became the first U.S. division to set up a CP in Czechoslovakia.

During the first 15 hours of the campaign, infantrymen chalked up gains of 15 miles and by next afternoon, 97th troops had advanced up to 28 miles. All enemy resistance along the division front disintegrated; German soldiers surrendered en masse. An entire enemy field artillery battalion surrendered to Capt. Oliver M. Smith, communications officer, 387th Inf. Regt.

Col. Long's 387th was in reserve during the first day of the attack, but it roared into battle at 0600, May 6, advancing with the other combat teams, despite its heavily mined sector and all bridges blown in its path. The 922nd FA Bn., part of the combat team, remained in the lines lending support to the other regiments throughout the attack.

In 30 hours—from the signal to attack until the order to halt all advances—the Trident Division drove 28 miles along a 25-mile front to clear 700 square miles of enemy-held territory. During the first 14 hours of the assault, 10,696 prisoners were taken. One hundred and twenty communities including Mesto, Tepla, Lestkov, Mesto Touskov and Kladruby were liberated by 97th elements in the swift advance.

All offensive activity suddenly ceased pending the announcement by governmental heads of the United

States, Great Britain and the Soviet Union that the war in Europe officially was ended.

The last shot in the European conflict had been fired. Now there was time for a brief pause to reflect. The military record of the 97th Division was inspiring. Many medals had been awarded for brilliant performances, but there also had been posthumous awards.

V-E Day was observed at religious services throughout the division. Gen. Halsey issued the following statement:

Victory in Europe has been attained and the cloud of Nazi oppression has been lifted forever. It is with a very real sense of pride and joy, and deepest sincerity, that I, as commander of the 97th Trident Division, congratulate you, the men of this organization, for your loyalty, courage, initiative and determination in combat. Your accomplishments and your high standards are a credit to yourselves and to your organization.

Though the combat history of this division has been relatively short, the part we played in bringing about the downfall of German forces on all fronts has been of utmost importance. You, as members of the division, can look back for many years and say, "The Trident was on the march when the bell rang."

Even as we rejoice in victory, however, there is sadness in our hearts, for the road through the Ruhr

Pocket and into Czechoslovakia is marked by crosses bearing the names of our comrades who valiantly and unselfishly gave their lives that the cause of freedom might endure and flourish.

We thank the merciful Almighty God for the victory He has given us in Europe. Let us remember Him. On Sunday, May 13, 1945, let us join the millions of thankful people the world over in worship.

In our hearts we pray that God will remain with us in the tasks that lie ahead, for the division as a unit and for each and every one of us as individuals. What lies ahead for the wearers of the Trident, I cannot say, but the Trident Division will be at the right place, at the right time, and with a military record that justifies the pride and loyalty of all its members.



The Team

AUTOGRAPHS

Name _____

Date Enlisted _____

Assigned to 97th _____

Battle Actions _____

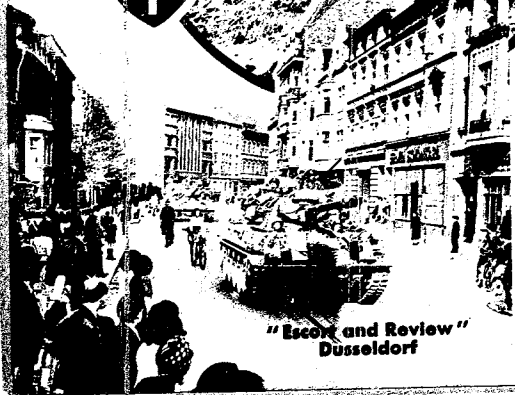
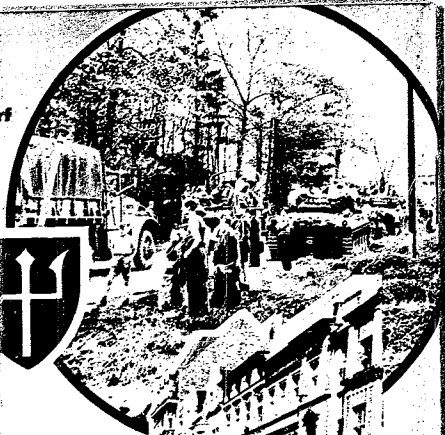
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PASSED BY CENSOR FOR MAILING HOME



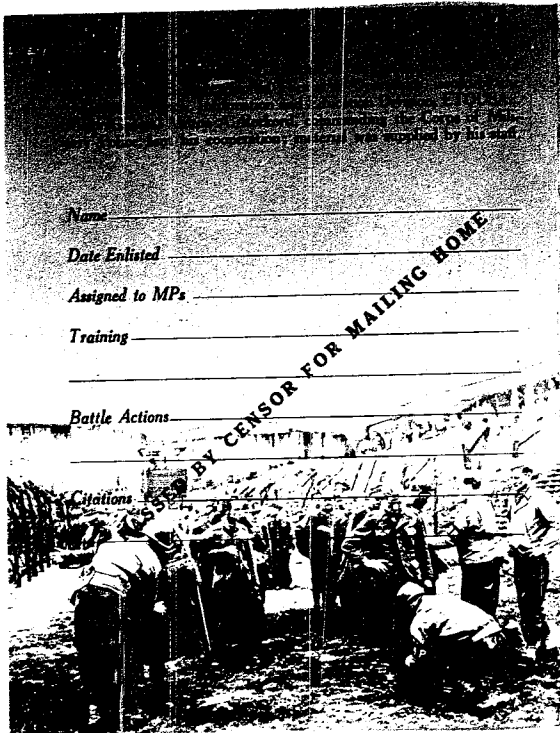
Photos: U. S. Signal Corp.

**Outside
Dusseldorf**



**"Escort and Review"
Dusseldorf**





Name _____

Date Enlisted _____

Assigned to MPs _____

Training _____

Battle Actions _____

Citations _____

I dedicate this little booklet to all MPs. In a small way it reveals the immense job done by the Military Police in the European Theater, from the traffic pointsman to the Field Provost Marshal.

Looking back over the road we have traveled, we can be justly proud of our many accomplishments. Each member of the Corps, by doing his duty, has contributed materially to the speedy and complete victory of our armies.

Therefore, with the deepest pride, I add my signature to a testimonial that describes, in brief, the contributions which we all have made to the successful campaign in Europe.

Major General, Commanding

THE STORY OF THE CORPS OF *Military Police*

INFANTRYMEN often have described the Corps of Military Police as the soldiers who posted "Off Limits" signs even before towns were liberated. But there's one place where doughs found no signs; there

were no complaints about the early presence of MPs. That was the Normandy beaches.

MPs crossed those narrow belts of sand at H-Hour, D-Day, and began clearing vehicles from the beaches, evacuating wounded, guarding prisoners in an improvised cage, unloading shells. In the pre-dawn air invasion, MPs had come in fighting with the 82nd and 101st Airborne Divisions.

They were not immune. The same murderous fire caught them as well as their infantry buddies. In some ways it was even tougher for the MP. Once posted, he had to stand up and take it. His duty didn't allow him to duck into a foxhole. If he became a casualty, another MP replaced him.

Pvt. Neil Dawson, San Antonio, Tex., 47 Corps MP was typical. Acting as a beach guide,



to continuous artillery and small arms fire for eight hours. Before that, Dawson and Pvt. Jack F. Conrad, Sunbury, Pa., of the same platoon, unloaded mortar ammunition from an LCT blasted by enemy fire.

Wounded in the shoulder as he leaped from his landing craft, 1st Lt. Charles M. Conover, 1st Inf. Div. MP, directed and organized traffic three hours before collapsing. He was awarded the Silver Star.

M/Sgt. Edward Lopes, V Corps MP, led his detachment ashore in the assault and posted men within 100 yards of the enemy where they directed combat soldiers along the safest routes of advance. Men under Sgt. Nicholas T. Kinderknecht guided traffic from the beach to assembly points and evacuated wounded from the water and nearly front lines while dodging machine gun fire.

Helping division, Corps and Army MPs were especially trained amphibious MP companies — the 210th, the 214th and 449th — normally assigned to Corps but now attached to the famed Engineer Special Brigades. These outfits, experts on beach traffic, were in at the beginning.

D-Day traffic wasn't the only problem. Increasing numbers of PWs jam-packed cages. Immediate help was imperative. Late in the afternoon, June 6, 1944, the 302nd MP Escort Guard Co., composed of 57 percent limited service men, came ashore. The unit suffered casualties in men and equipment before relieving 1st Inf. Div. MPs of their stockade responsibility. Several days

later, the 595th took charge of three beach evacuation pens while the 301st was busily occupied with PWs in another sector. Supposedly, these were Com Z units.

Cos. C and D, 783rd MP Bn., directed beach traffic on D plus 4, and the entire battalion, along with the 713th, followed Armies thereafter.

MPs looked the enemy in the teeth and hit back the best way they knew how on that memorable D-Day. They guided doughs from beach death traps to rendezvous points. Airborne MPs engaged in close-in fighting with the 101st A/B Div.

With traditional thoroughness, MPs turned in a job well done, a performance which was to be repeated many times—repeated during von Rundstedt's famous breakthrough drive in December, 1944.

During the crucial hours of the German drive, the Corps of Military Police, with units assigned to every echelon of command, became a prime controlling influence—the pivot on which the holding and regrouping of American troops depended.

MPs kept a firm grip on traffic, ignoring enemy artillery zeroed on vital road intersections. Pfc George F. Swearingen, Byronville, Ga., 2nd Inf. Div., drove up to Post 8, Camp d'Elsenborn, Belgium, through which essential traffic was moving. There were two wounded MPs and a third suffering from shock when he took over amidst artillery bursts. Twice wounded, Swearingen stuck to

his post, preventing a traffic snarl that would have caused many casualties both in men and equipment.

Others led doughs to battle lines. S/Sgt. Floyd Calloway, Pfc Fred J. Warner and Pfc Henry F. Gozdan, all of the 803rd MP Corps Co., escorted the 7th Armd. Div. along N-32 until contact was made with enemy tanks near Waimes.

In another sector, Third Army, in a stream of veteran infantry and armored units, began a northward movement. Half-tracks, two and a half-ton trucks, tanks, jeeps, clogged the roads. Traffic jams seemed inevitable. But the inevitable didn't happen!

Brig. Gen. Hobart R. Gay, Gen. Patton's chief of staff, commanding the 507th and the 512th MP Bns, the 1st and 2nd Div. of the Motor Vehicle Service Unit, and the 1st and 2nd Div. of the Motor Vehicle Service Unit, were efficient and



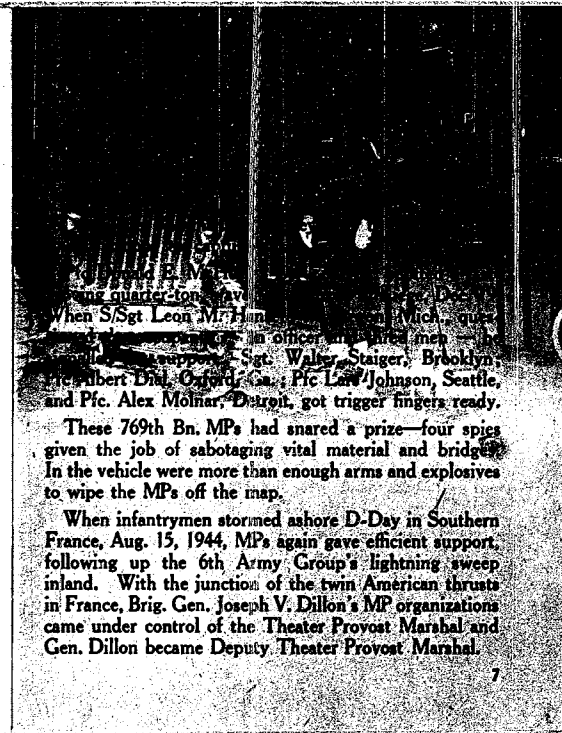
509th and 518th MP Bns. was acute. In the area between Corps and Army rear boundaries, traffic was excessive, enemy agents were at large; local inhabitants were frightened, restless.

Co. B, 518th MP Bn., recorded: "First Army rear echelon units were ordered to evacuate... MPs were the only military units on duty. They were the sole means of liaison to incoming combat teams... MPs tracked down all reports of enemy infiltration and action... organized and controlled all Belgians in the area..."

"At Spa, Lt. Dean W. Nelson's 3rd Platoon rounded up 21 released collaborators and calmed the civilian populace. By Dec. 19, Lt. John Kolodziejski's 1st Platoon were the only troops in Rochefort... At Marche, with the exception of the 51st Engrs. and the MPs, all other military units had evacuated... Engineers engaged the enemy east of Hotton... MPs were subject to enemy tank and small arms' fire, bombing, strafing and buzz-bombing..."

Further back, Com Z MPs perfected a tight security network, with rear area defense largely the Provost Marshal's responsibility. MP battalions posted heavy guard on all key bridges; patrols scoured the countryside for parachutists and enemy agents; road blocks were thrown up from Army zones through Paris to the coast.

This vigilance trapped many disguised Krauts. S/Sgt. Richard Hallman, and Sgt. Walter A. Sowinski, Long Island, N. Y., 783rd MP Bn., in Advance Section, knocked



When S/Sgt Leon M. Ham...
...in office and three men...
...Sgt. Walter Staiger, Brooklyn...
...Pfc. Larry Johnson, Seattle...
...and Pfc. Alex Molnar, Detroit, got trigger fingers ready.

These 769th Bn. MPs had snared a prize—four spies given the job of sabotaging vital material and bridges. In the vehicle were more than enough arms and explosives to wipe the MPs off the map.

When infantrymen stormed ashore D-Day in Southern France, Aug. 15, 1944, MPs again gave efficient support, following up the 6th Army Group's lightning sweep inland. With the junction of the twin American thrusts in France, Brig. Gen. Joseph V. Dillon's MP organizations came under control of the Theater Provost Marshal and Gen. Dillon became Deputy Theater Provost Marshal.

Top Priority—

KEEP TRAFFIC MOVING!

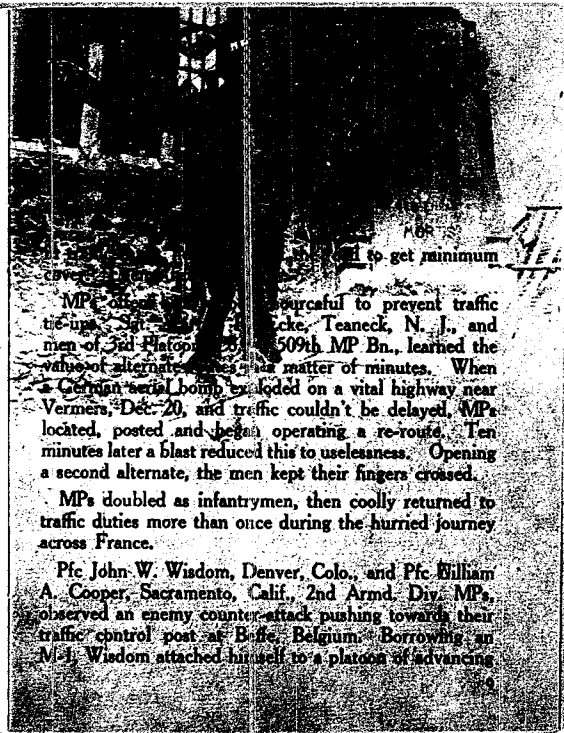
KEEP traffic moving safely," echoed MPs in basic training. "Give this duty top attention, for tactical success often hinges on this factor." And MPs gave all they had...

March 1, 1945, 0200 hours: The 9th Inf. Div. MP platoon was charged with the responsibility of traffic control at the Ludendorff Bridge, Remagen, Germany. MPs were stationed at the approaches and out on the uncertain span itself. Intense artillery fire from aroused Germans rained down. Posts were maintained 24 hours a day as MPs evacuated wounded, laid communication lines, removed knocked-out vehicles. Traffic had to keep flowing—flowing fast. One MP raced to a blazing tank, climbed inside, rescued a trapped crew member.

Four days later, the platoon, relieved of its task, had a slight breathing spell. It counted its casualties—14 wounded, two killed.

During the height of the Battle of the Bulge, Pfc Anthony Onica, Highland Park, Mich., 2nd Inf. Div., directed traffic on a Belgian road. An enemy plane strafed the intersection, but Onica clung to his post. When a lull

8



MPs were successful to prevent traffic tie-ups. Sgt. [Name] Teaneck, N. J., and men of 2nd Platoon, 509th MP Bn., learned the value of alternate routes in a matter of minutes. When a German aerial bomb exploded on a vital highway near Verriers, Dec. 20, and traffic couldn't be delayed, MPs located, posted and began operating a re-route. Ten minutes later a blast reduced this to uselessness. Opening a second alternate, the men kept their fingers crossed.

MPs doubled as infantrymen, then coolly returned to traffic duties more than once during the hurried journey across France.

Pfc John W. Wisdom, Denver, Colo., and Pfc William A. Cooper, Sacramento, Calif., 2nd Armd. Div. MPs, observed an enemy counter-attack pushing towards their traffic control post at Belle, Belgium. Borrowing an M-1, Wisdom attached himself to a platoon of advancing

doughs which soon was pinned down by machine gun fire. In the ensuing battle, this traffic pointsman accounted for three Germans.

Combat teams looked on armored MPs as friends, willing to lend a hand when the going was hot. Sometimes, MPs rode the backs of tanks with a task force.

When retreating Nazis destroyed a bridge at Creon, France, Aug. 6, advanced elements of the 5th Armd. Div. came to an abrupt halt. The division MP platoon found a detour for the troops, then gave anti-sniper protection to the engineers building a treadway bridge.

MP platoons assigned to infantry divisions encountered similar experiences. At Dinant, Belgium, 9th Inf. Div. MPs, under Sgt. John C. Mantegna, helped engineers with their first bridge across the Meuse. Reaching the east bank, MPs were deployed to provide security while engineers finished the ponton span.

Eighth Inf. Div. MPs never will forget Hurtgen Forest. Pfc Ottis Brewer, Jackson, Ky., stood in a foot of mud four hours while directing the 709th TD Bn. into its area.

When 8th Inf. Div. MPs arrived, the crooked, narrow roads were slimy morasses, splotted with craters, tree trunks, swollen streams. Three divisions had churned up the roads and engineers saw no end to their work.

First Lt. Robert L. Perrin, Howard, Kan., and Sgt. Harry Fenzlein, Fairlawn, N. J., kept MPs going 24 hours

a day, directing outgoing units, clearing the roads for ambulances, setting up traffic posts.

"Weasels," tanks, TDs and jeeps had churned through mud to log trails. Sgt. Esse Lewis, Jacksonville, Fla., led 644th TD Bn. M-10s to their area. Mortar shells burst against tree tops, splattering troops with metal and wood fragments. CC R of the 5th Armd. Div. entered the vicinity as eight miles of tanks, 90mm TDs, armored infantry half-tracks, tank retrievers, ground into position through the night. MPs staked the line of departure with delineators. In pitch darkness they used masked flashlights to guide Shermans that were wider than the roads. Pfc Winfield Bogert, Allentown, Pa., and Sgt. Donald Gruner, Patterson, N. J., sweated over 11 Shermans, four M-30 TDs, and 14 half-tracks, which slipped into a washout twice and nearly crushed them.

CC R was ready at daylight, but MPs still couldn't rest. It was time to handle the normal supply.

Lt. Perrin and Cpl. George Buhler, Passaic, N. J., led tanks into battle Nov. 25, but couldn't crack enemy defenses. Reinforced, they tried again four days later and succeeded. As armor slashed ahead, muddy, bearded MPs gave them the right-of-way. Jams, mines, shells were overcome as traffic of three divisions and an adjacent Corps rolled through to the front. For nine days this nightmare continued before Hurtgen Forest was cleared.



Enemy 88s, at one to two minute intervals, shelled the traffic flow in the Roer River sector. Drivers stopped, leaped for cover, leaving some vehicles parked bumper to bumper. Germans increased the rate of fire.

Cpl. Robert T. Peterson, 102nd Inf. Div. MP Platoon, covered the area near his post and persuaded drivers to return, disperse their vehicles. Pfc Albert C. Howell, reliefman, alternately running and flopping to the ground as shell fragments whistled by, sprinted to the most prominent knot of vehicles. Finding the drivers, he went from foxhole to foxhole, urging them to scatter their trucks. When the jam finally was broken and the artillery fire ceased, only four vehicles were damaged.

Once posted, the traffic MP accepts a tremendous responsibility. Proper movement of traffic demands that he never once neglect his duty. Rain, snow, mud, enemy patrol, tank fire, strafing, artillery bursts, mortar—nothing must budge him. His post is sacred ground which he must preserve, even if he must give his life.

Early in the German breakthrough, three members

of Co. C, 518th MP Bn., looked about in unhappy amazement. They were 1st Lt. Robert B. Vallon, Akron, Ohio; Cpl. Joe P. Whitehead, Henderson, N. C.; Pfc Albert F. Thompson, Bronx, N. Y. The reason: they found themselves manning a TP squarely in front of an infantry platoon entrenched and waiting for Germans.

Traffic posts, like Military Police, are everywhere—in the UK, beach areas, Paris, at the Ludendorff Bridge, Marseilles, around the world. On the Continent, Com Z MPs took over or established posts after Army MPs had pressed forward into new territories. Before final resistance was crushed, MPs of the 769th and the 707th MP Bns. routed traffic from Cherbourg.

To erect signs and control traffic on the Red Ball Highway was the mission of the 783rd MP Bn., which began working with the Transportation Corps' Motor Transport Brigade, Aug. 29, 1944.

Hundreds of miles of roads, originating in the Contentin Peninsula and stretching to Chartres and Dreux, were neither reconnoitered nor sign-posted. It was easy to pinpoint and label this road network as an express supply route. But that didn't help truck drivers find their way.

From the Theater Provost Marshal's office came Lt. Col. Charles E. Day, former traffic expert with the New York State Police; Maj. Forest L. Wyman and Capt. Lawrence O. Schreiber to assist the 707th, 793rd, 783rd and later Cos. A and B, 796th Bn., in meeting

perhaps the greatest single challenge in the history of the Corps of Military Police.

MPs began a period of intense day and night activity. A fast but limited reconnaissance was conducted. Advance Section Engineers furnished special Red Ball directional signs. Static traffic posts were selected and manned while patrols in quarter-tons and on motorcycles were stationed in readiness. MPs posted, maintained signs. Pointsmen assumed duties at all major cross roads, entrances and exits to all traffic control regulating posts and blind corners in urban districts.

Every participating service could look with pride on that route as initial convoys roared through without a hitch. An outstanding achievement, it later was extended with the 783rd getting the toughest job. Because MP strength never was sufficient to provide full-scale control of the Red Ball route, those assigned redoubled efforts, fighting to check pilferage, black market activities and to curb serious traffic violations.

Waffendorf, Germany, Sept. 16-18, 1944 : To control traffic at a blind corner, 5th Armored MPs withstood enemy artillery and mortar fire for three days. Five of the original six men were evacuated as battle casualties. Three volunteers, knocking out machine guns nests and infiltrating infantry, held on until all elements of the division were clear.

During emergency periods, the most effective means

of checking vehicles and individuals was the road block. Identification of personnel was of utmost importance. Acting as valves, efficiently operated road blocks regulated the flow of authorized traffic.

MPs HERD PWs

by the Numbers

HUNDREDS of thousands of "Supermen" were collared in west-central Germany during March and April, 1945. Immense trailer trucks, jammed with prisoners, rolled away from cages daily. This made exciting press headlines, but told only half the story.

Transfer of prisoners from front lines to rear was a mission of great significance. These bedraggled, beaten members of the "master race" easily could constitute a back-breaking burden to swift, mobile Armies.

Through a foolproof evacuation system, Military Police scraped up the PWs, by handfuls or by thousands, dispatched them to the rear, clearing Army areas for future captures.

Provost Marshals and MP units perfected a chain of evacuation that withstood countless heavy loads thrown

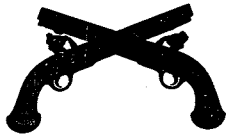
at it. When the haul of prisoners was unusually large, tactical units assisted in escorting and guarding.

But the bulk of the work fell to a small number of MP escort guard companies, most of whom had handled prisoners before in Zone of Interior camps. Broken into sections, companies like the 142nd, 430th, 483rd, 554th, and 620th MP EG, picked up PWs at division collecting points and escorted them to enclosures. Here, Advance Section EG companies attached to the Army PWs accepted and moved prisoners to forward Com Z enclosures. PWs were passed to the rear until they reached final destinations, Continental Central enclosures, labor enclosures or ZI camps.

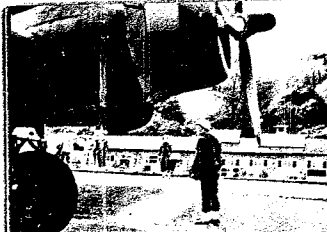
GAVRAY, France, Aug. 2, 1944: Reconnaissance elements of the 5th Armored bumped into the enemy, and the first five Germans fell to fighting MPs. As a result of this unusual initiative, the division commander personally commended the MPs.



MPs Lend a Hand



**ON THE
JOB**



MPs Protect
Uncle Sam's
Property



MPs Are
Always on
the Job



A week later 5th Armored surrounded Le Mans and bagged a large number of Germans. Because no guards were available, prisoners were turned over to traffic control pointsman. These MPs not only guarded scores of PWs and directed traffic but underwent enemy small arms fire.

Invasion forces pushed inland. Initially, the 428th, 437th, and 472nd MP Escort Guard Cos. evacuated from divisions under V, VII and XIX Corps, to two beach enclosures operated by the 301st, 302nd, and 595th MP Escort Guard Cos.

Cherbourg Peninsula, packed with Germans, began to overflow, but First Army's Provost Marshal was prepared to cope with any sudden influx of prisoners.

A 10,000-man enclosure was established at Foucarville with the 552nd MP EG Co. and the 5th Ranger Bn. in charge. In addition, three 1000-man cages were located on VII Corps' beach. After official notification, a second 10,000-man enclosure, under the 482nd MP EG Co. at Valognes, was built to regulate the flow of prisoners into Foucarville. More than 25,000 prisoners were evacuated in one sweep when the Normandy peninsula collapsed.

These temporary cages were crude affairs, often no more than a strand of barbed wire encircling the field. When time was available, concertina wire was used; carbide floodlights and telephone communications installed.

Lack of personnel was a handicap. One platoon of Capt. Joseph C. Virgillio's 454th MP EG Co. once handled 5000 prisoners. A single guard sat behind a machine gun at each corner of the enclosure. The remainder of the platoon processed prisoners or handled rations and water. EG personnel, always short on organic transportation, often had to travel 100 miles for rations and water. Two officers and 34 men of the 82nd Airborne MP platoon once guarded 4900 prisoners.

Division cages were up close, well within range of enemy fire. The first MP detachment to enter Germany was a group from 3rd Armd. Div., led by Capt. John M. Walton and Lt. Arthur J. Rutshaw. The detachment was in the van of the first task force to dent the Siegfried Line, Sept. 12, 1944, and promptly set up a PW enclosure about a mile inside the Line.

Further back and deep into Com Z were Continental Central Enclosures, permanent structures, which barricaded 20,000 or more prisoners. These gigantic, sprawling compounds, with guard towers and thousands of feet of wire on ten foot poles, were a far cry from the first hastily-built cages.

Every advantage was taken of abandoned enemy enclosures, of barracks such as Caserne Valaine, or of former German civilian concentration camps like Compiègne, where the 2022nd PW Overhead Detachment of 21 officers and 128 men, and 14 men of the 453rd MP EG Co.,

received, guarded and administered to 4000 PWs who increased to 20,000 in five days.

Under technical supervision of U. S. personnel, PWs built their own enclosure fences, processed themselves, tended their own sick and wounded.

MPs of the 2022nd also assisted Psychological Warfare units in organizing an anti-Fascist PW group. This overhead detachment, with a score of officers and a company of administrative personnel, received and evacuated 180,000 prisoners in seven months.

G-2 field interrogation detachments screened prisoners. Transients, Allied nationals, civilians, officers, trouble-makers went to Cherbourg. First-class labor eligibles were processed and farmed out to various services—Signal, TC, QM, Medical, Ordnance, Engineers.

At first, PWs were transported to the U.S., but the procedure was revised about D plus 60. By V-E Day, May 8, 1945, the number of PWs had mounted to



gigantic count of nearly 3,000,000—a total that exceeded the size of the A. E. F. in World War I.

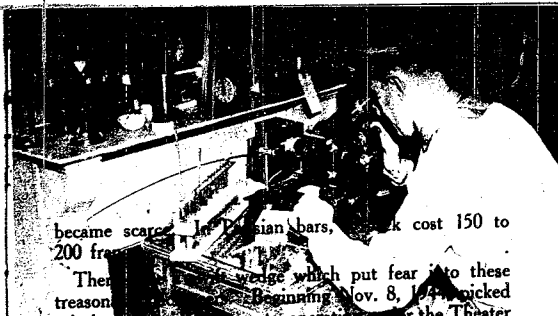
An amazing feat accomplished by MPs was moving PWs en masse. Pre-invasion plans established a safe, sound ratio of one guard to every ten prisoners in transit. Nine months later on the Continent, the accepted ratio was one to 50, and one to 150 was not unusual.

MPs met with success in handling PWs because, while strictly observing Geneva Convention rules, they punished without compassion and in accordance with approved methods any German overstepping the bounds. PWs expected discipline; they got it.

Cracking Down ON THE PROFITEERS

IN the wake of troops storming towards Germany rose a horde of selfish opportunists who turned army supplies into ill-gotten gain. Petty scavengers pilfered and bartered, thus disintegrating Army lifelines.

Lawlessness spread, reached alarming proportions. Armored columns spluttered to a gasless standstill as civilian cars drove unrestricted about Paris. Cigarettes



became scarce. In Russian bars, a drink cost 150 to 200 francs.

Their knowledge which put fear into these treasonous profiteers. Beginning Nov. 8, 1944, picked criminal agents, operating under the Theater Provost Marshal, searched the quarters and personnel of several Railway Operating battalions under surveillance. Close watch was kept at Dreux, Velliers, Villaneuve, St. George, St. Cyr, Matelot Yards, Versailles, and the Batignolles Yards in Paris. Agents stoked locomotives, lived with the men, gathering evidence. Records of Army postal units were checked. The stage was set.

On Nov. 25, Military Police struck—CID agents, officers and men of the 709th and 787th MP Bns. By nightfall the job was complete, the culprits apprehended.

Within approximately two months, eight officers and 235 enlisted men had netted nearly \$200,000 through illicit traffic in essential Army goods. These merely were a few groups among many whom MP and CID agents constantly were breaking down.

The effect of the raid was immediately noticeable. Pilfering and profiteering on the French black market fell off. The weak, the susceptible, realized that MPs ever were alert.

Agents did more than operate in rear echelons. Suppression of crime was their interest in every locale. Though assigned to the various Armies, Com Z sections and Headquarters, the central drive emanated from Lt. Col. James Edler, CID Chief in Paris, whose uncompromising and fixed determination to wipe out crime recognized no barriers. Rape, murder, assault, black market—Col. Edler and hundreds of trained agents hit them all, beating down crimes of violence.

Not only were CI Sections organized but each MP battalion and post, camp and station company set up investigation sections where the spadework on serious cases frequently began, and for minor offenses, generally ended.

Determined MPs stopped at nothing in their search for testimony. T/4 Humbert S. Betti, Jr., Union City, N. J., 509th MP Bn. Hq., huddled in a bathtub-size foxhole near a German-held Siegfried Line pillbox. While mortar shells screamed overhead, Betti took a statement from an astonished doughfoot.

Down in CONAD, 2nd Lt. George H. Williams and Sgt. Alfred Zeringue, 68th MP Co., PC & S, all but solved a murder before CID agents arrived. They had located

the fatal projectile, an empty cartridge case and ascertained the suspect's identity. Maj. Gen. Arthur R. Wilson, CG, Continental Advance Section, commended the two MPs for their thorough job.

MPs on traffic duty often were able to lend a hand. The 241st MP Co. threw out a dragnet Feb. 10, 1945, that caught a hit-and-run driver within five hours after the fatal accident.

At 1910 hours in 241st MP Co. Hqs., Dole, France, the desk sergeant's telephone rang. The 475th Ordnance Depot was calling. An Army truck had hit a civilian walking towards the depot.

First Lt. James F. Kingwell, 241st CO, got on the case immediately, talking with men at the depot where the driver had come for gasoline. What kind of a truck was it? A five-ton semi-trailer. And the driver? Tall and thin, nervous, face haggard, dressed in dirty fatigue clothes and a blue combat jacket with the letters USN stencilled on the back. It was dusk but the driver hadn't heeded a suggestion to turn on his headlights.

At 1830 hours, Cpl. George L. Riddle, 241st MP Co., patrolling a street in Dole, told the corporal of the guard that a battered semi-trailer had come through, its headlights out and a ripped tarpaulin flapping in the wind.

Lt. Kingwell alerted the Provost Marshal and MP headquarters at Dijon, as well as MP companies and ordnance depots. Patrols set out from 241st MP Hqs.

At 2315 hours, the lieutenant and Cpl. Charles Aronson spotted a semi-trailer off the road. The driver got out of the cab. He was tall, gaunt, and wearing a blue combat jacket. The driver asked the officer if he knew of a place to sleep. Lt. Kingwell did and escorted him to MP headquarters.

The MP— ANYTHING, ANYWHERE, ANYTIME

OFFENSIVE action is not customarily an MP function, but Hotton, Belgium, had to be held until infantry arrived during the Battle of the Bulge. Maj. Charles Kapes and eight of his 3rd Armd. Div. MPs took up positions in the town and stopped the lead German tank with a bazooka. Other enemy tanks wheeled and fled. On the left flank, Capt. Walton, Ass't PM; Warrant Officer Richard P. Davies, chief clerk; and 13 men fought tank, mortar and small arms' fire. During four days of fighting, MPs cared for 40 civilians, took charge of political prisoners, buried dead civilians.

With machine guns, BARs and scout cars, the 62nd MP Co. held security posts on the Strasbourg perimeter

until the threat of German infiltration in Alsace subsided. Hysteria and panic were prevented by Psychological Warfare detachments and MPs whose appearance on the streets was evidence that Americans intended to stay.

MP training, aside from its specialization, bore many similarities to infantry training. MPs were familiar with the light and heavy machine gun, the 60mm mortar, Tommygun, carbine, M-1, Springfield and Enfield rifles, .45 pistol and revolver and riot-type shotguns. They knew offensive and defensive infantry tactics, methods of attacking a town, protecting an airport or bridge.

MPs also helped stabilize lines of resistance. In late December, 1944, at Witzfeld, 2nd Inf. Div. MPs hastily

BRIDGE
1254 FEET
COMPLETED APRIL 1945

NO THROUGH TRAFFIC

ONE WAY
TWO WAY

organized a straggler collecting point where personnel and vehicles were checked.

The Provost Marshal often was charged with rear area security. During emergencies his principle concern was enemy agents. Disguised as Army personnel or as civilians, these saboteurs sifted into France and Belgium.

Security-alert MPs, stringing up their counter-sabotage net, manning road blocks, patrolling open flat lands, checking vehicles across bridges, made a record catch. In a single day, one MP EG lieutenant ordered his firing squad to execute six spies.

S/Sgt. Morris F. Anderson, Willmar, Minn., Co. C, 509th MP Bn., took a long look at a civilian wandering near an ammunition dump. The "civilian," who carried two identity cards and said he taught at a local school, was an SS man.

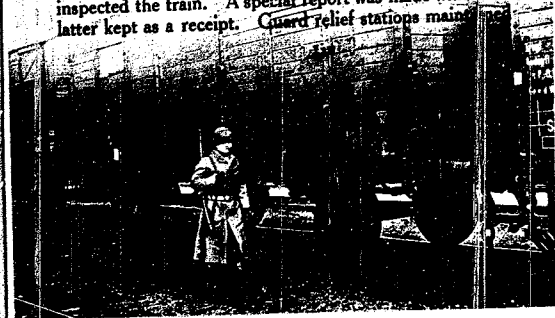
MPs flushed out pro-Nazi civilians trying to aid the enemy. On Dec. 21, 1944, in a house near Hotton, signals were flashed to direct German artillery. Cpl. Michael P. Rich, Bronx, N. Y., and Pfc Stephen R. Pavlich, Bridgeport, Conn., Co. C, 518th MP Bn., accompanied by a group armed with grenades and a Tommygun, forced their way into the house. After a brief battle, 14 persons were led out.

Suspicious civilians usually were brought for questioning to the nearest CIC detachment, with whom MPs worked in close cooperation. The First Army Provost Marshal

operated the Master Interrogation Center and Civilian Internee Enclosure for the Counter-Intelligence Corps. MPs furnished raiding parties for the CIC.

Thousands of MPs rode front-bound freights as train guards. Ex-combat soldiers of the Theater-activated 385th MP Bn. knew the rigors of this monotonous, tough life, and for comfort they preferred a foxhole to the bare floor of a 40 & 8. In two months this outfit guarded 548 trains of 17,786 cars and travelled 110,000 miles. The box score: no cars pilfered!

The 794th MP Bn., probably the oldest at this new MP duty—train security—developed a pilfer-proof system that fathered SOPs for all units. A minimum of three MPs boarded a train when it moved out. At the marshalling yards, the non-com in charge of the permanent yard MPs, along with the train guard NCO, inspected the train. A special report was made which the latter kept as a receipt. Guard relief stations maintained



responsibility along the route. When the train reached its destination, a thorough report was forwarded.

When the train stopped en route, MPs deployed on both sides, keeping an eye on cars containing pilferable supplies. Sometimes guards turned up more than ordinary thieves. Cpl. Richard Donovan, Pfc George D. Rivar, Pvt. Herbert Dockery, Pvt. James W. Howard and Pvt. Jack E. King, 389th MP Bn., pulled a German from a ration car on a train en route to Paris, Dec. 5, 1944.

More than 10,000 MPs, stationed in Germany, Belgium, France and the United Kingdom, guarded runways, hangars, bomb dumps and aircraft at all Air Corps installations. The almost complete absence of theft, tampering and sabotage testify to effective security methods.

MPs detailed to crash-trucks pulled airmen from wrecked and burning planes, stood guard as enemy strafers shot up fields, and more than once battled flames that threatened hangars, planes and vital equipment.

The mission of aviation MPs seemed routine but actually was of top-flight significance. Whether working on a freshly-carved airstrip or patrolling a London airdrome, these MPs were part of the insurance which enabled USSTAF to carry out thousands of missions that helped to bring Germany to its knees.

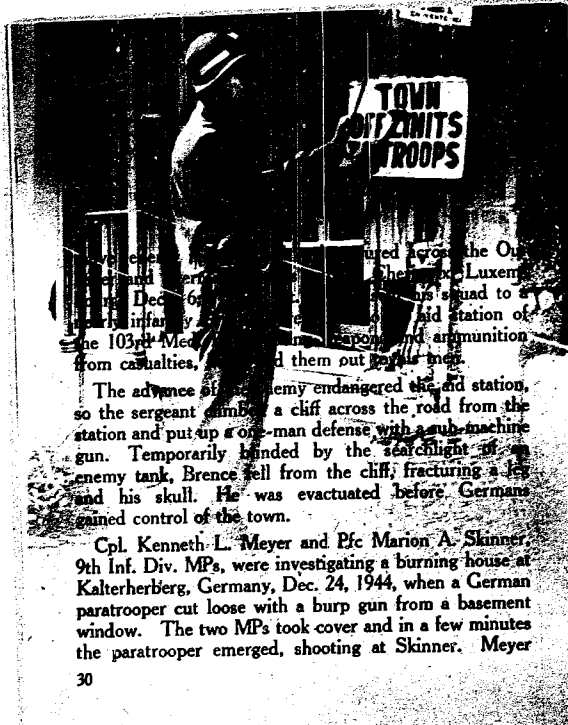
The day of the heavy-handed MP was gone. In his stead was the specially trained World War II MP, an

expert in tact, common sense and diplomacy. Minimum force was used to carry out his task; his club was a last resort.

TOWN patrolling was more than posting "Off Limits" signs or grabbing AWOLs, but even these jobs had more meaning than was realized. "Off Limits" signs were put up to protect the soldier, to keep him from frequenting places dangerous to him. In periodic AWOL drives, MPs bolstered combat efficiency by returning men to their units. By bringing AWOLs to justice, black market activities lessened.

Ninth Air Service Command MPs broke up a gang of French civilians and AWOL American soldiers dealing in stolen Army supplies. While MPs were raiding the group's hideout and questioning four soldiers, a truck drove up. Sgt. Levi M. Dolloff, Needham, Mass., and Pvt. Albert De Wilde, Pucville, La., ordered the two men in the truck to dismount. Instead the driver fired, wounding Dolloff. Pvt. Frank J. Woods, New York City, killed the driver with a pistol shot but was wounded in the exchange of fire. Pfc Lawrence Allard, Attleboro, Mass., wounded the driver's companion. Thousands of dollars' worth of rations, a jeep and two trucks were recovered.

Sgt. Charles A. Brence, 28th Inf. Div. MP, ran into something tougher, proving that a town patrolman does more than make visiting soldiers unhappy. In a surprise



...ve been captured across the Our
...and ... Luxembourg
... Dec. 6, 1944, his squad to a
... infantry ... aid station of
... the 103rd Medical ... and ammunition
... from casualties, ... them out for ...

The advance of the enemy endangered the aid station, so the sergeant gambled a cliff across the road from the station and put up a one-man defense with a sub-machine gun. Temporarily blinded by the searchlight of an enemy tank, Brence fell from the cliff, fracturing a leg and his skull. He was evacuated before Germans gained control of the town.

Cpl. Kenneth L. Meyer and Pfc Marion A. Skinner, 9th Inf. Div. MPs, were investigating a burning house at Kalterherberg, Germany, Dec. 24, 1944, when a German paratrooper cut loose with a burp gun from a basement window. The two MPs took cover and in a few minutes the paratrooper emerged, shooting at Skinner. Meyer

fired, spinning the German around, as Skinner's Tommy-gun spurted death.

MPs aided G-5 in controlling the movement of refugees streaming back to their homes. They also helped enforce curfew regulations and travel restrictions for civilians. In turn, G-5 assisted MPs with vice control, stamping out black market activities as well as providing billets for troops and contacting local authorities.

MPs not only operate Disciplinary Training Centers but five Base Section Guardhouses, which receive prisoners from all Com Z Sections and the Armies. Once MPs gain custody of a law-breaker, they accent rehabilitation. Hundreds of soldiers passed through DTCs, went back to fight and won decorations.

Besides furnishing guards for all types of Army headquarters, MPs also provided escorts for celebrities and top-ranking generals. The 795th MP Bn. safeguarded Gen. Charles De Gaulle and his entourage, saw them safely to Paris. The 769th has a long list to its credit: the King, Queen and Princess Elizabeth of England, Winston Churchill, Henry Morgenthau, Queen Wilhelmina, and many generals including Gen. Eisenhower and Field Marshal Montgomery.

The Corps of Military Police was organized in 1941 as a separate branch of the service. Since its founding, the Corps has spread over the face of the earth.

Under Maj. Gen. Milton A. Reckord, former Third

Service Command CG and 29th Inf. Div. commander, the Corps not only has increased in strength but in the efficient performance of multiple duties.

In November, 1944, 16 new MP battalions were activated at Le Mans. They were composed mostly of men who had seen combat. Using the same type of personnel, eight new PW Overhead Detachments also were activated, and previous to this, 2700 MP Escort Guards were added.

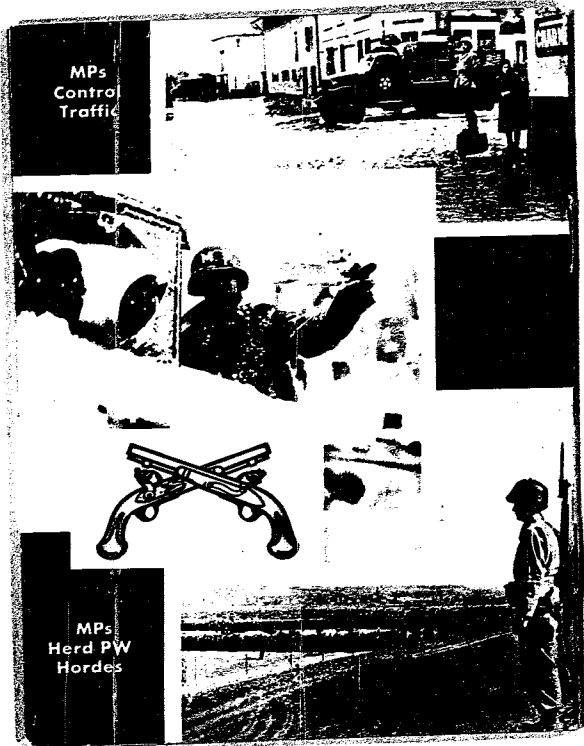
With new duties and expanding capacities, the Corps of Military Police prospered despite its youth in the family of the U. S. Army Service Forces.

Since V-E Day, MPs have encountered some of their toughest problems: handling more than a million PWs in forward transient enclosures, controlling traffic at road intersections over the face of Europe—from the Baltic to the Mediterranean Sea—helping send liberated Allied PWs homeward.

And this is the way it will be until the job is complete—the MPs backing up the troops at every stage and at every hour.

The TEAM





MPs
Control
Traffic

MPs
Herd PW
Hordes

8

"THESE ARE
MY CREDENTIALS

82 AF
THE STORY OF THE
8th INFANTRY
DIVISION

1798



1944

Name *1st Lt. HARRY F. KENNEDY*

Date Enlisted *MAR. 5, 1941*

Attached 8th *MAR. 11, 1941*

Training *FORT JACKSON, SC.*

FORT LEONARD WOOD, MO. CAMP FORREST, TENN

Battle Actions: *SEEN THEM ALL*

Citations *PURPLE HEART, WITH OAK
LEAF CLUSTER*

This is the first of a series of G. I. Stories of the Ground, Air and Service Forces in the European Theater of Operations, to be issued by the Stars and Stripes, a publication of the Information and Education Division, Special and Information Services, EFOUSA. Maj. Gen. G. A. Stroh, commanding the 8th Infantry Division, lent his cooperation to the preparation of the pamphlet, and basic material was supplied to the editors by his personnel.



THE Story of the 8th Infantry Division as told here is not complete, for it only highlights the events leading up to and including our first campaigns of World War II. The overall picture of our progress can only imply the individual acts of heroism and sacrifice leading to combat success. It is not possible to record in these few pages the names and achievements of the comrades who have left us. Their sacrifice will be engraved forever on our memories. Always a part of our team in spirit, they will carry on with the 8th to final Victory.

D. G. Stroh

Major General, Commanding

The 8th Division Story: Pay-Off at Crozon

SEPTEMBER 19, 1944: The capture of Nazi General Herman Bernard Ramcke was pure and unexpected velvet, but the right climax to the finish of the Crozon Peninsula campaign. Ruthless, hard-bitten, he had already turned down two chances to quit, and had just ducked out of Brest. He was the extra dividend on the training in the Deep South, the Arizona desert, Northern Ireland, and then the hard hacking down from the Ay River into the knowledge of what it is to play for keeps.

Smashing ahead on the heels of its own artillery barrage, one hour before the attack of September 19, the 3rd Battalion, 13th Infantry, caught the Germans piling out of their shelters, before they reached their positions. As the assault companies drove north, the reserve company, Company I,



was left to clear a strip of west beach, heavily salted with pillboxes and coastal guns.

Platoon Commander 1st Lt. James M. Dunham, leading his men through the emplacements, spotted the white flags first. And so Lt. Gen. Ramcke might have been his baby. But a German medic insisted in precise English that the general was waiting below in a dugout for the American commanding officers. He wanted a first class surrender.

In a few minutes Brig. Gen. Charles D. W. Canham, assistant division commander; Col. R. A. Griffin, 13th Infantry commander; and Lt. Col. Earl L. Lerette, 3rd Battalion commander, had gone to inspect their catch, 75 feet underground.

"I am to surrender to you," Ramcke told Gen. Canham through his own interpreter. "I want to see your credentials."

Gen. Canham pointed to the eager dogfaces crowding the entrance with their M-1s. "These are my credentials."

This blunt phrase put the Nazi in his place, and paid dramatic tribute to the real power behind America's armies—the G.I.

The peninsula campaign folded when a truce was signed that evening. In two months the 8th had accounted for nearly 15,000 prisoners, vast quantities of supplies, and a lasting crimp in the enemy's morale. It was a combat achievement that put the division into the big time play for Berlin.

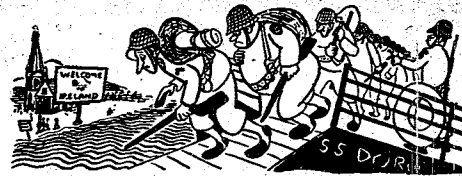
IN 1918 the 8th had landed in France too late to quarrel with the Hun, but this time the division got in virtually on the ground floor—on D-plus-28, at a beach on the Cherbourg Peninsula. The 121st Infantry had dived hopefully into a realistic "embarkation" several weeks before the 8th finally pulled out of Belfast Harbor, but that was a dry

run, and the division didn't hit the Continent until July 4. Preparations for battle were completed in the vicinity of Montebourg by July 6. Cherbourg had been taken, and the Krauts had been chopped out of the northern tip of the peninsula to the vicinity of La Haye du Puits. Yet even with the aid of allied air superiority, Nazi resistance was dogged on the line through Carentan and St. Lo, eastward to Caen on the Orne Estuary.

THE plan called for the VIII Corps, to which the 8th had been assigned, to punch with three divisions south of La Haye du Puits. The 8th was scheduled to pass through the 82nd Airborne Division, taking the center of the corps front to hammer home the main drive. On the second day of the action at La Haye du Puits, Brig. Gen. Nelson M. Walker, assistant division commander, had been seriously wounded while in the front lines. He died next day.

The first objective, the Ay river, was strongly defended. With the 28th and 121st Regiments on line and the 13th in reserve, the division jumped off on its first attack early on July 8.

Participating in the division's initial crack against the enemy was fair game for the 28th, for in World War I that regiment was the first



American combat outfit to set foot on European soil. That was on June 28, 1917, under the command of Col. Hanson Ely. A part of the 1st Division, it trained under the famed French "Blue Devils," and subsequently helped to quash the German threat against the Channel ports.

This regiment likewise scored a notable combat record in the Battle of Soissons, on July 18, 1918, and later in the destruction of the St. Mihiel salient, the slugging in the Argonne, and at Sedan. The grateful French decorated the members of the Regiment with the Fourragère. Until the "Peace" was signed the 28th kept a "Watch on the Rhine," returning to the U.S. shortly thereafter, and remaining a part of the 1st Division until 1939. In the summer of 1940 the regiment joined the 8th Division at Fort Jackson, South Carolina.

The 28th was organized in 1901 at Vancouver Barracks, Washington, and soon thereafter was

sent to Mindanao, P.I., to cut military roads through the jungles and suppress the Moro head-hunters. The mission accomplished, it returned to serve ten years of garrison duty in the states. In 1913 the regiment patrolled the Rio Grande, and the next year became part of the expedition which occupied Vera Cruz.



MALVERN HILL, Sharpsburg, Chancellorsville, Spottsylvania, Tanner's Creek, Seven Pines, Mechanicsville, Cold Harbor, Gettysburg — such scenes of Confederate valor founded the tradition of the 121st Infantry, which originally stemmed from the colorful Georgia Militia — the Baldwin Blues, the Floyd Rifles and the Barnesville Blues. They were at Appomatox. In 1891 they became the 2nd Infantry of the Georgia National Guard.

At Camp Harris, Ga., in August 1917, the unit was redesignated the 121st Infantry — "The Old Gray Bonnet Regiment" — and assigned to the newly formed 30th Division. Reorganized in 1919 as a part of the Georgia National Guard, the regiment broke into active service for a short period in 1934. On September 16, 1940 it was inducted into federal service at Fort Jackson. There on November 22, 1941, it replaced the 34th Infantry Regiment as part of the 8th Division.

Now in 1944 the regiment was heading toward Brest, where it had landed almost 26 years before — on October 18, 1918. Which brings us back to the 8th Division's trouble on its first day against the enemy defenses of the Ay, the day on which the division reclaimed 1000 yards of France.

At night a counter attack hit the 121st Infantry, which repulsed it by a night attack of the regimental reserve battalion. In the morning the division slugged again, to be met by another counter attack. But on the third day local Nazi withdrawals were indicated and the 8th picked up speed. Infantry elements isolated small pockets of the enemy, bypassed them and forged ahead, leaving the corps cavalry to clean up.

German machine gun fire was heavy and the enemy mortars were accurate. Tougher still, a communications break sent the 3rd Battalion, 28th

Infantry, 1000 yards beyond adjacent units, thereby exposing its flanks. Before contact could be restored, the Nazis had badly mauled Company L in a counter-attack.

The 13th Infantry attacked for the first time on the morning of July 13, when the 28th dropped into division reserve. If the Nazis had bothered to consult their version of American history, they might have been confused by what was coming at them that morning. It was historical haywire by their standards, for less than one hundred years before, the forbears of the 13th and 121st Regiments had fought on opposite teams in the Civil War.

THE 13th Regiment was formed on July 16, 1798, shortly after President George Washington retired. First action came at Lewiston, N.Y., in the War of 1812 when Queenstown Heights was taken. The City of Buffalo raised a monument to the 13th at Fort Porter, hailing the exploits of the regiment on the Niagara frontier. Until the final battle of Plattsburg, the 13th (which had become known as "The Jolly Snorters") was continuously engaged. Active service in the Mexican War was followed by the reconstituting of the regiment on May 3, 1861, with General W. T. Sherman commanding and Philip Sheridan as one of its captains. Service for the regiment has been continuous since then.

In the Civil War, the 13th took and held Vicksburg for a short while on May 19, 1863. Seven men carried the colors that day, and all seven died. Of the entire attacking force only the 13th reached the Confederate position, but even their attack was repulsed. Here the regiment paid a high price for its motto, "First At Vicksburg."

In Cuba, in 1898, the 13th took its cut of San Juan Hill, and Private Agnew of Company H captured the flag of Spain. The regiment returned



to San Francisco in 1900, following a year in the Philippines, and in 1903 Company I served at Fort Lisicum, Alaska. Two more Philippine tours came in 1905-07, and 1911-17. The 13th tied in with the 8th Division in January of 1918. At the end of World War I units of the regiment were stationed in New England until October 1939, when the 13th was ordered to the Canal Zone. Its personnel was transferred to other organizations in June 1940; but in July 1940, the regiment was reconstituted at Fort Jackson.

First Battle Reveals the Profit Or Loss of Combat Training

ALL of this is a far cry from the front before the Ay on the morning of July 13, 1944, but tradition has much to do with what followed in the campaign which eventually took the 8th Division to Crozon. Progress that day was slow, but on the next day both assault elements reached the north bank of the Ay. When the VIII Corps directed that the positions be held, it was time to figure the profit and loss.

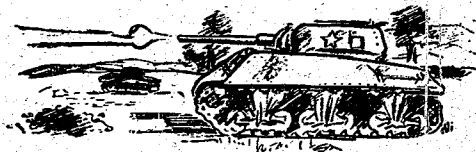
The division had achieved its first objectives, suffered its first casualties. Hedgerows had become as familiar as the training terrain of Tennessee, Georgia and Northern Ireland. But this time the umpires wore Red Cross brassards, and the Joe on the other side was no Joe at all, but a killer. There had been brodies, and smart plays. Contact between adjacent units had been lost, flanks exposed, and enemy counter attacks were hard going. All this paid off with heavy casualties.

On the credit side the artillery had learned that a morning barrage prior to the day's attack only alerted the enemy. Instead, heavier harassing fires

were laid down, and the artillery concentrated on neutralizing and knocking out strong points uncovered by attacking infantry elements. This typifies the process of building up a foolproof combat technic, which went on in every unit of the division during those first few days of the real McCoy.

On July 12 Brig. Gen. Donald A. Stroh assumed command of the 8th Infantry Division.

For eleven days the 8th sat tight, waiting for a new VIII Corps offensive. At last the attack was definitely scheduled to begin at 0530 July 26. The line of the Ay from the river's mouth to the bridge at Lessay was swampy and so strongly held that an advance southward by the 79th Division was out. The Lessay bridge was gone and the only ford in the river was impassable because of mines and crossfire.



The 90th Division was in a similar fix. And only the 8th's front, two kilometers wide, was suitable for an attack. To the 8th went the task of overcoming the enemy defenses to the south,

and establishing a bridgehead between the south bank of the Ay and the Lessay-Perrier railway. Through the gap the 79th Division was to fan out to the southwest, and then rip out the German defenses along the western sector of the river line from the flank. Spearheaded by the 8th, the 90th Division and the 6th Armored Division were to bypass the German strongpoint to the east, continuing the attack on the southeast.

IT was up to the 8th. Both assaulting regiments — the 28th and 121st — jumped off on schedule. The entire division sector of advance was under observation from a church steeple. Corps and division artillery chewed away at it for two days before the enemy resigned his ringside seat.

Resistance was met by the 28th, attacking with the 1st and 2nd Battalions forward. Following a reorganization halt, a second attack was launched at 1500, penetrating the enemy's main defensive position. The 28th Infantry reached the Lessay-



Perrier road, rendering untenable the entire enemy position along the corps front. The 121st Infantry reported no resistance initially, but in the afternoon it was evident that the report was optimistic. Some elements had been pushed back across the Ay.

The next day's plan called for the 28th Infantry to hold until the 121st came abreast, at which time both regiments would attack in conjunction. Meeting little resistance, the 121st caught up with the 28th at 1400 that afternoon, and at 1500 the coordinated attack began against light artillery and mortar fire, and numerous mines.

This day marked the beginning of the mass retreat of the German Seventh Army.

The 79th, 90th and the 6th Armored Divisions poured through the gap, lashing west and east to pursue the fleeing enemy. American armored forces raced forward to begin the lightning thrusts through Brittany and Eastern France, which were to sweep beyond Paris to Holland and Belgium.

*When He Runs, You Chase Him
Until He's Ready To Quit*

ADVANCING against light resistance on the morning of July 28, the division won all its objectives, and in the following days the pursuit of the enemy continued. The 4th and 6th Armored Divisions had passed through the VIII Corps sector. The 8th (minus Combat Team 13) followed in route column, pounding south through Coutances, Granville and Beauchamp, to an assembly area southwest of Avranches. Combat Team 13, motorized and attached to the 4th Armored Division, had been having a show of its own, securing La Jourdanriere and later La Meurdraquiere. By August 1, it was back again with the 8th.

The division worked southward during the next two days, clearing out small pockets of resistance and securing road nets and vital installations along the line of march. On August 2, Combat Team 13 again was attached to the 4th Armored, swinging south to St. Aubin d'Aubigné, 11 miles north of Rennes. The remainder of the division reached the vicinity of St. James by nightfall of August 3.

The division movement continued by truck on the morning of August 4. Meanwhile, Combat Team

13, having reached St. Aubin d'Aubigné, discovered that the enemy had withdrawn from Rennes, and it then passed through the city to occupy the heights to the south. By 1100 the situation was so favorable that the division commander ordered the remaining elements to move to an assembly area at Betton, slightly northwest of Rennes.

The 8th (less the 121st Infantry, which remained near St. James in corps reserve) continued to hold and defend Rennes. Some prisoners were taken but no contact was made with organized forces. On August 8 the 1st Battalion of the 28th Infantry was attached to the 6th Armored Division, operating toward Brest.

The 121st Infantry, under VIII Corps control, was attached on August 6 to the 83rd Infantry Division, and headed toward Dinard. It encountered determined enemy resistance in the vicinity of Tremereuc on August 7. During the ensuing six days it found the territory around Pleslin and south of Plertuit hotly defended by pillboxes, heavy machine gun and mortar fire, minefields and obstacles. On August 9 the Nazis cut off the 3rd Battalion until the late afternoon of August 12. Two artillery planes successfully dropped blood plasma for the battalion. After the occupation of Dinard on August 14 and 15, the 121st Infantry reverted to the 8th, which was then in an assembly area in the neighborhood of Dinan.

Preceded by its task force, the 8th then headed for a concentration area near Brest, having remained near Dinan from August 13 through August 17. On August 14 a task force mainly composed of the 3rd Battalion of the 28th Infantry, and platoons of cannon, antitank guns, tank-destroyers, tanks, combat engineers, and field artillery, moved enroute to



Cap Frehel Peninsula to take over positions formerly held by the French, and reduce the enemy. The balance of Combat Team 28 rejoined the 8th on August 15, forcing the enemy to capitulate before noon. The score was 300 Kraut P. W.'s.

On August 23, the 8th, which for three days had confined itself to patrolling, closed in its sector and prepared to attack southward toward



The Plan

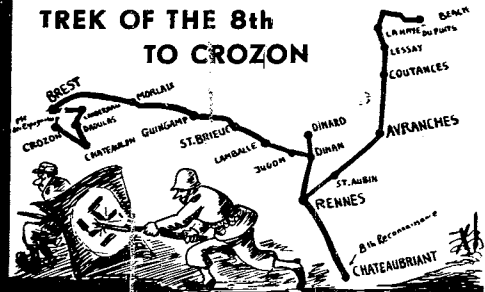
Gen. Stroh has what it takes to win a war



The Prize

Gen. Rauch's forces were plenty tough

TREK OF THE 8th TO CROZON



Time Out

The 121st gets a break after Dinard's fall

Snipers!

The 13th mops up around Le Haye du Puits



Brest. That same day the Assistant Division Commander, Col. Canham, became a Brigadier General.

Once again the 8th was to carry the ball, when orders were issued for the division to make the main effort of the corps in the center, immediately north of the city. At nearly midnight on August 24, the 13th Infantry and the 28th, plus certain attached units, infiltrated toward objectives. The attack was launched the next day shortly after noon, for an average advance of 1200 yards against determined resistance. The attack continued through August 26 against a deeply entrenched enemy employing intense fire. The gain was 300 yards more.

Enemy resistance mounted from August 27 to August 29. After slight advances, the 13th and 28th Infantry Regiments consolidated their positions and held firmly. The enemy called a medical truce on the morning of August 29, in order to evacuate dead and wounded.

ON August 30, Brig. Gen. D. A. Stroh, division commander, was promoted to Major General. On that day and the next the 8th consolidated further small gains and regrouped. Simultaneously, the 121st Infantry, which had been held in division reserve, relieved the 28th Infantry which, in

turn, went into division reserve. On August 31 the division prepared for a coordinated corps attack, to include the 9th Infantry Regiment of the 2nd Infantry Division. A road in the vicinity of Kergroas was its objective.

On September 1, the 121st Infantry, in conjunction with the 9th Regiment on its left flank, opened the attack which, beside cleaning out strong enemy pockets of resistance in the villages of Kergalet and Kergroas, materially assisted the 2nd Division in the capture of Fournuef. The next day, attacks by both the 13th Infantry and 121st Infantry forced the enemy to withdraw, but a shortage of artillery ammunition prevented the formulation of detailed plans for a resumption of the attack in the division zone. Activities from September 5 to September 7 were confined to patrolling and to the holding of occupied positions.

Improvement in the artillery ammunition supply on September 8 made it possible for the 121st Infantry, in the face of severe enemy resistance, to attack and seize the eastern end of the heavily organized and strongly defended Lambezellec ridge. The 121st Infantry advanced westward toward Lambezellec, and by noon the 2nd Battalion was fighting there. The 13th Infantry advanced abreast to positions from which it could support the attack of the 121st Infantry against Lambezellec.

One Fort, Two Towns, And A Four-Fingered Peninsula

ON September 10, having passed through Lambezellec, the 121st Infantry was confronted by Fort Bouguen. This was a formidable work consisting of thick walls between twenty-five and thirty-five feet in height, surrounded by a deep, dry moat.

Within the division zone the western extremity of these walls rested on the Penfeld River, pierced only by one narrow entrance, not wide enough for vehicles. This entrance passed through two tunnels and across two narrow bridges. That was only half the problem. Between the river and the inside of the wall was a steep cliff, which could not be assaulted by infantry without extensive engineer demolitions or by breaching the wall with heavy artillery fire. Examination of the plans of the fort, as well as diagrams and photographs of the ground, indicated that demolitions were impracticable.

On September 11, heavy artillery fire was directed on the wall of Fort Bouguen, but this failed to make an appreciable dent.

The Commanding General, VIII Corps, decided to suspend further operations against that portion

of the inner defenses of Brest and to contain them in the vicinity of Fort Bouguen, while efforts were renewed further east. He therefore directed that elements of the 2nd Infantry Division relieve elements of the 8th in front of the fort. Accordingly, on September 12, the 13th and 121st Infantry Regiments with attached units withdrew to a temporary assembly area in the vicinity of Plouvien, to be ready for operations on the Crozon Peninsula.

Two days earlier, the 28th Infantry (less the 2nd Battalion which remained in division reserve) had been moved towards Guilers to relieve three battalions of the 29th Infantry Division which had been making only limited gains during the preceding forty-eight hours. When the 13th and 121st Infantry Regiments moved to Plouvien, the 28th Infantry Regiment remained on its mission, preparatory to being withdrawn, as the 29th Infantry Division progressed to the east across its front.



At this time the 8th was withdrawn from the action at Brest and sent to the Crozon Peninsula, which reportedly was a strongly-held threat to the Port of Brest that would prevent its use by Allied Forces, even after Brest had been taken.

ON the Crozon Peninsula, Task Force A, commanded by Brig. Gen. Herbert L. Earnest, had been holding the German forces west of a line about fifteen miles from the four finger-like tips of the peninsula. The enemy had prepared strong defensive positions. Crozon was expected to be a hard nut to crack, and when the 8th Division moved into its attack position on September 14, it had, in addition to the tanks, tank destroyers, and engineers already attached to it, Task Force A, composed of the 1st Tank Destroyer Group, the 35th Field Artillery Group, 83rd Armored Field Artillery and the 15th and 17th Cavalry.

West of the line of departure, two main ridges ran parallel to the end of the peninsula, where it branched into four fingers, two on the north, one west, and one south. A stream split these ridges. The 28th Infantry Regiment was to advance along the north ridge, where an airfield in the vicinity of Lanveoc was expected to be stubbornly defended. The 121st Infantry Regiment was to take the south ridge, passing through the town of Crozon. The 13th Infantry Regiment was in division

reserve. Task Force A, with a zone down the center valley, was to advance as the infantry cleared the dominating ridges, and mop up remaining pockets of resistance.

ON the morning of September 15, after a terrific barrage by our heavy and light artillery, and chemical mortars, the attack was launched in a drizzle of rain that later cleared.

In the zone of the 28th Infantry, the 3rd Battalion, under command of Major Donald R. Ward, led the attack. By 0930 it had advanced 500 yards and was approaching the hamlet of St. Eslez. The 3rd Battalion, and the 1st following it, were under heavy flanking artillery and mortar fire from the south ridge. All the officers of Company L became casualties, and Tech. Sgt. Charles E. Ballance reorganized the company and took command. He was killed by a sniper the next day.

In the vicinity of St. Eslez the resistance grew so fierce that it was apparent the main line of the enemy defenses had been reached.

On the south ridge, Company G, 121st Infantry, led the column of companies in which the 2nd Battalion attacked. After an advance of 200 yards, small arms and automatic fire met them with an intensity which indicated that in this sector, too, the enemy intended to hold to the limit. Flat and open ground gave him such good observation that

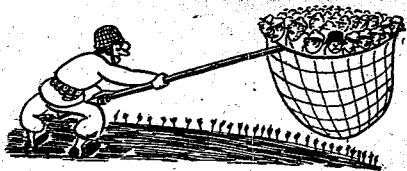
every attempt of Company G to move forward drew an inferno of fire.

The night of the September 15 was enlivened by German counter-attacks which promptly were repulsed on both ridges. At 0700 the next morning our forces renewed the attack under cover of a dense fog, an effective mask for each morning of the Crozon action. In the 28th Infantry the 1st Battalion shoved up on the right of the 3rd Battalion. Although the advance for the day was slight, it penetrated the enemy's line. Numerous strong points were reduced, and 150 prisoners were bagged.

The 121st continued the attack with its 1st and 2nd Battalions. Stiff resistance persisted, but the regiment penetrated the enemy main line.

On the third day of the attack, September 17, that line was broken on both ridges. With it the enemy's confidence in his plan of defense collapsed. Strong points remained to be broken, but through bypassing and reducing them the division advanced at such speed that the Germans never succeeded in regrouping and reforming a line of resistance.

A fort which had been considered formidable fell to the fire of one machine-gun of the 2nd Battalion, 28th Infantry. Once having broken the main line, the 121st took objectives with a speed that baffled the harried Krauts. Before the town of Crozon was reached effective enemy resistance had ceased.



By the afternoon of September 17, the shaft of the peninsula belonged to the 8th. It was time to clean out the branching fingers at the western extremity. This ground was dominated by Hill 70, in the zone of advance of Task Force A. In following up the advance of the infantry, the task force had been hampered by the nature of the ground and lack of a road net in its zone. And since it had not reached Hill 70, the 3rd Battalion of the 13th Infantry was committed to secure this key to the last phase of the Crozon story.

On the night of September 17-18, a reinforced platoon of Company L, 13th Infantry Regiment, under command of 1st Lt. George R. McLendon, outposited Hill 70 without finding evidence of German occupation. Dawn revealed the outposts of the enemy. Bewildered at being infiltrated, the Krauts became panicky. Sgt. Will R. Wheeler, in charge of a combat patrol of little more than a squad of men of Company L, took over a hundred

prisoners, and marched them down the hill to where the main body of Company L was advancing to attack. Before 0900 on the morning of September 18, the 3rd Battalion had occupied the essential hill, and the mop-up of the fingers of the entire peninsula proceeded on schedule.

Four forces accomplished this, acting under the division plan almost as independent combat commands. Task Force A reduced the Cap du Chevre sub-peninsula to the south; the 28th Infantry, driving due west, cleared out Camaret Point; on the north, the 2nd Ranger Battalion (which had been attached to the division on September 17) mopped up the Le Fret area; and to the 13th Infantry fell the role of smashing through a massive wall and the old fort guarding the large northern finger, the Pointe des Espagnoles.

All of which leads up to the afternoon of September 18 and the capture of Lt.



Gen. Erwin Rauch, commanding general of the Crozon Peninsula forces of the enemy. He was the first half of the two-for-one dividend the 8th earned in the way of Nazi generals. The second and larger part of this payoff was Gen. Ramcke, who entered this story at the beginning. They're both out of circulation now, and that's what counts.

The campaign for the Crozon completed the 8th's first chapter in the Allies' Victory Book of World War II. This is written in October of 1944 and the 8th is still doing business in a powerful way, and so the complete accounting of the division's exploits must await the end of the war. But what the division already has achieved in combat is a token of that future, as well as of the 8th's training and glorious tradition in the past.

THE present 8th Infantry Division was activated at Camp Fremont, Palo Alto, California, in January 1918, composed of the 8th, 12th, 13th and 62nd Infantry Regiments, the 2nd, 18th and 83rd Field Artillery Regiments, the 319th Engineer Battalion, 320th Field Signal Battalion, and 8th Supply Train. Only one of these units, the 13th Infantry Regiment, is now in this division.

The 8th left Camp Fremont in September 1918, en route to France, but before it had arrived the

Armistice of November 11 ended the fighting of World War I. The outfit had to wait a long time.

A part of the division was attached to the Army of Occupation and served in Germany until August, 1919. The other elements had returned to the United States in January of that year, where in the following month the division was disbanded. In March 1923, it was reconstituted as an inactive unit, and on July 1, 1940, at Fort Jackson, it was re-activated—the beginning of the 8th Infantry Division of World War II.

Under the command of Maj. Gen. Philip B. Peyton, and with the nucleus of division headquarters furnished by the 8th Infantry Brigade of Fort McPherson, Georgia, the revived 8th Infantry Division initially was composed of the 13th, 28th and 34th Infantry Regiments. In November 1941, the 34th Infantry was reassigned to another division and was replaced by the 121st Infantry. Of the original artillery elements the 28th Field Artillery Regiment was reconstituted into the 28th, 43rd, 45th, and 56th Field Artillery Battalions. These, with the 12th Engineer Battalion, 8th Medical Battalion, 8th Reconnaissance Troop, 8th Signal Company, 8th Quartermaster Company, Headquarters Company and the 8th Military Police Platoon, complete the 8th Infantry Division as it landed on D-Plus-28.

Old And New, Every 8th Outfit Packs Its Sunday Wallop

THE origins of the 28th, 121st and 13th Regiments already have been told, but the remaining units of the 8th, with the exception of the 708th Ordnance Company, were activated at Fort Jackson on July 1, 1940. The 708th Ordnance (originally organized as the 208th) was activated in June 1942, during a brief period when the 8th Division was motorized.

In September 1941, the 8th (then under the command of Maj. Gen. James P. Marley) took part in the Carolina Maneuvers. After Pearl Harbor it patrolled the Atlantic Coast from North Carolina to the Florida Keys for six weeks. Returning to Fort Jackson late in March 1942, the division resumed its training. The following month, it became the 8th Motorized Division. On July 1, 1942 Brig. Gen. Paul E. Peabody succeeded Maj. Gen. Marley as division commander. In September there was a motor march to Tennessee where the



division engaged in two more months of maneuvers. Then, after a brief stay at Camp Forrest, Tennessee, the division set out for its new station, Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, where it remained until March 1943. On January 24, 1943, Maj. Gen. William C. McMahon became commander of the division.

In March 1943, the division moved to Camp Laguna, Arizona, for six strenuous months of desert training. During the latter part of this period, it



On the Ready—
"The Arrow Division"

was demotorized, reverting once more to its original status as a standard infantry division. During this period the 8th Division Band was organized from the 13th and 121st Bands in the division, the 28th Infantry Band having been ordered by the War Department to the 65th Infantry Division, stationed at Camp Shelby, Miss., as their band.



Upon completion of desert training, the division returned to Camp Forrest. Late in November, it arrived in the staging area at Camp Kilmer, New Jersey, and on December 5, 1943, it sailed from New York Harbor for Belfast, Northern Ireland, arriving ten days later. Headquarters were established at Omagh, Tyrone County. The 13th and 28th Regiments were billeted at the Ely Lodge and Drumcose estates in Enniskillen, County Fermanagh. The 1st Battalion, 121st Infantry, was stationed at Shadow Camp in Fintona and later

at Bally-Northland in Dungannon, while the remainder of the regiment was sent to Ashbrooke-Colebrooke, the property of Sir Basil Brooks.

Other elements occupied surrounding territory, spreading out over an area approximately thirty miles square. This presented a difficult problem for training, supply and administrative supervision, which was solved by close and frequent observations and visits by the staff.

Training in Northern Ireland was as varied as the limited terrain permitted. Greatest emphasis was placed on small unit tactics, which later paid big dividends in combat. There was much scouting and patrolling, particularly at night, and a vigorous physical conditioning program. Stress was laid on all types of firing.

GENERAL Dwight D. Eisenhower visited Enniskillen in April and witnessed a number of small unit problems by members of the 13th Infantry, firing by the division artillery, and a regimental review by the 28th Infantry. Lt. Gen. George S. Patton, Jr., Third Army commander, also inspected the troops, commenting favorably on a demonstration of an attack on a fortified position by the 1st Battalion, 121st Infantry.

Every two weeks each regiment sent three officers and fifteen enlisted men to a British training

camp and received the same number of United Kingdom troops. This exchange helped to promote better understanding among Allied soldiers.

As the time for the invasion of France drew near, the training program was expanded to include battalion and regimental combat exercises, command pos. exercises, and the study of German tactics. Elementary amphibious training was given to all troops, and some units began language classes in French and German. The preparation was complete.

"First at Vicksburg" is the motto of the 13th, but "These Are My Credentials" might well become the motto of the entire division — the credentials of tradition, training, and battle experience backed up by fire-superiority, skill, and the will to win. With such credentials the 8th will go anywhere .. anytime.



Printed 28 October 1944, at Imprimerie du Centre, Paris.

THE TEAM:



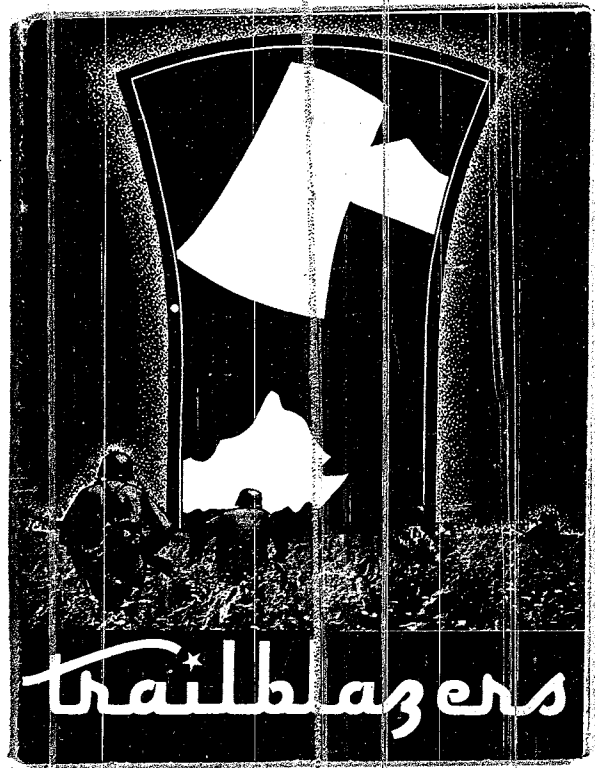
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In Avranches

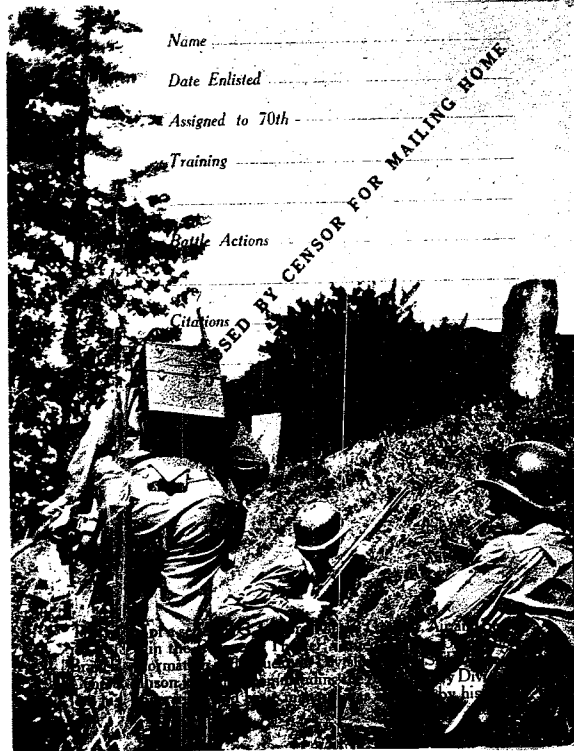


At Coutances





Trailblazers



Name _____

Date Enlisted _____

Assigned to 70th _____

Training _____

Battle Actions _____

Citations _____

To those great soldiers who died fighting that this organization might have a story worth publishing, we dedicate this abbreviated story of the 70th Infantry Division. The future of the division as presently viewed makes timely this recording of its past accomplishments.



Allison J. Barnett
Major General, Commanding

THE STORY OF THE **70th** INFANTRY DIVISION

FEB. 17, 1945: In the foggy, gray mist of early morning, the 70th Infantry Division surged forward, its sights set on Saerbrucken, capital of the rich, long-disputed Saarland.

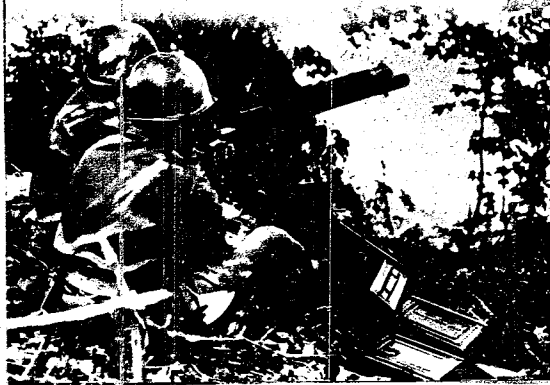
Although relative newcomers to the European Theater—their baptism of fire came at Philippsbourg and Wingen-sur-Moder—the Trailblazers were eager, confident. Fighting for the first time as a division, the men under Maj. Gen. Allison J. Barnett could hardly visualize the rugged battles that lay ahead.

Immediate objectives were the French industrial city of Forbach on the division's left flank, the town of Styring-Wendel further northeast, the Pfaffenwald

stretching from Forbach east to the Saar River, the strategic high ground of Spicheren Heights. Once these heights were gained, Saarbrücken's fate would be doomed.

Over terrain ideal for delaying tactics and ambushes—countless valleys and ravines separated by thickly-forested hills—the doughs slogged along in a veritable sea of mud.

Oeting, Kerbach and Etzling fell in quick succession to the 176th Inf. Regt., which whipped along the left flank, and to the 274th Inf. Regt., which forged ahead in the center. On the right, the 275th Inf. Regt. fought



bitterly for Lixing and Grosbliederstroff as it pushed to the Saar through Zingingingen, Hesselung and Alsting.

The Germans must have had the 15-man patrol under observation all the time. Waiting until the patrol had formed its skirmish line, the Nazis opened up with machine guns. In a moment, all but one of the 15 men were dead or wounded. He was Pvt. Jesse D. Cain, Jr., Philadelphia, Co. A, 275th.

Lying in cover so shallow he couldn't raise his arms from his side without drawing fire, Cain's only thought was, "Wait till dark and maybe I can make it in."

But Cain's wounded buddies couldn't wait. Several prayed softly. One muttered, "Get a doctor," and raised his knees to ease his pain. The German machine gun rattled death.

Pvt. Cain didn't wait. He crept, crawled, finally sprinted for the woods. The Nazis blazed away at him; they missed. The wounded soon were evacuated.

The drive on Saarbrücken was a nightmare from the outset. The areas over which the advance rolled were heavily mined. In "Peaceful Valley," above Forbach, it was nearly impossible to set foot on unmined soil.

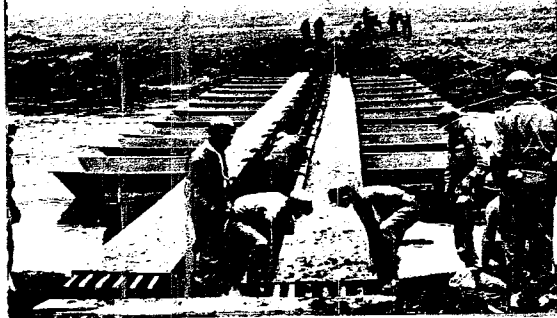
From a distance, the bright yellow shu-mines looked like a field of daffodils. Near Etzling, the mines were just as thick, even more potent and Trailblazer tanks couldn't move up to give pinned-down infantrymen the support they needed.

This was a job for the engineers—the combat engineers who had been building bridges under fire, removing demolition charges, filling anti-tank ditches.

Pfc Deno A. Gaffi, Kelso, Wash., Co. A, 270th Engr. Bn., was among those braving enemy fire that grew hotter as the Germans spotted them. Gaffi seemingly paid little attention to the gunfire as he worked to clear a route of advance,

“There’s your path,” he told the tankers as he lifted the last mine.

For two consecutive Sundays, the Army Hour broadcast dramatic enactments of the 70th’s rugged fight along the approaches to Forbach. Many Trailblazers received inquiries for information regarding the struggle for this vital stronghold.



The advance had been painfully slow. Now, the 276th set its sights on Schlossberg Castle. Doughs would have to scale those rugged heights that were practically void of cover. The regiment went to work. Surprised at the outset when they failed to draw fire, the men quickened the pace.

When the 276th reached the castle, it discovered that the Nazis had pulled out altogether. Germans had withdrawn into Forbach.

When the Trailblazers went into their first action as a combat division, The Stars & Stripes of Feb. 25, 1945, reported:

“A brand new American infantry division, the 70th Trailblazer, was revealed on February 23 to be spearheading the Seventh Army drive into Germany, south of Saarbrücken.

“The 70th, which first went into action on December 28 (as Task Force Herren) southeast of Haguenau, is fighting in Forbach, just inside the French border six miles southwest of Saarbrücken, and was later reported in possession of most of the town.”

In the center, between the other two regiments, the 274th pushed steadily ahead toward the town of Spicheren and Spicheren Heights, which overlooked the first belt of the Siegfried Line forts and dragon’s teeth.

He was leading a patrol when the machine guns opened up. He fell, badly wounded. Knowing he would be a handicap to his men who insisted that they evacuate him, he said:

"Leave me here and go back. That is a direct order."

As a final gesture, he gave his carbine—his sole protection—to a soldier who had lost his weapon. The men withdrew reluctantly. The last time they saw and Lt. Bernard Brens, Paterson, N.J., Co. K, 275th, he was still going forward—crawling on his hands and knees toward the enemy.



Battle Axe SLASHES INTO "HOLY SOIL"

ONCE the 276th had gained control of Schlossberg Castle, it was no cinch to keep possession of it. Nazis roared back in a charge that was reminiscent of a Hollywood movie. Screaming Krauts scrambled up the steep slopes in pitch-darkness. Co. I, 276th, entrenched at the base of the 500-year-old castle that rose majestically out of sheer rock, fired in the direction of the sounds.

When Capt. Herbert J. Andrews, Colton, Calif., Co. I CO, was informed that the Germans were converging on doughs' foxholes, he called for 81mm mortar and artillery fire on the defensive lines.

The Nazis' small arms and automatic weapons fire diminished as the mortar and artillery shells pounded in. The wild, screaming charge ceased. Next morning, 40 dead Krauts were counted on the hillside.

Next, the Trailblazers swung down into Forbach, slugging ahead and battling for each house as enemy screaming meemies blasted unmercifully.

Sgt. William P. Henry, Jr., La Habra, Calif., Co. F, Bloody Axe Regiment, was posthumously awarded both the Silver and Bronze Star medals.

He was awarded the Silver Star for clearing Germans from houses beyond the Forbach underpass. He went into the houses alone, killing two Nazis and capturing two others. When his squad, engaged in similar work, lost contact, the sergeant worked his way through enemy occupied areas to reestablish contact.

Sgt. Henry won the Bronze Star for his action when, with another Co. F man, he exposed himself to kill a German officer who was leading a counter-attack on the regiment's positions. The Nazis fled after the officer was killed.

As the 70th's flanks swung inward, it became apparent that the Germans would defend Spicheren Heights



at all costs. With some portions of the lofty ridge facing Saarbrücken already in Trailblazer hands, the full fury of Nazi counter-attacks burst against the men fighting for Spicheren, Feb. 22.

Known as "Hitler's Holy Ground," the heights had sentimental as well as military value. German soldiers were buried here where they fought the French in 1870. And on Christmas Day, 1939, the Fuehrer had timidly walked a few hundred yards across the frontier as the Nazi propaganda machine trumpeted the incident as a triumphal march into France. Since then, this soil became a Nazi shrine and small urns of the earth were sold to devout followers as revered souvenirs.

Germans had contrived every device to defend this "sacred soil." Rotating and elevating pillboxes, mortars and artillery cascaded fire in every direction. Counter-battery fire was ineffective. A persistent low ceiling prevented air support.

This was a job for the infantry.

As the Trailblazers approached Strying-Wendel, German guards fled, allowing Allied prisoners to escape and make their way to American lines. Crippled, diseased and suffering from malnutrition, PW's streamed in a long column to the 274th's positions.

Even then, liberty was hard-bought. As the PW's hobbled along the Metz highway, German machine guns opened up, wounded many of them. Wearing the

tattered uniforms of Soviet Russia, France, Poland, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, the 951 men were among the first Allied PW's to be liberated in this sector.

Savage fighting raged as Trailblazers wrested Spicheren Heights from the Germans. Co. B, 274th, was digging in after a tough battle when the Nazis suddenly counter-attacked. Dropping their shovels, doughs seized their rifles and went to work.

Sgt. Elmo Chappell, Marietta, Ga., and two of his buddies discovered that their weapons were sluggish from the mud and ice and would not fire semi-automatically. Pushing his buddies to cover where they could load their rifles by hand, the sergeant took up an exposed position and fired each rifle as it was loaded and handed to him.

Sgt. Chappell accounted for eight Germans. With the counter-assault squelched, 70th doughs continued their relentless attack on the Germans.



These infantrymen were doing themselves proud. The 274th eventually scaled Spicheren Heights, then pushed on beyond Styring-Wendel; the 276th stormed through Forbach, scrapping through street after street; the 275th poked all the way to the Saar.

When the 70th had time to take stock, it counted 18 captured towns, 2034 prisoners and repulsed 29 counter-attacks. Its actions produced such accolades as the statement issued by Field Marshal Sir Bernard L. Montgomery while decorating Capt. Joseph K. Donahue, Rolla, Mo., Co. I, 275th, who was awarded the Silver Star for gallantry in action at Spicheren. Said the British officer, "I want to pay tribute to the gallantry of the American soldier. He is an excellent fighting man."

13th - Unlucky Day FOR RETREATING NAZIS

THE Germans had surrounded the Simon Mine and Factory at Forbach with a deep anti-tank ditch and a seven-foot wall, surmounted with iron spikes laced with barbed wire. When riflemen charged the site, only one soldier reached the wall. He crawled through a hole and advanced 30 yards before a panzerfaust stopped him.

S/Sgt. Jacob Kohn, St. Louis, 4th Bn., 274th, the medic in the rifle platoon, saw the man fall. Although he had lost his identifying arm band and no Red Cross flag was available, the sergeant dashed across the open ground to the wall through fire pouring from factory buildings.

Advancing beyond the wall into the yard, Sgt. Kohn reached the wounded dough, carried him back to the wall, across the ditch, to safety. Later, he received a battlefield commission and was awarded the Silver Star.

Pressure exerted by Third Army's penetration into the Palatinate forced Germans to withdraw; Trail-blazers increased the pace of the retreat with their hammering blows March 13. By next day, the division had cleared all the area up to the Saar.



During the next week, patrols frequently crossed the river to determine the disposition of enemy forces. Considerable casualties were caused by snipers and mines as preparations were made for the drive into Saarbrucken.

The first wave of Co. C, 276th, crossed the Saar near Hostenbach late March 19, followed by the remainder of the company the next morning. The 274th was transported across the river by boat while all other elements of the division used a foot bridge built by the engineers.

Supporting the Battle Axe regiment's crossing was the 433rd AAA Bn. Even ahead of the anti-tank guns, the ack-ack men lowered their guns within 200 yards of the river so they could fire point blank. So accurate was their rolling barrage that the entire third battalion crossed the river while the Germans, in their buttoned-up pillboxes, failed to get off a single round of small arms fire.

The 275th began its advance through Saarbrucken at noon, March 20. This city, with a pre-war population of 133,382, was the center of Saarland administration as well as an important industrial and cultural center. Simultaneously, the 274th, by-passing the city, slashed through the dragon's teeth of the Siegfried Line.

The push on Saarbrucken was aided by the First and Ninth Tactical Air Forces, whose planes plowed a furrow of flames from the city all the way to the Rhine. Three hundred medium and light bombers smashed

communications from Saarbrucken to Siegen as Trailblazers surged forward.

A miniature train is painted on the fuselage of an 882nd FA Bn. liaison plane and another on a gun of the 494th Armd. FA Bn. The grasshopper plane, flying low over Saarbrucken, spotted a German locomotive streaming towards the city and called such accurate fire directions to gunners that the entire train was destroyed.

Trailblazers—

READY, WILLING AND ABLE

It was a long road from Camp Adair, Ore., and Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., the mock battles of Prune Ridge and the Big Piney, to the snow-shrouded hills of northern Alsace. It twisted through the bloody streets of Wingen and Philippsbourg to the battles for Forbach, Spicheren Heights and Saarbrucken.

When Saarbrucken fell, it marked the end of 86 consecutive days in the battle line for Trailblazers who had landed at Marseilles just before Christmas, 1944. They had been committed to action in Alsace less than a month from the day they walked up the gangplank at Boston.

In the thick of the 274th's fight in Alsace, Lorraine and Western Germany was one of major league baseball's most promising young pitchers. Cpl. Alden

J. Wilkie, formerly of the Pittsburgh Pirates, was No. 1 gunner in a Co. D mortar squad.

The 70th Division was activated at Camp Adair, June 15, 1943, the day citizens of the state hailed the centennial of the Old Oregon Trail. "Trailblazers" was the appropriate name taken by the new outfit, claimed as "Oregon's Own."

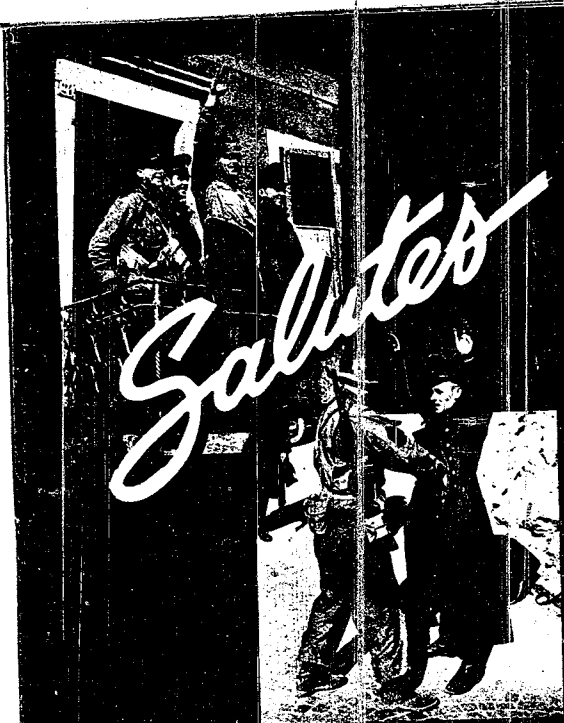
Its red, white and green shoulder patch bears an axe in recognition of the pioneers who travelled the Oregon Trail to the Willamette Valley (site of Camp Adair), a snowy mountain for Oregon's Mt. Hood, and a green fir, symbolizing the 91st Inf. Div. (Fir Tree Division), from which officers and NCOs of the 70th were drawn, prior to its activation.

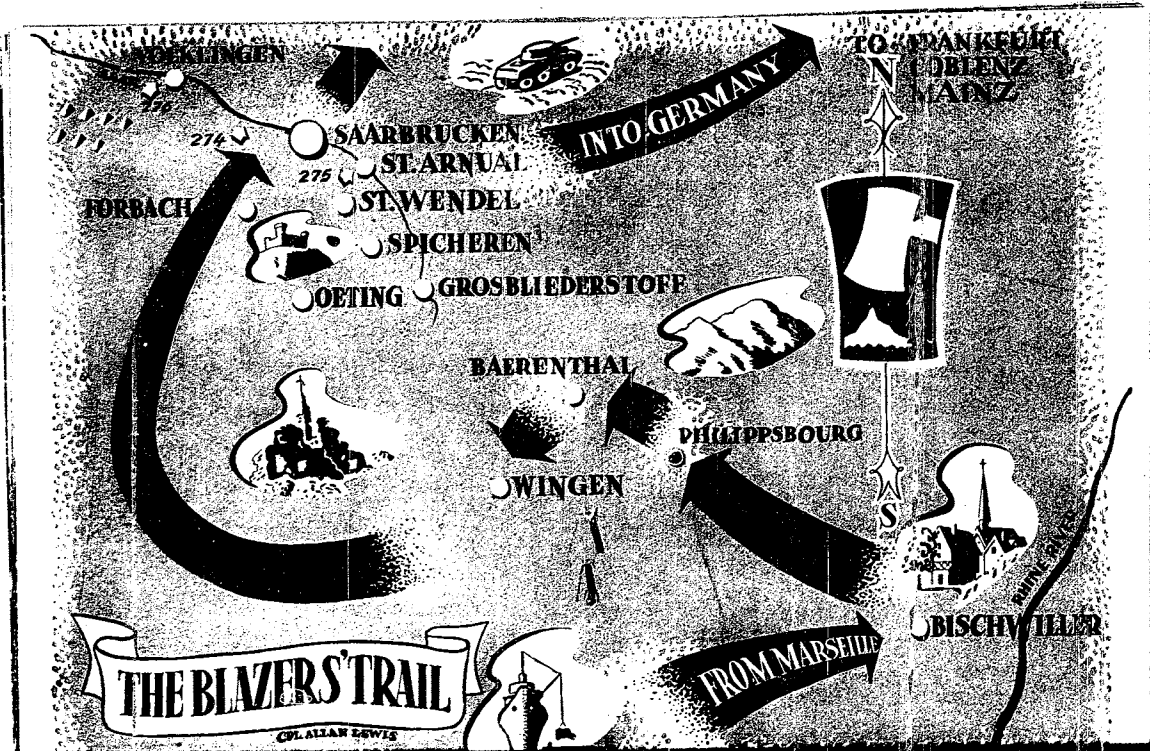


Recruits came largely from New York, Pennsylvania, Minnesota, Ohio and Missouri. They learned their first lessons as infantrymen in the hilly forests of the Valley, not unlike those wooded hills along the Saar. Under Maj. Gen. John E. Dahlquist, later CG of the 36th Inf. Div. (Texas Division), they sweated and froze their way to trained soldierhood. In July, 1944, they moved to Fort Leonard Wood where the final polish was added in the Ozark terrain under Gen. Barnett, who took command of the division Aug. 24. Gen. Barnett had served for 21 months as Chief of Staff, U. S. Army Forces, South Pacific Area.

On Dec. 1, 1944, the initial contingent of Trailblazers trudged up the Boston POE gangplank. The long training days were ended. The big fight loomed ahead. Trailblazers were ready, willing and able.

Shortly after midnight on New Year's Day, 1945, the 275th—the Eagle Regiment—was ordered to attack. The day before, the American defensive line in the mountains fringing the northern Alsatian frontier had been breached by German SS mountain troops, supported by strong armor and artillery. For American forces battling on the Continent, it was a crucial week. Pinched in the Bastogne Pocket, tanks were trying to stave off encirclement. The Battle of the Ardennes still was in a decisive stage. Nazis held the initiative from Belgium to Strasbourg on the Rhine. From Bitche to Hagenau, Krauts smashed south, plowing over snow-covered hills.





WIKTINGEN

TO FRANKFURT
COBLENZ
WANZ

INTO GERMANY

274

SAARBRUCKEN
ST. ARNOLD

FORBACH

ST. WENDEL
SPICHEREN

JOETING
GROSBLIEDERSSTOFF

BAERENTHAL

PHILIPPSBOURG

SWINGEN

BISCHWILLER

THE BLAZERS' TRAIL
COL. ALLAN LEWIS

FROM MARSEILLE



The three Trailblazer infantry regiments—the 274th, 275th and 276th—had landed at Marseilles in two shipments, Dec. 10 and 13, 1944. Less than three weeks later, Dec. 28, they were hurled into the line along the Rhine near Bischwiller as Task Force Herren, under Brig. Gen. Thomas W. Herren, assistant division commander, former commandant of Fort Riley's Cavalry School. When the Nazis struck to the west, TF Herren units rushed to help blunt the attack.

Courage SHARPENS EAGLES' CLAWS

THE Wehrmacht had penetrated to Philippsbourg, west of Haguenau. The 275th stood in its path. The mountains were steep; the forests, thick; the weather was freezing; snow mantled the woods and roads. First and 3rd Bns. spearheaded the attack with Cos. A, B, I and L in the lead. Increasing enemy infiltration eventually broke contact between the four companies and their battalion CPs. Fighting was reduced to innumerable, fragmentary guerrilla actions.

He won the first Silver Star awarded by the 70th.

He was too old, they told him back at Magnolia, Ark., in 1942 when he tried to enlist. He was 40. Later, however, he was accepted for OCS at Ft. Benning, Ga. In January, 1944, it was Capt. Edwin B. Keith—still "too old"—who led his company up

the snowy side of an important hill at Philippsbourg, under direct fire from entrenched SS troops. When the company had taken the hill, doughs counted their catch: 51 dead, 21 captured, more than 100 wounded.

No more was he "too old."

While headquarters tried desperately to re-establish contact with the lost companies, the battalions struck at the enemy in Philippsbourg. The town was of strategic importance. Lying in a deep defile in the hills, its main street wound through the mountains to open country beyond.

Machine guns set up in houses and on the outskirts of the town swept every angle of approach. German

88s were zeroed in on the crossroads. When Lt. Col. John T. Malloy, Paso Robles, Calif., 275th executive officer, reached Philippsbourg, he found five tanks and 75 men clinging to the edge of town but disorganized and ready to withdraw.

Ordering the tanks to follow him, he marched up the middle of the street through a hail of lead, guiding the tanks to the most important enemy position, a machine



gun nest at the upper end of the block. Just beyond the crossroads he was wounded by fragments of an 88. At 150 yards, however, the lead tank fired point-blank at the machine gun, blowing off a corner of the house and wiping out the emplacement. With this threat gone, elements of the 275th and the Battle Axe Regiment—the 274th—stormed through the rest of the town in savage house-to-house fighting.

Late that night, Cos. A and L made their way to safety; next day Co. I was located and relieved.

TF Herren's victory brought quiet to the sector. Philippsbourg had been a bitter, bloody introduction to battle for untried troops fresh from the States. Good leadership, training and courage had won the day.

Pay-Off Punch

LAUNCHED AT SAARBRUCKEN

HE was a Medic. Naturally, he was unarmed. Having given first aid under fire to two wounded soldiers, he went back for his jeep to evacuate them. By the time he returned, the pillbox where he had placed the doughs for safety had been captured by the Germans.

With another soldier, he took shelter in the cellar of a nearby house. An upper floor had been converted by Nazis into a gun nest and the house now was a target for

American artillery. After three days, the house was demolished, the Germans killed. Lt. Lewis A. Dougberty, San Francisco, 275th Med. Det., crawled out of the debris, made his way through the lines, shook off the effects of hunger and exhaustion, accepted relief only after all wounded had been treated.

The confused, seemingly patternless fighting along the northern front—the Battle of the Bulge—raged during the first few days of the new year, but on Jan. 4 the Germans tipped their hand. Striking 10 miles south of their Maginot Line bastion city of Bitche, the Nazis infiltrated an estimated 800 SS troopers into the town of Wingen-sur-Moder. The mission was to establish contact with enemy forces to the north and hold.

T|Sgt. David K. Lunsford, Louisa, Ky., 370th Med. Bn., wanted to be an infantryman. He was willing to take a break to buck private. He became the first man in the division to win an Oak Leaf Cluster to a Bronze Star. At Wingen, he knocked out a machine gun with a bazooka; when another machine gun held up his platoon, he exposed himself to fire to aid in adjusting mortars; when mortars failed to do the job, he crawled forward and silenced the enemy crew with his M-1.

He's now a T|Sgt. again—in the infantry.

Nearly 150 men of the 276th—the Bloody Axe Regiment—were captured when the Germans cut



TF Herren's main communications which channelled through Wingen.

The Nazis' strategy made imperative the recapture of Wingen by the Americans. The Germans planned to strike south and hook up with their forces moving up from below Strasbourg. If this could be accomplished, the entire Seventh Army east of the Saverne Gap would be isolated.

As Army headquarters shifted from Saverne to Luneville, the 276th was ordered to retake Wingen. Gen. Herren assigned the job to 3rd Bn. Jumping off before noon, Jan. 4, the attack made slow progress against withering automatic weapons fire.

The two Trailblazer platoon leaders, 1st Lt. Glenn Poehles, La Mesa, Calif., and 2nd Lt. Edwin David Cooks, Los Angeles, decided to play "dead."

In making their way through the underpass on the road leading into Wingen, they had been pinned down by heavy automatic weapons fire. With darkness came the Germans. Throughout the night, the two 276th platoon leaders lay in the snow, playing "dead," while the Nazis searched their pockets, kicked them, took their weapons and wrist watches.

"When they took Peebles' knife from his belt, we thought sure we were done for; and when they took my wrist watch I thought they would discover my pulse beating," said Lt. Cooks later.

When the Trailblazers took Wingen the next day, the two lieutenants were returned to the regimental CP at Zittersheim.



On Jan. 5, 70th doughs completely surrounded Wingen.

"Give us riflemen to go in with our tanks," asked the commander of the armor which had been assigned to slash into Wingen.

The only force available was the Guide and Guard Platoon—mail clerks, motor pool personnel, cooks' helpers. But the G & G men went in. Germans went out. Only when darkness forced the tanks to withdraw did the platoon come back out.

Preparations then were made for the pay-off punch. Anti-tank guns were hauled over mountain trails—only routes available—and lowered from the icy cliffs.

Spearheaded by a 274th battalion, the attack was launched at dawn. The powerhouse thrust ripped into the heart of the town. By afternoon, the enemy was kaput. Trailblazer prisoners, who had been forced to serve as litter bearers for Nazis, were freed. SS men wearing American uniforms were captured. The Nazi attempt to cut off Seventh Army was halted.

Lt. Hugo Seren, Jr., Seattle, Hq. Co., 276th, had watched the rabbits all afternoon. Now, as he advanced into the Alsatian village, the lieutenant saw the rabbits stop near the doorway of a courtyard, raise their ears.

"I knew someone was in there," Lt. Seren later said, "otherwise the rabbits wouldn't have stopped. Since I was

the first Yank in town, it couldn't have been anyone else but Germans."

It was Germans. A grenade lobbed over the wall took care of them.

Those first days of combat at Philippsburg and Wingen were rugged but they did provide seasoning. Trailblazers were veterans when they kicked off for Saarbrücken Feb. 17. Thirty-two days later, this prize city fell before the might of the 70th.



While the division stormed into the city, the 70th Recon Troop swooped northeast in a lightning-fast reconnoitering move. Anti-tank ditches, road blocks and demolitions failed to slow the troopers who seized several hundred prisoners along with two 88s and their crews at Holz.

So swiftly did the mechanized cavalry move that the Reconmen, running off their maps, had to rely on captured German motorists' maps. By the time these

troopers had made contact at Neunkirchen with Third Army forces—the 26th Inf. Div.—they had covered all main and secondary roads and villages in a zone 40 miles long and six to 10 miles wide.

Four Trailblazers were posthumously awarded the Silver Star and Bronze Star following the Saar Basin action. They were: S/Sgt. Clarence Jacobson, Co. D, 274th, Silver Star; S/Sgt. Grant Walter, Co. F, 276th; Cpl. George Spudick, Co. H, 276th; Pfc Harold Ward, Co. H, 274th, Bronze Stars.

Jacobson single-handedly obstructed an enemy counter-attack on his unit's position near Spiecheren for 20 minutes, ample time for his outfit to prepare to repel the assault.

Walter exposed himself repeatedly to enemy fire while checking the platoon position near Styring-Wendel. Although wounded, he refused to be evacuated until he had completed his job.

Spudick returned to a previously evacuated mortar position with weapons and ammunition, near Offweiler, inspiring his buddies to do likewise. Pfc Ward was killed when his platoon was isolated for seven days and under constant attack near Spiecheren.

The Trailblazers' offensive concluded with the meeting of Seventh and Third Armies, ending 86 days of



continuous contact with the enemy. During the climactic four days of March 20-23, the division took 668 prisoners, liberated 58 towns, freed several hundred Soviet laborers and captured large quantities of enemy materiel. Later, Prince August, son of the former Kaiser, and Julius Lippert, Lord Mayor of Berlin, were among the captives who passed into the PW cages.

70TH — FOREVER IN THE HEARTS OF *Fighting Men*

It now was revealed how Div Arty—comprised of the 882nd, 883rd and 884th Light Artillery Bns., and the 725th Medium Artillery Bn.—under the command of Brig. Gen. Peter P. Rodes, had helped to secure the Saarbrücken bridgehead, March 20. One of Div Arty's shells had severed the lines leading to German demolition charges under the famed Altrüch Bridge. When the Nazis attempted to blow the span, the charges failed to detonate. Accurate fire kept the Germans from restoring the demolition system.

Across this bridge and over the bridgehead which Trailblazers were guarding, swept the full force of Seventh Army



power. The 70th kept supply zones open, besides mopping up, patrolling, guarding vital communications, administering military government, maintaining PW enclosures and establishing facilities to care for thousands of Allied displaced personnel.

The Trailblazers became well-known to the American public for their action in the Saar Basin. The New York Post devoted a full column to the division's part in the Saar breakthrough. Other large metropolitan newspapers carried stories of the attack. The Minneapolis Tribune printed a front page map of the 70th's assault on Saarbrücken.

The 70th was stationed in the Frankfurt-am-Main sector when Germany surrendered unconditionally on May 8, 1945. Trailblazers accepted the news calmly. There was no celebration. The wet misery and shrapnel of the Pfaffenwald, the 88s crashing into Forbach, the bitter cold and snow of Philippsbourg and Wingen, the tortuous days of Haguenau Forest were too close.

Too close, too, was the



memory of the 714 Trailblazers who died in the hills and forests of Alsace, of Lorraine and in the Saarland; of the 2763 wounded, of the 395 who were taken prisoner, of the 89 listed as missing in action.

The 76th observed June 15, 1945, with double significance. Not only was this the division's second birthday anniversary, but it also was Infantry Day. Memorial programs were held. At ceremonies the year previous, a ship named *SS Trailblazer* in honor of the division was launched at Portland, Ore.



The biggest decoration to be awarded in the Trailblazer Division—the Distinguished Service Cross—was received by Capt. Donald Pence, West Point, N. Y., 275th, and Lt. Claude J. Haefner, Bethlehem, Pa., 276th. Pvt. Samson J. Stephens, Fernandia, Fla., 274th, was given the award posthumously.

Long training periods followed through June and July, 1945. Combat problems were enacted with seriousness. Although the Trailblazers were combat-wise, there was reason enough for additional training. It was essential that the division be prepared for any or all future assignments.

The people of Nassau, Germany, had reason to believe the war was starting again one day in June when

a Trailblazer rifle company, Co. K, 276th, carried on an offensive problem through the town. As machine guns chattered and men shouted for medics, white flags appeared in windows, people dashed for cover.

One woman asked Squad Leader S/Sgt. Mike Brebenis: "This fight a real war?"

"Darned right it is," replied the sergeant. The terrified German scrambled for a nearby building as the infantrymen pushed on to "capture" the high ground ahead.

Shortly after V-E day came the news that Trailblazers whose brevity of service precluded discharge were to be sent to other outfits.

Whenever Trailblazers are scattered, there always will be a 70th Infantry Division. It will live forever in the hearts of men who fought with it.



HEADQUARTERS XXI CORPS
OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY COMMANDER
APO 101, U. S. Army

FWM/ABC

1 April 1945.

201.22 CA

SUBJECT: Commendation.
TO : Commanding General, 70th Infantry Division, APO 161, U.S. Army.

1. It is my desire to commend the 70th Infantry Division on the capture of Forbach, Stiring-Wendel and Saarbrücken and on the crossing of the Saar River. The successful completion of this mission is one in which the 70th Infantry Division may take justifiable pride.
2. The courage of your men is evident in their victory in the face of the enemy's stubborn resistance and employment of natural obstacles.

F. W. MILNER
F. W. MILNER,
Major General, U. S. Army,
Commanding.

1st Inf. - AJS/wb
70th Infantry Division, APO 461, U. S. Army.

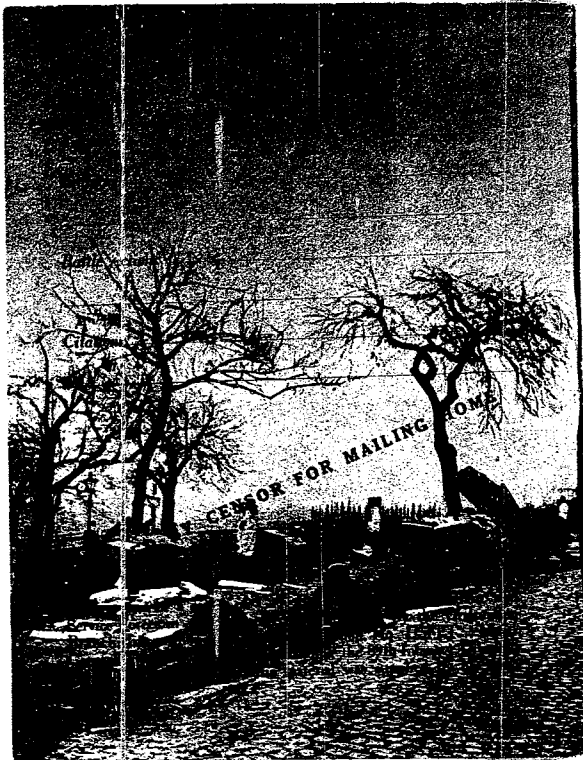
Units, 70th Infantry Division.
Members of the team may be justly proud of the above
mention of the combat efforts of the Division.

J. BARNETT
J. BARNETT,
Major General, United States
Army, Commanding.





Rolling
AHEAD!



This story of the 89th Infantry Division in World War II is taken straight from the official history. It is no fictional thriller, though in spots it reads like a Western. This booklet is based solidly on facts, and the facts were sired by deeds. The men of the Rolling W wrote these pages with action, some of them in blood. From a supposedly "green"

outfit, you became from your very first week of combat a pace-setter, a spearhead division in one of history's most spectacular pursuits. It took men, not boys, to do that job and stay out front. Your aggressiveness, courage, teamwork and above all your rugged fighting spirit carried you through Germany in unbeatable time. These qualities will mark the performance of 89ers on whatever front and against whatever odds in the days to come.

Arnold Wiley

Major General, Commanding

The Story OF THE 89TH INFANTRY DIVISION

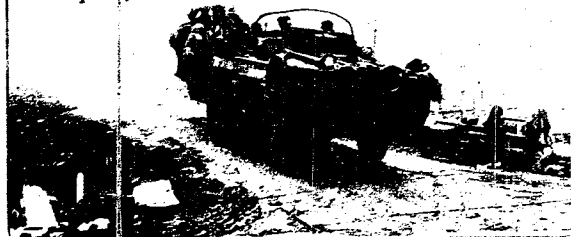
MARCH 26, 1945, 0330 hours: The Germans were dug into the cliffs. Machine guns and 20mms bristled from air raid bunkers, behind terraced walls. Snipers crouched on rooftops and spotters waited in

castle OPs perched along the rim of the gorge. Six hundred feet below, the Rhine gleamed under a faint moon.

At three points along the west bank, men of the 89th Infantry Division pushed off in assault boats, huddled low and paddled vigorously against the current. The division's second big river crossing in less than two weeks of combat was under way at Wellmich, at St. Goar and Oberwesel. The mission: to secure and hold a bridgehead at all cost; to climb the sheer cliffs; to drive into the wooded heights beyond. For a green outfit, many of whose men were under fire for the first time, this was a tough assignment.

An 88 shell wiped out three boats and an engineer launching crew on the beach at St. Goar. As the frail craft slipped to midstream, German flares floodlighted the gorge from shore to shore. Camouflaged zooms slammed shells at the oncoming boats, tore paddles from the men's hands, blew one boat to bits and tossed the doughs into the water. Somehow, the boats kept coming.

The men swam or waded ashore. Reorganizing quickly on the waterfront, they crawled up the stone



embankments, carved out a toe-hold and hung on. Boatload after boatload fought its way across the 250 yards of open water, battling drift as well as Nazis. By noon, approximately five battalions were across the river. The bridgehead was secure.

Of the operation, Lt. Gen. (then Maj. Gen.) Troy H. Middleton, VIII Corps Commander, wrote:

The almost insurmountable obstacles of terrain would have tested a veteran division; it was all the more outstanding when executed by a new division, relatively untried in combat.

This was a proud beginning for wearers of the Rolling W patch. They were latecomers to the European Theater of Operations, but with them they brought leadership, know-how and a spirit of individual aggressiveness developed in nearly three years of training. This spirit and teamwork carried the 89th deep into the Reich as a spearhead of Gen. George S. Patton's Third Army.

Three and a half months after landing in France, the Rolling W came to a halt within a few miles of the Czechoslovakian border in Saxony. By blasting open two vital bridgeheads, the 89th played a major role in the conquest of Germany. At the Moselle, it opened a route for the 11th Armd. Div. to slash enemy remnants still west of the Rhine. Across the 89th's Rhine bridge, under the shadow of fabled Lorelei Rock, poured a stream of infantry and armor to speed Hitler's final collapse.

In 57 days of action, Maj. Gen. Thomas D. Finley's

men advanced 350 miles and captured 43,512 prisoners. "We know for certain that they can't give us a job we can't lick," Gen. Finley said at the end of the campaign.

Another generation of 89ers had proved just as unbeatable in World War I. Known then as the Middle Western Division because most of its men came from Kansas and Missouri, the 89th was activated in 1917, and trained at Camp Funston, Kan. Landing at Le Havre in June, 1918, the division first went into the line in the Toul Sector, later fought through the savage St. Mihiel and Meuse-Argonne offensives.

By Nov. 11, 1918, the Middle Westerners, serving with the American First Army, had shattered the Germans' toughest trench defenses and cleared the entire left bank of the Meuse River south of Sedan. Following the Armistice, the division occupied a portion of the Rhineland near Trier. Among its distinguished veterans, the 89th claimed such leaders as Lt. Gen. Brehon V. Somervell, Commanding General, Army Service Forces, and Lt. Gen. John C. H. Lee, Commanding General, Communications Zone, ETO.

The 89th was reactivated at Camp Carson, Colo., July 15, 1942, under the command of Maj. Gen. (then Brig. Gen.) William H. Gill, who was succeeded the following March by Maj. Gen. (then Brig. Gen.) Thomas D. Finley, Asst. Division Commander.

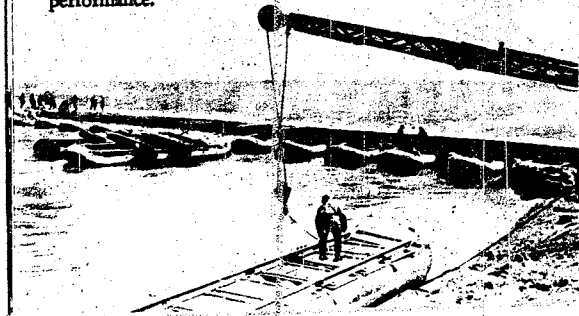
Basic training got under way in the heat and dust of Colorado's "mile-high" plateau country, rugged terrain for doughs who were to beat the Wehrmacht's best.

Highlight of the first year was an inspection by the late President Roosevelt, April 24, 1943.

In August, 1943, the 89th was reorganized as one of three experimental light divisions, designed to operate in areas where roads and trails were non-existent. T/O strength was cut to 9000 men; transportation and artillery were reduced proportionately. Jeeps gave way to push carts; pack boards replaced blanket rolls.

The next six months produced a series of grueling maneuvers under conditions that tested the stamina of every man. From Nov. 22, 1943, to Jan. 25, 1944, the 89th slogged through the mud and swamps of Louisiana in Third Army maneuvers.

The 89ers next moved to Hunter Liggett Military Reservation for two months of strenuous training against the 71st Light Inf. Div. in the mountains and canyons of California. Sweating Joes hacked trails through the brush, packed supplies and water up back-breaking grades. This conditioning paid off in battle performance.



As the 89th rounded into shape, 4,500 men—half the division's strength—were shipped to overseas reinforcement pools. Replacements streamed in from the ASTP, Air Corps and other branches as basic training began anew.

The next move was to Camp Butner, N. C., where the 89th was reorganized as a triangular division, June 15, 1944. The Rolling W now was composed of the 333rd, 334th and 335th Inf. Regts.; the 340th, 341st, 914th and 563rd FA Bns.; 314th Engr. Combat Bn.; 314th Med. Bn.; 405th QM Co.; 714th Ord. Light Maintenance Co.; 89th Recon Troop.

Most of these units had seen action with the 89th in 1918. Training was intensified, with emphasis on forced marches, proficiency tests and combat problems. By November, 1944, the division once more was ready for overseas. Inspections by Lt. Gen. Ben Lear, then CG, Army Ground Forces, and by Gen. George C. Marshall, climaxed preparations.

The advance party, commanded by Brig. Gen. John N. Robinson, Asst. Division Commander, sailed from New York for England, Dec. 26, 1944. After staging at Camp Myles Standish, Mass., the remainder of the division embarked at Boston, Jan. 10, 1945. In the bitter cold night of Jan. 22, 1945, the first units of the 89th stumbled down a landing stage into the waiting LSTs headed for Le Havre. T/Sgt. Leon C. Mounts, Long Beach, Calif., was the first 89er of World War II to step onto the soil of France.



Kill Germans
AND GO FORWARD

OVER slippery, ice-covered roads, the division trucked through sleet and snow to Camp Lucky Strike, Normandy, near the village of St. Valery-en-Caux. For the next month, 89ers unpacked TAT equipment, trained in knee-deep mud and made final preparations for the job ahead. German anti-tank and anti-personnel mines still lay buried in the camp area and the 314th Engrs. went to work detecting and pulling them.

Mid-February, the division moved to an extensive training area east of Dieppe, near Blangy-sur-Bresle, for further maneuvers. Long-awaited orders arrived, assigning the 89th to Third Army's XII Corps under Maj.

Gen. Manton S. Eddy. By jeeps, two and a half-ton trucks and ancient French 40-and-8s, the division crossed France, halting near Mersch, Luxembourg, March 7.

Three days later, the 89th crossed onto German soil to relieve elements of the 5th and 76th Inf. Divs. Taking up positions along the Sauer River, east of Echternach, all units were in position, poised to strike the initial blow, late March 11.

The 89th lunged forward the next day. Its first combat mission: to advance to the north and west bank of the Moselle River, seize the sector between Kochem and Burg. The enemy was withdrawing under Third Army's hammer-like smash, fighting rear-guard actions to cover a withdrawal across the Rhine. The Eifel battleground was forested highland, cut by deep river canyons; roads were poor and the Germans had blown key bridges. Machine gun nests, road blocks and hastily-planted mine fields studded the fields and hillsides.

In their two days' baptism under fire, the rifle companies swept through eight villages. Combat Team 3, under Col. Frank R. Maerdian, West Point, N. Y., stormed into Wispelt and Krinkhof. Gevenich and Dohr fell to Combat Team 5, commanded by Col. Jesse T. Harris, Atlanta, Ga. The first prisoners were ushered into the division cage.

Imbued with confidence born in battle, doughs pressed ahead at top speed. By dusk, March 14, they reached the Moselle Gorge and mopped up the river



towns of Alf, Ellers, and Mand. The 89th raced 50 miles during those first three days.

While treating wounded on a hillside near Kochem, Cpl. Joseph H. Johnson, Meridian, Miss., 355th, won the division's first Bronze Star. A near hit lifted him bodily from the side of a patient, but Johnson continued to give first aid to his buddies while undergoing continuous heavy fire.

For the next two nights, patrols paddled across the river and probed German positions, while plans for the crossing were rushed. The 354th, commanded by Col. Robert C. Aloe, San Francisco, Calif., swung up to the right flank. Attached to the 11th Armd. Div., the 355th was to pass through the bridgehead and stab



southeast toward the Nahe River. Meanwhile, Brig. Gen. John T. B. Bissell's Div Arty softened up targets near the crossing points at Burg, Bullay and Neef.

Two hours before dawn, March 16, four battalions jumped off into a hail of small arms fire from snipers hidden in the trellised vineyards on the east bank. The 54th carved out a one and a half kilometer deep bridgehead and cleared Burg and Punderich. On the left, the 553rd punched inland three kilometers against scattered resistance.

At daybreak, the 514th and 153rd Engr. Bns. launched vehicle-carrying ferries. Enemy artillery lobbed shells onto the site until noon, but the 87th Heavy Ponton Co. worked steadily on a Class 40 bridge to link Alf and Bullay. Several hours after the initial waves crossed over, infantry pounded on the heels of the fleeing enemy.

With light casualties, the 89ers had made their first major river assault crossing. Gen. Finley's battle

charge—" Kill Germans and go forward! "— had become fact, wrought in blood and courage.

Lt. Col. James W. Hawkins, Waynesburg, Pa., led 3rd Bn., 553rd, into a vicious fight at the " Tear Drop," a steep, narrow ridge north of Punderich where the Moselle doubles back in a gooseneck. Fanatic remnants of the 14th Nebelwerfer Regt., holed up in a ruined tower, held off the doughs for two days with machine guns and grenades. German snipers exacted a price for every yard advanced. Time after time, the Nazis waved white flags, then opened fire.

This was frontier style in-fighting, a test of marksmanship, nerves and endurance. Step by step, the 89ers fought up exposed slopes, clearing the crest in a final charge. Five hundred pounds of TNT reduced the tower to a pile of rubble, a monument to the Rolling W. The Moselle crossing was secure; the road to the Rhine lay open.

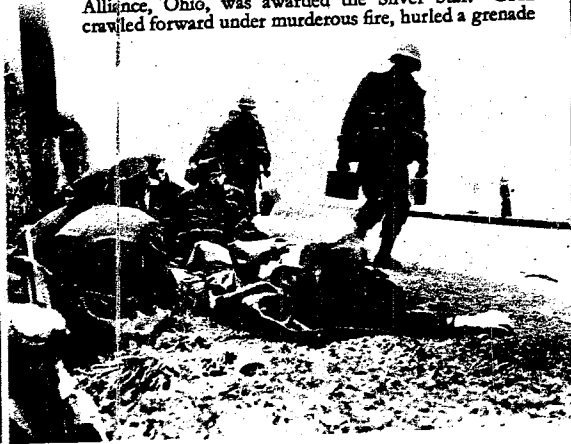
But now the weight of attack swerved southeast to catch the enemy off balance and disrupt his line of retreat. Two armored divisions—the 4th and the 11th—and the 5th, 89th and 90th Inf. Divs. plunged in the new direction and fanned out in fast-moving columns. From the south, Seventh Army sprung the lower half of a giant nutcracker that was to crush all Germans west of the Rhine in record time.

The 89th surged from the Moselle Gorge into Enkirch and Briedel, March 17. Through rolling farm country and patches of pine, the division spurred ahead to take Walhausen, Loffelscheid and Schwarzen. Troopers of

the 89th Recon, commanded by Capt. Andrew H. Engel, Jersey City, N. J., seized more than 100 prisoners at Rhauen.

Deserters, stragglers and small units isolated by the tankers surrendered in increasing numbers. Town after town—Dickenscheid, Dillendorf, Kirchburg, Dill and Laufersweiler—fell as the Germans reeled back under the one-two punch of armor-infantry teams. P-47 and P-51 fighter-bombers battered enemy convoys.

Twenty miles in advance of the division, the 355th crossed the Nahe River, March 19. For directing fire in eliminating one machine gun nest and single-handedly wiping out another near Kirn, S/Sgt. Joseph G. Gruz, Alliance, Ohio, was awarded the Silver Star. Gruz crawled forward under murderous fire, hurled a grenade



into the position and killed two gunners, then jumped in the hole and bayoneted a third German.

Two days later, the remainder of the division swarmed across the river against moderate opposition and sprinted for the next water barrier, the Glan. Merxheim, Kuppchen, Otzweiler and Hundsbach fell in rapid succession. On the heights of Limbacher Hohe, a stubborn pocket held up 2nd Bn., 353rd, nearly a day. T/Sgt. Max J. Markley, Mabelrah, Ark., led his platoon over exposed ground under a storm of small arms fire to capture 47 Germans and rout the others.

The 89th reached the Glan River March 22 and was ordered to assemble in the Kirn area. Combat Team 5, which had knifed to Worms on the Rhine behind the 11th Armd. Div., rejoined the 89th. The first phase of the division's operations ended with a complete enemy collapse throughout the Palatinate. The next operation was the trans-Rhine drive for Central Germany and the Nazi vitals.

In its first 10 days of combat, the 89th hastened the Germans' defeat. The division had opened up a vital supply route over the Moselle, taken more than 5000

prisoners, cleared more than 100 towns and villages and seven hundred square miles of territory.

The 89th was transferred to VIII Corps, March 23. In a letter to Gen. Finley, Gen. Eddy wrote:

The 89th Infantry Division... takes with it our admiration for the commendable manner in which it so quickly acquired the spirit of veterans in its first major engagement.

Your advance to the Moselle River, followed by your notable assault river crossing at Bulley, established a new... route vitally essential to the successful operation of this Corps. The courage of your troops in their baptism under fire, and the promptness with which your staff and combat leaders grasped their new responsibilities, surely mark the beginning of a gallant record for your division.

Let me express to you, and to all the members of your command my appreciation for your splendid performance with the XII Corps.

The 89th shifted to a new sector north of the Sim between Kestern and... on March 22, to prepare the Rhine assault.



BRAVE MEN

Win RHINE BRIDGEHEAD

MARCH 25, 1945, 2030 HOURS: Infantry tramped down steep, twisting trails to the river's edge. Bumper to bumper, trucks crept along the narrow, winding roads transporting pontons, treadways and assault boats.

The 89th MP Platoon unsnarled traffic, kept convoys moving. By H-Hour, every man was in position, awaiting the signal. This task of precise timing and detailed organization was expedited by the staff work of Col. Norman M. Winn.

At Wellmich, Lt. Col. Thomas G. Davidson's 1st Bn., 354th, pushed across two Co. A platoons in the first rush, then was pinned down for hours by withering automatic weapons fire. Anti-Tank Co.'s 57mms raked the hillsides. Cpl. Walter Giles, Ogden, Utah, picked off an enemy machine gun nest in a culvert at 1500 yards. Behind wharves and a railroad embankment, doughs laid down a blanket of M-1 fire. By noon, Cos. B and C were storming up the east bank and into the town.

When one of the lead boats was sunk by machine gun fire, Pvt. Joseph Martin, East Providence, R. I., Co. A, swam about in the bullet-sprayed water, applying tourniquets to the wounded. His action helped save

the lives of several of his comrades who were marooned for six hours on the enemy-held side of the river.

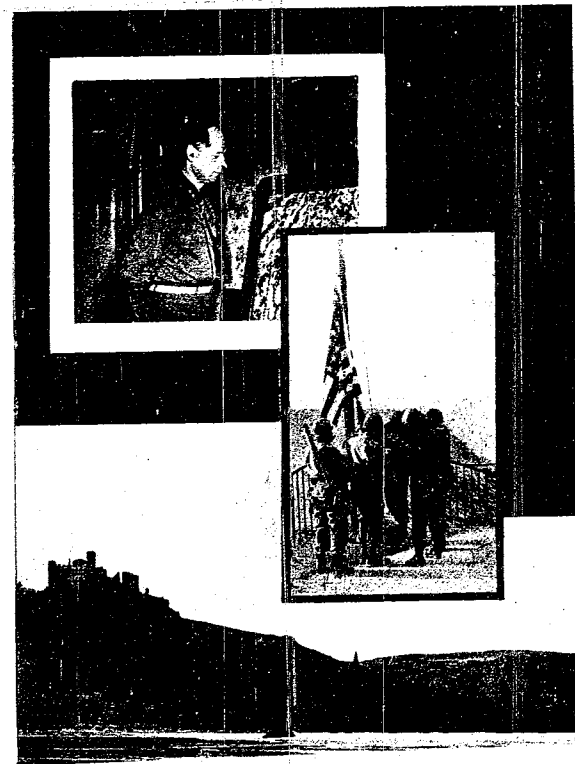
Upstream at Oberwesel, Lt. Col. James S. Morris' 1st Bn., 353rd, caught the Germans by surprise and sneaked across the river with light casualties in the first wave. Third Bn., 353rd, followed, then wheeled south into Kaub. Lt. Col. Harry L. Murray's 2nd Bn., 353rd, scaled the cliffs and jabbed toward Bornich.

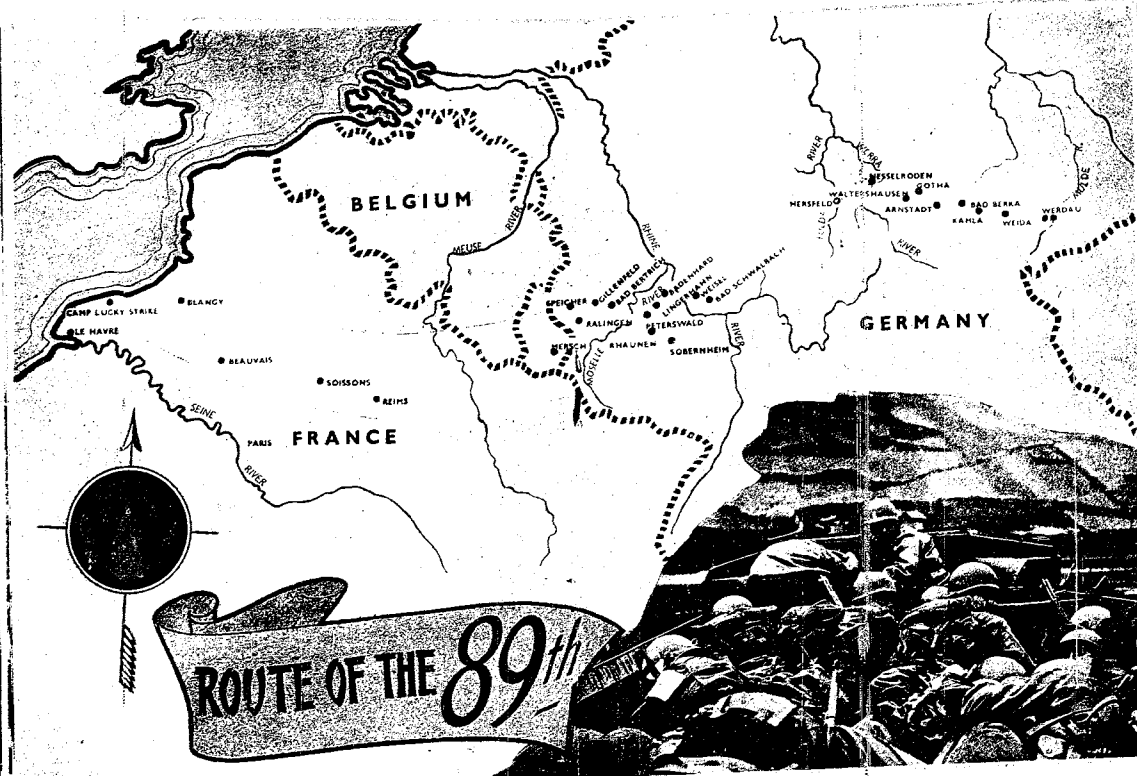
When the Germans stopped Co. L, 353rd, in the north section of Kaub, Co. I squeezed in on the flank and TDs cut loose from across the Rhine. Block by block the enemy was pushed back. In a costly day-long fight, 89ers cleared the town.

In the hills east of Kaub, Capt. Gerald Fortney, Morgantown, W. Va., Co. K, outwitted the Nazis. A PW volunteered to guide him to an enemy pocket. Instead the captain chose his own route, surprised 14 Germans waiting in ambush and took them prisoner.

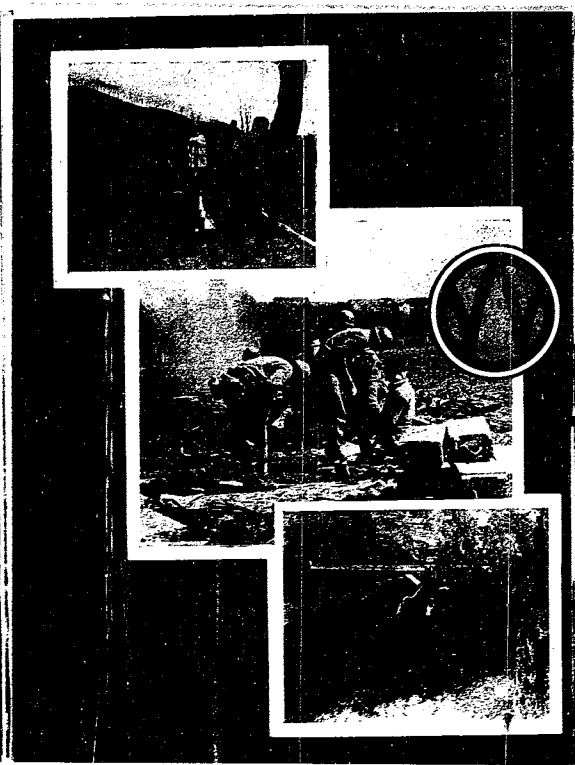
Bitier fighting raged at St. Goarshausen. Smoke generators couldn't be used to screen operations because the wind was in the wrong direction. Germans fought with furious determination to hold this key bridge site. Cos. E and F of Lt. Col. Henry K. Benson's 2nd Bn., 354th, fought to the far side of the town through a storm of bullets and shells, then methodically went to work flushing snipers and machine gunners from the battered buildings.

Pvt. Anthony Miano, Bronx, N. Y., 354th radioman, crossed the river twice during the height of the battle, carrying messages and directing artillery fire. For





ROUTE OF THE 89th



several hours, his radio was the only link between battalion headquarters and St. Goarshausen.

One 354th wire crew crossed the river under fire three times. Four 354th AT Co. gunners—Pfc Paul Mullenix, Flint, Mich.; Pfc Ralph Dyer, Montgomery, Ind.; Pfc Van Maraman, Lockhart, Ala.; Pfc Alphy St. Pierre, Keegan, Me.—strung vital communication wire from shore to shore.

During the house-to-house battle, medical and ammunition supplies ran low. Pfc Lorenze Gludovatz, Miami, Fla., an ammunition bearer, floundered in deep water 20 yards offshore with a 50-pound packboard of machine gun belts. But he struggled up the bank and kept his gun in action.

Patrolling the streets, S/Sgt. Alex Bejarano, El Dorado, Calif., yelled to his squad: "I've been luggin' this anti-tank grenade through maneuvers two solid years. I'm gonna heave it!" His pitch blasted a machine gun nest in a second-story building.

Teamwork and courage, the will to win, toppled St. Goarshausen in eight hours of toe-to-toe slugging. Nazi homefront broadcasters dubbed the 89th, "Third Army Shock Troops."

As soon as the town was cleared, the 1107th Engr. Group began erecting a bridge. Engineers worked throughout the night and the next day despite artillery fire. By 2300 hours March 27, the span was completed and a torrent of men and supplies rolled across to the "holy soil" of Hitler's tottering Third Reich.

To exploit the bridgehead and spearhead the 89th drive beyond the Rhine, two task forces crossed the 87th Inf. Div.'s bridge at Boppard and streaked down the east bank late March 26. A task force commanded by Lt. Col. John R. Johnson, Columbus, Ga., and composed of the 1st Bn., 355th; 1st Platoon, Cannon Co.; Cos. B and C, 602nd TD Bn., and one platoon from the 314th Engr. Bn., smashed Kestert in a three-hour battle, then veered east from the gorge toward Struth to relieve an artillery threat to the bridge.

The 89th Recon Troop and Co. A, 602nd TD Bn., cleared the east bank of the river from St. Goarshausen south to Lorch. Heavy fire from 88s dug into the commanding heights was silenced by Maj. Milo B. Gacesa's 2nd Bn., 355th. Next day, the doughs pushed into Stephanshausen.

"Gallant and conspicuous courage" while on patrol near Lorch earned a Silver Star for Pfc John F. J. Hall, Williamstown, Pa., Co. E, 355th. Cut off from his unit, Hall was trapped in a shell hole with a wounded buddy. Firing a BAR from the hip, he killed several oncoming Germans, then dragged his comrade to cover. When darkness fell, Hall located a rowboat and floated downstream with the wounded man to friendly positions.



89ERS *Crush* BINGEN BULGE

THE enemy still clung to an arc stretching south from Prath through Nochern to Kaub. Flak gunners, Volkssturm and Nazi prison guards fought tenaciously alongside the few remaining infantrymen.

The 353rd seized Auf der Hohe and moved into Weisel behind artillery. From Kaub, 3rd Bn. pushed southeast onto the high ground between Wolfsheck and Lorchhausen.

First Bn., 354th, fought into Nochern and Weyer and knocked out the enemy's northern anchor. Third Bn., 355th, commanded by Lt. Col. Jerome A. Lentz, Denver, Colo., captured Harbach and Rettershaim, smashed a nest of 20mm near Presberg, swung southeast through Rudesheimer Wald and into St. Vincentztift.

With gathering momentum, the 89th surged ahead into the heavily forested country of the "Bingen Bulge" on a three-regiment front. Out in front, Task Force Johnson overran Langschied and Kemel, then raced to Bad Schwalbach. Infantry spread over this 250 square mile area and cleaned out the by-passed pockets.

While the 354th maintained contact with the 76th Inf. Div. on the left, the 353rd crossed the Ernst and Wisper Rivers, beat through gloomy Ralseler Wald, cracked German defenses at Obergladbach, and drove



into Hausen. First Bn., 353rd, captured Espenschied.

Geisenheim and Rudesheim, the two largest cities in the area, fell without a shot. The prisoner bag mounted. The 714th Ord. Co. worked around the clock as it processed enemy materiel. By March 30, four days after the crossing, the "Bulge" was free of Germans.

Memorial services were held throughout the division Easter Sunday for the 89ers who had fallen in battle. The division was ordered to assemble near Bad Schwalbach and the 89th readied itself for the climax offensive.

The division sped north to the assembly area between the 65th and 90th Inf. Divs. at Hersfeld, April 3. The mission was to take Eisenach and drive across the province of Thuringia. Next day, the 89th pushed on to Nesselroden to become the easternmost U. S. infantry division and the one closest to the Red Army troops.

After Combat Team 3, attached to the 4th Armd. Div., roared into the lead and helped seize the ancient

20

city of Gotha, it then held up to wait until the 89th opened the autobahn supply route.

West of the Rhine the enemy had utilized river barriers for defenses. Now, the Germans fell back through the dense Thuringian Forest. Fanatic SS troopers strove desperately to bolster the sagging Wehrmacht morale and slow the Allied tidal wave.

A task force commanded by Lt. Col. William L. Burton, Radford, Va., ran interference. Composed of 3rd Bn., 354th; 341st FA Bn.; 89th Recon Troop; Co. B, 602nd TD Bn.; and a platoon of engineers, the task force sprinted into Wiegleben and Westhausen and seized the area between Henningsleben and Warza.

Combat Team 3 crushed a resistance pocket at Lauchroden April 5, overwhelmed 300 SS troops defending Fortha to clear the approach to Eisenach. First and



2nd Bns., 353rd, closed the net by encircling the city on three sides.

In an effort to spare lives, surrender terms were sent to the enemy commander, who asked for emissaries. Maj. Irving G. Sheppard, Columbus, Ohio., 1st Bn. Executive Officer, and 1st Lt. James T. Towne, Saratoga Springs, N.Y., AMG, were blindfolded by two SS guards and driven to a secret meeting place. In a mouldy, candle-lit chamber, the Prussian general told the officers that the "plans of the supreme command" did not permit him to surrender Eisenach.

The officers were returned unharmed, and at 0215 Div Arty boomed forth, hurling 1900 rounds into the city in a four-hour bombardment. At 0700, the doughs smashed forward. Four hours later, Eisenach was cleared. The 89th took 500 prisoners, 50 vehicles and a freight yard full of supplies.

A change in Corps boundaries April 6, altered the 89th's line of advance; the division swung southeast in a grinding three-day offensive that ended with the fall of Friedrichroda.

Supported by artillery and 707th Tank Bn. armor, the 353rd and 354th pierced the enemy's first defense line between the towns of Wutha and Rhula. Remnants of the Germans' 85th Corps, including the 11th Panzer Div. and the 347th Inf. Div., waged a series of bitter last-ditch battles. As the Nazis crumbled, fighting became confused; battle lines ceased to exist. The stubbornly defended town of Tabarz collapsed under a four-pronged attack, April 8.

"I am in a German hospital in Tabarz. If possible come and release me," read a note signed by Lt. Col. Thomas Buckley, 353rd FA Group, and handed to Maj. Keith Hammond, Pull, Ind., 353rd Regimental Surgeon, by a German medical non-com. Maj. Hammond dashed into Tabarz under artillery fire while a fire fight raged in the suburbs. Finding Col. Buckley, he had the colonel evacuated by ambulance, then remained behind to treat a badly wounded lieutenant before driving him back through enemy lines.



Veteran Dought SPEED TO TRIUMPH

INFANTRYMEN of the 354th battered their way into Friedrichroda, core of the Nazi Redoubt in Thuringia as enemy planes dropped food to the defenders and hospital patients tossed grenades from their beds. The city was secured by noon.

Even the division band saw action. CWO Victor H. Steg, Wichita, Kan., and four musicians on a guard mission, ambushed a group of Nazis who had been cut off. During a night-long vigil, Mr. Steg and his men repulsed two attacks, killing the Nazi leader and wounding several others.

Meanwhile, Combat Team 5 slashed forward with the 4th Armd. Div. to Ohrdruf, liberated a large concentration camp. Several hours previous, SS guards had shot all prisoners too weak to move.

A search disclosed nearly 3000 bodies burned and buried in pits north of the camp. A group of German citizens, by order of Army authorities, were made to witness these horrors—the whipping block, gallows, crematorium. No member of the 89th doubted Nazi barbarism after Stalag Ohrdruf.

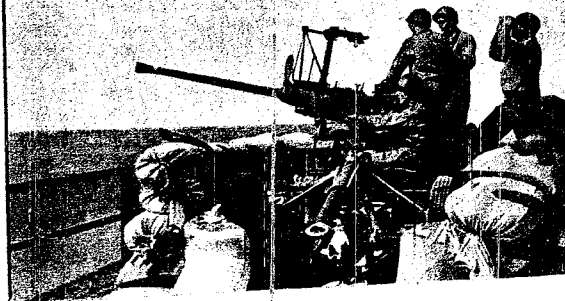
Kicking off between Waltershausen and Friedrichroda, the 89th paced Third Army infantry in the final

dash toward Czechoslovakia beginning April 10. The 354th pounded Crawinkel, then blasted the enemy from Grafenhain and Georgenthal. Next night, riflemen ripped into Arnstadt and seized two bridges over the Gera River.

On the right flank, the 354th was slowed by a tough knob of resistance at Wolfis. Defenses bristled with self-propelled artillery and dug-in tanks. The 2nd Bn. took Espenfeld, and the remainder of the regiment crossed the Gera River April 11, abreast of the 355th.

When German artillery cut 914th FA Bn. communications near Wolfis, Sgt. (then Cpl.) Edward F. Cronk, Grand Rapids, Mich., traced the break by crawling over a hill exposed to massed fire. The enemy adjusted fire on him, but Cronk clung to his post and repaired the wire three times as artillery cut it.

Enemy planes appeared for the first time. ME-109s buzzed supply dumps, strafed moving columns and



CPs. Within the next few weeks, 550th Anti-Aircraft Bn. gunners shot down more than 20 attackers.

Intelligence teams roved from town to town, screening civilians and arresting officials who had kept the province a hot bed of Nazism. Night patrols hunted down Germans who attempted to infiltrate and harass communication lines and supply points. Leaders of Werewolf packs, Hitler Jugend and Madchen and other youth sabotage groups were rounded up.

East of the Gera, a task force commanded by Lt. Col. H.L. Streeter, 707th Tank Bn., was formed to race ahead and seize bridges over the Saale River at Kahla. Composed of the 1st Bn., 353rd; 89th Recon Troop; 340th FA Bn.; two companies of tanks and one company of TDs, the task force was split into two columns after capturing Bad Berka, April 12. One of the columns overran Grosslohma and Schirnewitz, reaching the Saale in a single day.

The southern column smashed heavy opposition in Blankenhain, then swerved southeast toward Kessler where it smacked into enemy tanks and infantry. This delay gave the Germans enough time to blow the Saale bridges, but as soon as Kahla was cleared, engineers threw across a treadway bridge.

In the rear, the regiments mopped up swiftly. On April 14, the 353rd and 355th swept across the Saale on a wide front in assault boats, ferries and over footbridges.

The 89th prisoner count passed 15,000. Two notorious Germans surrendered near Kahla, convinced the



war was all but over. They were Dr. Manfred Zapf, former Nazi chief propagandist in the U.S., and Richard Walter Darre, Hitler's Minister of Agriculture.

Near the Saale, doughs captured Dr. Richard Hebermehl, director of the Reich Weather Bureau and chief weather advisor for the Luftwaffe, together with his staff, charts and instruments. Cadets and officers of Thuringia's military training schools, armed with bazookas and thrown into the fight, surrendered in droves.

Thousands of liberated persons from slave labor camps crowded the roads on foot and bicycles and in carts, homeward bound. From a Blankenhain camp, 89ers freed 325 Polish women officers, captured in the 1944 Warsaw uprising. Ex-front line soldiers wearing emblems of rank cut from C-ration cans, the women stood at attention behind their commander, Ma-

Wanda Gertz, before greeting the doughs with smiles.

Had the Germans been able to slow the advance of American troops, the Saale area would have become a huge secret war production center. Men of the 89th located miles of recently constructed tunnels, underground assembly plants and hidden factories. CIC personnel found facilities for turning out jet planes, burp guns, aerial cameras, other vital equipment.

East of the Saale, the battle of the last desperate elements of the German Army neared the end. The 89th, flanked by 80th Inf. Div. doughs, stayed in front of the advance most of the way.

Supply problems were tremendous. The 405th QM Co. kept trucks rolling night and day despite strafing attacks. The company later received a Meritorious Service Unit Plaque for "outstanding performance in maintaining a constant flow of supplies" to the front.

The 89th Signal Co. laid and patrolled hundreds of miles of wire, maintained messenger service despite intense enemy sniper fire.



The Rolling W-

READY FOR ALL COMERS!

ORDERS were issued April 16 for the division to drive ahead and seize a bridgehead over the Zwick-Mulde River. More than 20 towns fell before the 89th's might that day. The 354th buttoned up Weida and led the division across the Weida River. So rapid was the pace that the division CP moved three times within five days.

Resistance stiffened as the 89th neared the Zwick-Mulde River. On the right, the 353rd's 1st Bn. captured Zoghaus, then fought grimly for 24 hours to silence batteries of 88s on the heights overlooking Greiz. Reichenbach, plastered by artillery and air bombardment, collapsed the next day under a sustained ground assault. Capture of Zwickau, an industrial city of 100,000 astride the Zwick-Mulde River, was the 89th's last major engagement in the ETO.

On April 17, the 355th, supported by tanks, moved up behind the artillery. Hundreds of hastily-mobilized Volkssturm troops, backed up by the SS and the Wehrmacht, met the thrust with heavy panzerfaust and machine gun fire from a network of trenches.

A task force of three motorized platoons—units of the 89th Recon, 602nd TD Bn, and the 355th I & R—was formed on the spot. Guided by two liberated British paratroopers, the task force swooped ahead of the

infantry at 50 miles an hour and seized two bridges over the river in the heart of the city.

Fast action saved both bridges. The spans had been mined for demolition, but the 89ers located and cut all the wires that were found. The task force stood pat until infantry drove through to the river bank and cleared the city.

Of the action, the Associated Press commented: "...like a two-gun Western."

For his work as a demolition expert, Sgt. Virgil A. Scutlock, Jackson, Ohio, won a Silver Star. In the face of intense sniper fire, Scutlock volunteered to cut the wires on one of the bridges. A bullet smashed his jaw, but he stayed at his post until the charges were removed.

The 89th took 1700 prisoners in Zwickau and from nearby camps freed 5000 Allied prisoners, including 500 Americans.

By April 19, all three regiments cleared a strip east of the river to reach the Corps training line, which extended southwest from Oberhausen to the town of Wernfeld.



The entire VIII Corps passed to First Army control, April 23. From then until V-E Day, May 8, 1945, the 89th saw limited action.

Wrote Gen. Middleton, VIII Corps Commander:

The rapidity of your advance through Germany to the Mulde River and the tactical skill with which your units were maneuvered to drive back a shifty, resisting enemy as well as to conform to changing objectives and zones of action, were distinguished achievements.

For the next two weeks, foot and mechanized patrols probed enemy strong points. Div Arty pounded German positions to prevent consolidation and to break up counter-attack threats. The three largest towns in the forward zone—Lossnitz, Aue and Stollberg—were kept under constant pressure.

One enemy attack in force was smashed by the 355th late April 27. Small local actions continued. Early May 7, the 89th suffered its last combat casualty, just before the "cease fire" order at 0830.

The division's daily newspaper, *The Rolling W*, printed on a captured German press, heralded the Nazis' unconditional surrender. All ranks shared a feeling of thanksgiving, of satisfaction of a job well done and a sober realization that victory was but half won. The road to peace lead through the Pacific.

The division set up temporary headquarters in Gotha May 12, 100 miles west of the Mulde River, and for the remainder of the month, occupied a large area in Thuringia, maintaining order, patrolling roads and

guarding installations. Retracing its steps across Europe, the 89th then moved to Rouen, June 1.

As Headquarters, Normandy Assembly Area, the division operated Camps Lucky Strike, Twenty Grand and Old Gold as it undertook the tremendous task of staging troops earmarked for redeployment.

From a green division the 89th had learned quickly the hard lessons of battle, had matured into a tough, hard-driving outfit. Its men had proved their courage and demonstrated their ability to go forward. The 89th was confident, ready for any future mission.







the 106th



When the history of the Ardennes fighting has been written, it will be recorded as one of the great strategic Allied successes of the war in Europe. Tactically, for the 106th and the other American divisions involved, it was a bitter and costly fight. But it becomes increasingly clear that the Germans expended in that last futile effort those last reserves of men and material which they needed so badly a few months later. The losses and sacrifices of the 106th Infantry Division paid great dividends in eventual victory.

These pages are dedicated to those gallant men who refused to quit in the darkest hour of the Allied invasion, and whose fortitude and heroism turned the tide toward overwhelming victory.

Donald A. Stroh

Major General, Commanding

THE STORY OF THE 106th INFANTRY DIVISION

DEC. 16, 1944: Springing from the bleak vastness of the Schnee Eifel with the speed of a coiled snake, Field Marshal von Rundstedt's desperate but mighty counter-offensive struck toward Belgium and the Ardennes. Carefully hoarded Panther and Tiger tanks, followed by crack, battle-tested infantry, launched the last-chance gamble aimed at shattering the taut lines of the US First Army, seizing the

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was supplied by his staff.



cities of Liege and Antwerp and slashing through the Allied forces to the sea.

The full force of this massive attack was thrown against the new, untried 106th Infantry Division which had gone into the front lines for the first time only five days previous. Two regiments, the 422nd and 423rd, with the 589th and 590th FA Bns., were cut off and surrounded by the sheer weight and power of the concentrated German hammer blows. The 424th Regt. was driven back. The 106th Recon Troop, 3rd Medical Bn., and 81st Engr. Combat Bn. suffered heavy casualties.

But, despite the vulnerable 27-mile front which the division had to defend, despite inadequate reserves, supplies and lack of air support, the valiant men of the Lion Division took a tremendous toll of enemy shock troops, wrote a story in blood and courage to rank with the Alamo, Château-Thierry, Pearl Harbor and Bataan. They never quit. Said Field Marshal Sir Bernard L. Montgomery:

The American soldiers of the... 106th Infantry Division stuck it out and put up a fine performance. By jove, they stuck it out, those chaps.

At St. Vith, first objective of the German thrust, the 106th held on grimly at a time when every hour of resistance was vital to the Allied cause. The 106th doughs fought against superior forces, with pulverizing artillery battering them from all sides; it was men against tanks, guts against steel. Their heroism gained precious time for other units to regroup and strike back. In one of the bloodiest battles of the war, the 106th showed the Germans and the world how American soldiers could fight—and die.

When the terrific German onslaught was launched the 106th had only been on the Continent 10 days. The men had made a three-day road march from Limésy, France, to St. Vith, Belgium, in rain, cold and snow. In the five days they had been in the line there had been little rest.

They landed at Le Havre from England, Dec. 6. Next day, in the dim half-light of dawn, troops piled into open trucks while a cold, drizzling rain fell. Some of the men laughed and made cracks about "Sunny France." Others cursed the rain, the cold, the fate that had sent them to battle-scarred Europe. Still others said nothing.

In the clump of trees off to one side of the road stood what once had been a pretentious country chateau. It was decayed and rotten now. Bomb-cratered ground and the shell of a fire-gutted house gave evidence of what had passed. In a field across the road lay broken remains of an Allied bomber. It

looked alone and dead; there was the feeling that someone ought to bury it. The scene was one of dreary foreboding.

Trucks roared over pitted, rough roads toward St. Vith, through towns and battered remnants of villages; past burned skeletons of tanks and trucks in roadside ditches, around battlefields of World War I. People came out to smile, wave and make the V sign with their fingers. The men smiled back and made the V sign, too.

As the long convoy wound through the mountains of eastern Belgium and Luxembourg, men saw the snow-covered evergreens and thought of Christmas, only a short time off. Then they stopped thinking about that because they remembered where they were and why they had come.

Arriving at St. Vith the night of Dec. 10, the division went into the line the next day. It relieved the veteran and Inf. Div. in the Schnee Eifel, a wooded, snow-covered ridge just northeast of Luxembourg.

This was a quiet sector along the Belgium-Germany frontier. For 10 weeks there had been only light patrol activity and the sector was assigned to the 106th so it could gain experience. The baptism of fire that was to come was the first action for the 106th. For many of its men it was the last.

PANZERS *Strike* 106TH STICKS IT OUT!

ASSIGNED to VIII Corps, the 106th took up positions in a slightly bulging arc along a forest-crowned ridge of the Schnee Eifel approximately 12 miles east of St. Vith.

The northern flank was held by the 14th Cav. Gp., attached to the 106th. Next, in the easternmost part of the curve, the 422nd held the line. To the 422nd's right, swinging slightly to the southwest, was the 423rd and almost directly south was the 424th. Beyond the 424th, on the division's southern flank was the 28th Inf. Div. St. Vith was 106th HQ and the rear echelon was in Vielsalm, about 12 miles due west.

The little road center of St. Vith had seen war before. It was through St. Vith that the Nazi panzers rolled to Sedan in 1940; German infantry marched through it in 1914. But it never had figured as a battleground such as it was to become in this fateful December of 1944.

During the night of Dec. 15, front line units of the 106th noticed increased activity in the German positions. At 0540 the enemy began to lay down a thunderous artillery barrage.

At first, fire was directed mainly against the northern flank sector of the 14th. Slowly the barrage crept

southward, smashing strongpoints along the whole division front. Treetops snapped like toothpicks under murderous shell bursts. Doughs burrowed into their foxholes and fortifications, waited tensely for the attack which would follow.

The darkness was filled with bursts from medium and heavy field pieces plus railway artillery which had been shoved secretly into position. The explosions were deafening and grew into a terrifying hell of noise when Nazis started using their nebelwerfer "Screaming Meemies."

Full weight of the barrage was brought to bear on the 589th FA Bn., supporting the 422nd. Hundreds of rounds blasted their positions in 35 minutes.

At 0700 the barrage lifted in the forward areas, although St. Vith remained under fire. Now came the attack. Waves of Volksgrenadiers, spearheaded by panzer units, smashed against the division's lines in a desperate try for a decisive, early breakthrough. They were stopped. A second attack was thrown against the division. Again, 106th doughs held. Nazis threw in wave after wave of fresh troops, replacing their losses. There were no replacements for the 106th.

Lionmen settled to their grim business, dug deeper, fought with everything they had. German bodies piled up, often at the very rim of the defenders' foxholes. Still the Nazis came.

All during the day the attacks mounted in fury. Hundreds of fanatical Germans rushed straight toward



the American lines, only to be mowed down or driven back by a hail of steel. Others came on, met the same fate. The deadly, careful fire of the stubborn defenders exacted a dreadful toll on the Wehrmacht.

Finally, under pressure of overwhelming numbers, the 14th Cav. Gp. was forced to withdraw on the north flank, giving the Germans their first wedge in the division front. Enemy tanks and infantry in increasing numbers then hacked at the slowly widening gap in an effort to surround the 422nd.

In the meantime, a second tank-led assault, supported by infantry and other panzers, hammered relentlessly at the 423rd and 424th. Early next morning a wedge was driven between the two regiments. This southern German column then swung north to join the one that had broken through in the 14th's sector. The 422nd and 423rd were surrounded. The 424th pulled back to St. Vith.

The Nazis were headed for St. Vith. There, cooks and clerks, truck drivers and mechanics shouldered

weapons and took to the foxholes. Hopelessly outnumbered and facing heavier firepower, they dug in for a last ditch defense of the key road center. They were joined Dec. 17 by Combat Command B, 9th Armd. Div., and elements of the 7th Armd. Div.

Surrounded, the 422nd and 423rd fought on. Ammunition and food ran low. Appeals were radioed to HQ to have supplies flown in, but the soupy fog which covered the frozen countryside made air transport impossible.

The two encircled regiments regrouped early Dec. 18 for a counter-attack aimed at breaking out of the steel trap. This bold thrust was blocked by sheer weight of German numbers.

The valiant stand of the two fighting regiments inside the German lines was proving to be a serious obstacle to Nazi plans. It forced von Rundstedt to throw additional reserves into the drive to eliminate the surrounded Americans, enabled the remaining



units and their reinforcements to prepare the heroic defense of St. Vith, delayed the attack schedule and prevented the early stages of the Battle of the Bulge from exploding into a complete German victory.

Low on ammunition, food gone, ranks depleted by three days and nights of ceaseless in-fighting, the 422nd and 423rd battled on from their foxholes and old Siegfried Line bunkers. They fought the ever-growing horde of panzers with bazookas, rifles and machine guns. One of their last radio messages was, "Can you get some ammunition through?"

Then, no more was heard from the two encircled regiments except what news was brought back by small groups and individuals who escaped the trap. Many were known to have been killed. Many were missing. Many turned up later in German prison camps.

Lt. Gen. Courtney H. Hodges, First Army commander, said of the 106th's stand:

No troops in the world, disposed as your division had to be, could have withstood the impact of the German attack which had its greatest weight in your sector. Please tell these men for me what a grand job they did. By the delay they effected, they definitely upset von Rundstedt's timetable.

Germans kept probing toward St. Vith all during the night of Dec. 17-18. Then, as daylight came, they renewed their furious and relentless attack. North of the town, 7th Armd. Div. elements were in position.

To the south were the 424th and CC B, 9th Armd. Div. Dug in along the highway to the east were Div. HQ Defense Platoon, 81st Engr. Combat Bn., and the attached 168th Engr. Combat Bn.

A mighty see-saw battle churned over the entire area during the next three days. Raging at the unexpected snag in their plans and aware that precious hours were being lost with every delay, the Nazis unleashed repeated fanatic attacks along the whole, thin perimeter of the defenders. Time and time again they were thrown back.

WOUNDED LIONS

Claw NAZI JUGGERNAUT

FREETS of individual gallantry and courage against long odds were legion. Men alone and in little groups fought their way out of the surrounded units. For days, soldiers made their way back through enemy lines. Some fought with whatever outfits they found.

During the early hours of the Nazi assault, the 423rd I & R Platoon, under 1st Lt. Ivan H. Long, Pontiac, Mich., effectively held a road block. The Germans, learning at great cost that they could not smash through the block, went around. The platoon was faced with the alternative of surrendering or making a dash through enemy territory. The men were without overcoats or blankets. Among the 21 doughs were only four D-ration chocolate bars. They had little ammuni-

tion. But they fought their way through the snow and gnawing cold to rejoin the division with every man safe.

Cpl. Willard Roper, Havre, Mont., led the group back as first scout. After 72 hours of clawing through enemy patrols, tank and machine gun positions, the exhausted and footsore men, some of whom had lost their helmets, could still grin and fight.

One of the most noteworthy efforts at St. Vith was the leadership of Lt. Col. Thomas J. Riggs, Jr., Huntington, W. Va., commanding the 81st Engr. Combat Bn. Once a midshipman at the US Naval Academy, Col. Riggs first won fame as an All-America full-back at the University of Illinois.

On the morning of Dec. 17, Col. Riggs took over the defense of the town. He disposed his limited forces, consisting of part of his own battalion; the Defense Platoon, 168th Hq Co., and elements of the 168th Engr. and waited for the coming blow. The wait was short. Soon a battalion of German infantry

tanks and infantry tackled the engineer line, probing for a weak spot. During these attacks, Col. Riggs was in the center of the defense, rallying his men and personally heading counter-thrusts to keep the enemy off balance.

Col. Riggs was captured while leading a patrol in the defense of St. Vith. Marched across Germany, he escaped near the Polish border and made his way to the frontier. He was sheltered three days by civilians and then joined an advancing Red Army tank outfit. After fighting with it for several days, he was evacuated to Odessa and from there was taken to Marseilles. He rejoined the 81st in the spring when it was stationed near Rennes, France.

Ruthless concentrations of German artillery, armor and infantry were thrown against the 81st on the eastern approaches to St. Vith. In the meantime, the Headquarters Defense Platoon was making a heroic stand in an attempt to protect the CP.

Cpl. Lawrence B. Rogers, Salt Lake City, Utah, and Pfc Floyd L. Black, Mt. Crab, Ohio, both members of the platoon, along with two men whose identity never was learned, successfully held a vital road junction against three Tiger tanks supported by infantry. With a machine gun, rocket launcher, two rifles and a carbine, the four-man volunteer rear-guard stopped the advancing force. They held the enemy at bay for two and a half hours, retreating only when their machine gun failed to function.



Edward S. Withee, Torrington, Conn., 81st Regt., volunteered for what seemed to be a suicidal mission. His platoon was pinned down in a house near Schonberg by four enemy tanks. All were doomed unless escape could be made while the enemy's attention was diverted.

Withee attacked the four tanks and the supporting infantry, armed only with a sub-machine gun. His platoon withdrew safely. When last seen, Withee was pouring fire into German infantry. He was listed as missing in action until April when he turned up in a PW camp. He was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross.

There was the magnificent bluff of 220-pound

Capt. Lee Berwick, Johnson's Bayou, La., 424th. He talked 102 Germans and two officers into surrendering an almost impregnable position to a handful of men. He boldly strode to the very muzzle of enemy machine guns to warn of the "huge force" supporting him and ordered the senior officer to surrender. It worked!

As the relentless drive of the Nazi juggernaut ground in on the surrounded units, many men and small groups made desperate attempts to cut their way out. A number were killed or captured, but a few made it. Two who succeeded were 1st/Sgt. Wallace G. Rifleman, Green Bay, Wis., and Capt. Edward H. Murray, Cabir Creek, W. Va., both of Co. G, 423rd.

With several others, the pair started for the American lines under cover of night. There was a bridge over the Cur River guarded by three Germans—by-passed; guards in an enemy motor pool and radar station—killed in a gun fight; German guards on a building—silenced in hand to hand combat; two Germans who rose from foxholes to try to bar their way—liquidated. Encounters with an enemy tank, a German artillery crew, and a close escape from a heavily armed combat patrol sent out to track them down rounded out the adventure.

Sgt. Rifleman won the Silver Star for gallantry in action in a subsequent battle.

Enemy artillery fire on the second day of the attack damaged a mortar base manned by Pfc Harry V. Arvannis, Moline, Ill., 424th. He resumed fire, holding the

tube between his legs and aiming by hand. After firing about 50 rounds, he saw a squad of Nazi infantrymen creeping toward his position.

Training the mortar on them, he shot his last 50 rounds of ammunition, killing or disabling eight of his attackers. The other four rose to their feet and lunged at him in a bayonet charge. Arvannis and his assistant gunner emptied their service pistols, stopping three of the four. The fourth was upon them, bayonet gleaming.

Pfc Arvannis threw his four pound revolver at the German, hitting him squarely in the forehead and killing him instantly.

Heroes UPSET

VON RUNDSTEDT TIMETABLE

THERE are stories, too, of units that fought and served in the face of overwhelming odds: the 106th QM Co., 106th MP Platoon, 106th Signal Co., Division Band and 331st Medical Bn. Each received the Meritorious Service Unit Plaque.

Despite intense enemy artillery and small arms fire, the MP Platoon kept traffic flowing and performed other duties all during the German counter-offensive.

At St. Vith, when shelling by the enemy was at its heaviest, the men at the traffic posts were forced to

take a prone position, but they stuck to their posts and directed traffic. During this critical period, over 700 PWs were handled by the platoon. When St. Vith finally fell to the enemy, all remaining PWs were marched to Vielsalm under cover of darkness. This operation was accomplished without the loss of a prisoner.

Members of the platoon conducted ammunition trains over routes which were under constant artillery fire. They helped "stragglers" to get back to their own units and into the fight. They reconnoitered roads, planned road blocks, crippled an enemy tank, destroyed an enemy staff car with its officer occupants.

The 106th QM Co., composed almost entirely of New England personnel, found itself partially surrounded at times, and had to depend on the ingenuity of its men to get the supplies through.

The ration shortage was becoming critical in Vielsalm Dec. 19 due to the enemy advance and destruction of supply depots. Twelve QM trucks set out to find a depot still open. Rations and gasoline were located at Dinant, Belgium. For security, the trucks made the 33-mile return trip in two serials. The first arrived in Vielsalm on the 20th. The second ran into a furious tank battle near St. Hubert, detoured, avoided destruction and got through to Vielsalm with all supplies intact.

As the fury of the battle mounted, maintenance of communications became literally a matter of life or death. Skill and courage of signalmen of the 106th

Marching

in

Brig. Gen. Herbert T. Perrin
Former CG

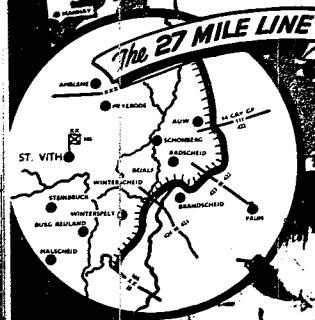


out

Brig. Gen. Alan W. Jones
Former CG



on





Signal Co. and in the regiments kept the vital communication lines open whenever it was humanly possible.

Again and again through the whole division sector, trouble shooters made emergency repairs on lines severed by artillery fire. For signalmen, field splices under enemy small arms fire became almost commonplace. New lines frequently were laid through territory teeming with enemy patrols.

While the town of Schonberg was under heavy bombardment by the Germans, four men of the Signal unit stayed at their switchboard while the building in which they were located was blown down around them. A shell ripped off the rear of the structure. Another reduced the right side to rubble, and the roof collapsed as a third shell tore into the structure. Still the men stayed at their post.

A fourth shell landed behind the switchboard, wounding two of the operators. They destroyed the board and withdrew only when ordered to leave by a superior officer, after German infantry had entered the town in strength as the barrage lifted. These men were T/5 Seymour H. Zorn, New York City; T/5 James R. Leonard and Pfc Donald A. Allen, both of Pittsburgh, and Pvt. Archie L. King, Muscatine, Ia.

Medics of the 106th also distinguished themselves in the bloody Ardennes. One was T/5 Marshall W. Walker, Tryon, N. C., who made repeated trips by jeep through German-held territory near Winterspelt to evacuate 424th wounded.

Capt. Philip J. Antrim, Wichita Falls, Kan., 424th battalion surgeon, found that deep snow, rough terrain, roving enemy patrols and the number of casualties prevented litter bearers from bringing wounded to his aid station fast enough. He packed equipment on his back, went forward to treat men where they had fallen. Capt. Antrim received the Bronze Star and was decorated for two other heroic deeds in the next five weeks.

Men of the 331st Medical Bn. also followed the "Service Above Self" motto. Collecting Cos. A, B and C, supporting the 421st, 423rd and 424th, respectively, treated and evacuated the wounded so efficiently that Clearing Co. D had only six deaths among all wounded treated in the Ardennes campaign. Co. D functioned for three days and nights as a field hospital in the Vielsalm area, although completely surrounded.

Two other units of the division won praise for a difficult job well done: the 806th Ord. Co., which worked under trying conditions, and the 106th Div. Band, which fought as infantry in the defense of St. Vith. Dec. 19-21, the 112th CT, 28th Inf. Div., on the 106th's right flank, was cut off from its own division. CT 112 was attached to the 106th Div. and with the 424th, held against German attacks south of St. Vith.



424TH *Lashes Back* AT MANHAY

THE fall of St. Vith became inevitable late Dec. 21. All units of the 106th and 7th Armd. withdrew to form a perimeter defense west of the town and east of the Salm River. These positions were held against renewed attacks next day.

Orders were received on the 22nd from XVIII Corps (Airborne) to withdraw farther to the west. The 82nd A/B Div. was moving into positions along the Salm River and a line running west from Salm Chateau. Elements of the 106th, the 7th and 9th Armd. Divs. were to move back to the northwest through new lines formed by the paratroopers.

Careful planning and leadership enabled the units to pull back under constant enemy infantry and tank attacks. The successful withdrawal across the two remaining routes over the Salm River was completed by night of the 23rd.

It was at the start of the withdrawal across the Salm that Maj. Gen. Alan W. Jones became a casualty and was evacuated to a hospital in Liege. Brig. Gen. Herbert T. Perrin, Asst. CG, assumed command.

That night and next day the weary, battle-bruised survivors of the first week of the Ardennes breakthrough took their first respite from battle. Without blankets, with barely enough rations, and unable to light fires

for warmth, they dug in on a windswept hill in the vicinity of Werbomont, Belgium.

Sixteen hours later, on the coldest Christmas Eve in the memory of Belgians, the 424th launched the first counter-attack of the Bulge at Manhay. This heavily fortified junction on the St. Vith-Houffalize Highway was the northern pivot point of the German penetration into Belgium. It was to be another bloody battleground for the 106th.

Gen. Eisenhower wrote Gen. Perrin:

The magnificent job you are doing is having a great beneficial effect on the situation. I am personally grateful to you and wish you would let all your personnel know that if they continue to carry out their mission with the splendid spirit they have so far shown, they will have deserved well of their country.

Securing the main road to Manhay, 2nd Bn., 424th, crossed open ground to the edge of town under intense shelling. It pushed into town, then was forced to withdraw. Christmas Day, the battalion punched its way into town again and held on against furious resistance by the First SS Panzer Div. and Volksgrenadiers. Manhay was one of the significant turning points of the Ardennes battle. It, too, was a story of valor.

When Co. E's advance was halted by intense machine gun fire, S/Sgt. John F. Goidesik, Chicago, advanced alone with a 60mm mortar and destroyed the enemy position with three rounds, permitting his company to advance.

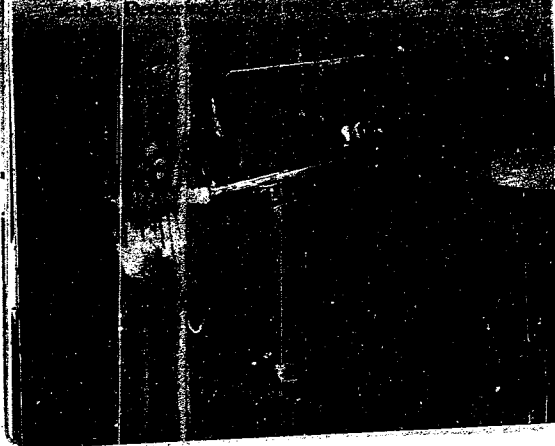


Sgt. Richard J. Maslankowski, Chicago, cradled a .30 caliber light machine gun in his arms and advanced to wipe out an enemy machine gun nest. The gun jammed; he repaired it under fire, pressed on to kill the enemy gunners with his last burst of ammunition.

Capt. Glynn Salyers, Somerset, Ky., commanding Co. H, 424th, was wounded while leading his men across an open field. He refused medical attention until the objective was won and all his wounded men were cared for.

After Manhay, the 106th continued to hack away at the Bulge. The 517th Parachute Inf. Regt. was attached Jan. 11, and with the 424th, formed a tough battle-tried fighting team. The two regiments attacked on the northern side of the Bulge, jumping off along the Ambleve River between Stavelot and Trois Point and along the Salm River to the south. Terrain was rugged—barren ridges, heavily wooded slopes, deep gullies. The enemy was well dug in and had been ordered to hold at all costs.

But the men of the 106th Division had a secret to



Henumont, and the infantry advance carried to Mohipre by late afternoon. In Henumont itself, resistance was rugged. The enemy made effective use of self-propelled guns.

During an assault on the strongly defended town, sudden crossfire from well-concealed machine guns halted Co. I, 424th, scattered men and mortally wounded Lt. Raymond S. Kautz, Raleigh, N. C., company commander, and mortar platoon leader, Lt. Robert A. Engstrom, Bayport, Minn. Although wounded himself, T/Sgt. Harold R. Johnson, Flint, Mich., assumed command of the company. He was hit twice more while rallying the men, preparing to renew the attack. He personally directed intense, accurate mortar and machine gun fire on enemy automatic weapons, eventually led the men to their objective.



When his platoon of Co. K, 424th, was pinned down by fire from an emplaced machine gun, Sgt. (then Pfc.) George S. Vasquez, St. Paul, Minn., loaded the gun, went forward with his M-1 and wiped out the Nazi position single-handed.

Co. C, 424th, was held up by three enemy tanks. Robert Honaker, Scarbro, W. Va., led a bazooka team which destroyed one tank and repulsed the others. Honaker later earned a battlefield commission and a Silver Star.

The 106th pressed south and east. The 1st Bn., 424th, met serious opposition in front of Coulee where the enemy was dug in on a strong and deep defensive line. Fighting was fierce, losses were heavy. While the 424th attacked to the front, engaging the main strength of the defenders, the 517th swept around and cleared the town in a slam-bang action before the enemy could recover and regroup.

After seizing all assigned objectives, the 106th was given the additional mission Jan. 15 of taking the

town of Ennal and high ground to the east. Ennal was held by a strong force of Germans entrenched in houses bristling with automatic weapons.

Two platoons of Co. K, 424th, punched their way into Ennal but were pinned down by devastating enemy fire. Ennal had to be secured by night. Available forces were organized and, as darkness approached, the town was taken by assault and cleared. Gen. Perrin personally led the attack, for which he was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross.

The 517th cut the road from Petit-Thier to Poteau on the 16th and by nightfall was on the outskirts of Poteau. But the advance of the 30th and 75th Inf. Divs. pinched off the 106th. The division was then ordered to mop up by-passed enemy troops in the area. On Jan. 22, Gen. Perrin issued the following:

With the withdrawal of the 424th Inf. from the line on Jan. 18, the major portion of the elements of this division completed a period of 34 days of practically continuous close combat with the enemy. Our artillery is still engaged. The events of that period are still fresh in your minds and in those of your men. The physical hardships endured, the constant exposure to rain, sleet and snow in freezing temperatures, and on terrain over which it was once considered impossible to wage effective warfare, have, so far as I know, rarely, if ever, been demanded of soldiers of any nation. Those twin enemies—weather and terrain—have been our greatest problems, for certainly, wherever we have met the German, we have found that he is in no sense

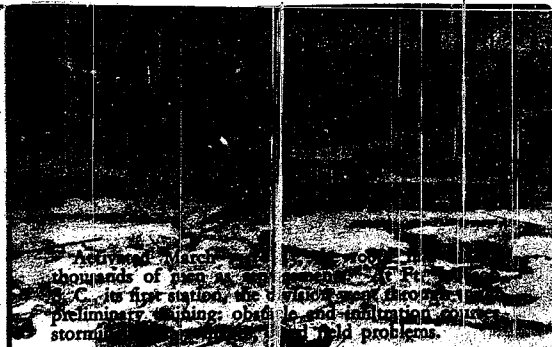
our equal. You and your men have met those demands and overcome them by a stubbornness of will, a fixed tenacity of purpose, and a grim and determined aggressiveness of body and spirit. You have accomplished your missions, and no higher praise can ever be spoken of any military organization.

106th HAS RECORD OF VALOR AND HONOR

AFTER a rest, the 424th CT joined the 7th Armd. Div. in the mission all Lionmen had been waiting for: to retake St. Vith.

The 424th struck southeast on Jan. 25 from a point just north of St. Vith with the objective of securing the main highway running through Amel to the northeast. A coordinated infantry-tank attack dislodged a main enemy outpost at a road junction. By late afternoon, in the face of automatic weapons, 88mm guns and small arms fire, doughs cleared the town of Medell. The following morning Meyerode fell to the furiously attacking 106th. The 7th Armd. then seized St. Vith while the 106th took Deidenberg and Born.

The 106th now was hack at the line where it had first met the enemy. It had taken fierce punishment but had come back in some of the bloodiest fighting of the war—a proud achievement for a division that had a history of less than two years.



Activities March 1945. Thousands of men as they passed through C. its first station, the division was through preliminary training, obstacle and infiltration course, storming, and field problems.

In Tennessee winter maneuvers of 1944, the division learned to fight in terrain and weather which resembled the rugged, cold Ardennes. Maneuvers over, the 106th moved to Camp Atterbury, Ind., for seven months of advanced training. Its unit commanders were prepared for the trying days to come.

The 106th left the States in mid-October, spent several weeks in the South Midlands of England, raced across France and Belgium into the line under the command of Maj. Gen. Jones.

Feb. 28, 1945: Maj. Gen. Donald A. Stroh now was in command of the division. Lionmen, after a short rest, were back in the line on the south flank of First Army near the Belgian town of Hunnigen. For three weeks they had patrolled and probed the thickly-



own mine fields to find a weak spot in the concrete gun emplacements, despite the tank obstacles of the Siegfried Line.

Facing the 106th was a division identified as one which had been in the attack on St. Vith. With the memory of the breakthrough still vivid, Lionmen sought vengeance. They got it.

Co. C, 424th, with combat engineers from Co. A, 81st Engr. Bn., knocked out a large, particularly troublesome Nazi pillbox. The team clawed its way under machine gun and rifle fire, over four rows of anti-personnel mines and up to the very walls of the fort. Germans in foxholes outside the pillbox were killed or driven off. Fire from the embrasures was silenced by flame throwers, rifle grenades and bazookas.

Pvt. Dennis A. Wartigun, Kearny, N. J., Co. A, 81st, approached the eight-foot thick walls and with a long pole, pushed a charge of TNT through an opening. The blast cracked the walls, blew open the door, killed three of the defenders. Doughs rushed in

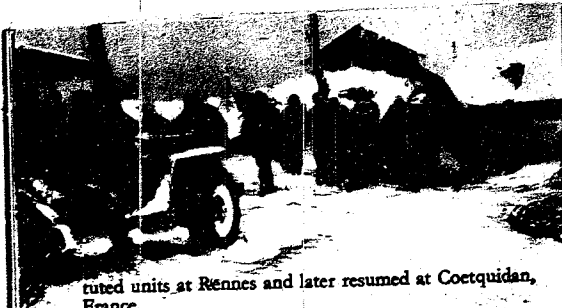
to capture nine other Germans who needed no further persuasion to surrender.

Slowly, methodically, pillboxes fell. A week later, the 106th was well on its way through the Siegfried Line heading toward the Rhine. Fighting on the southern flank of V Corps and First Army, the 106th was in contact with Third Army to the south.

Led by 3rd Bn., 424th, Lionmen wrested Frauenkron from the enemy. Driving through fields of anti-tank and anti-personnel mines, the 424th crossed Lemert Creek, seized the towns of Berk, Kronenburg and Baasem, as it advanced toward its objective along the Simmer River.

Other divisions of V Corps started to swing to the southeast as the Siegfried Line was breached, pivoting on the 106th. Third Army continued to drive to the east, and the division was pinched out. After mopping-up operations, the 106th was pulled back to Corps reserve and the 517th was relieved from 106th control.

Assigned to Fifteenth Army, the division moved to St. Quentin, France, late in March. After a brief stay, it moved to Rennes, France, where reinforcements were brought in and the 422nd and 423rd Regts., along with the 589th and 590th FA Bns., were reconstituted. For the first time since the division had gone into the line, it was up to full strength. A strenuous, tough training program was started for the reconsti-



tuted units at Rennes and later resumed at Coetquidan, France.

While at Rennes, 3rd Inf. Regt., 159th Inf. Regt., Aleutian veterans; and 401st and 627th FA Bns. were attached to the division. The 106th now was not only at full strength, it had a surplus—a far cry from the dark final days of December when the 424th and a few attached units were the division's only force.

An impressive ceremony was held April 14 at the St. Jacques airfield near Rennes. Survivors of the original 106th regiments lost in the breakthrough presented their colors to the new members of the 422nd and 423rd.

While the division stood at "present arms" on the parade ground, commanders, with the old and new color guards armed with German rifles captured in the Battle of the Bulge, advanced to the center of the field where they exchanged salutes. Colors and guidons were then presented to the new color guard. When the units reformed, the augmented division of five

regiments and six artillery battalions passed in review before Gep. Stroh.

A similar ceremony on a smaller scale was held later in Germany by the 424th. During the hectic see-saw battle in the early days of the Ardennes breakthrough, the regiment lost its colors. After V-E Day, a medic of the 2nd Inf. Div., then moving into Czechoslovakia, recovered the colors from a German prisoner and sent them back to the 106th. The colors were presented again to the 424th in an impressive ceremony.

While in the Rennes area, the 106th constituted the reserve for the 66th Inf. Div. and French units containing the strong German garrisons on the coastal area of St. Nazaire and Lorient.

Plans were being made to relieve the 66th but orders came through for the division to return to Germany. Leaving the reconstituted units to complete their reorganization and training, the 424th, 3rd and 159th Regts., with other units, raced across France to corral the thousands of prisoners being taken in the final drive through Germany.

Spread out along both banks of the Rhine from Holland to Switzerland, the 106th was reinforced to a strength of 40,000. Approximately 1,500,000 PWs passed through 106th cages.

It was a big job: receiving, screening, processing and discharging the hordes of former German soldiers. But it was a job the 106th relished; many of the Germans

were the same ones whom they had battled in the Ardennes.

Meanwhile, the reconstituted units of the division moved from Coetquidan, to a training area near Mayen, Germany, named Camp Alan W. Jones for the former CG. They completed their training and were ready for action when Germany surrendered May 8, 1945.

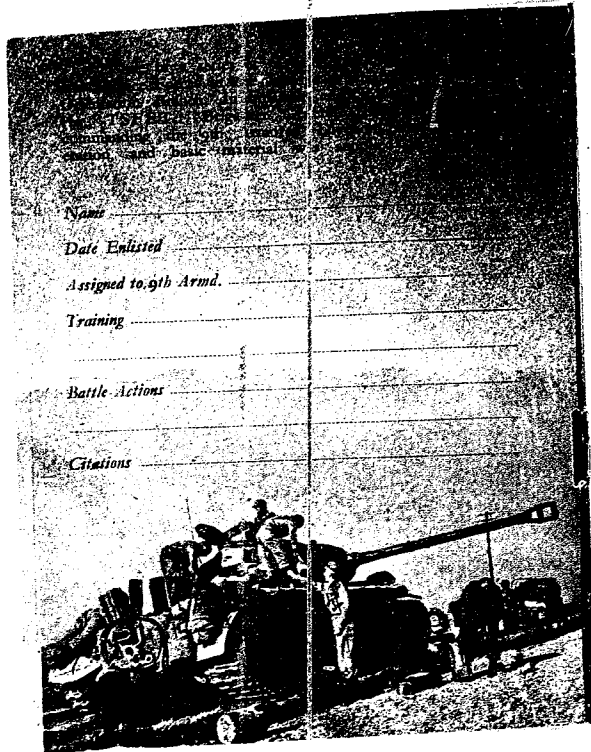
Following the surrender of Japan, the 106th, now under the command of Brig. Gen. Francis A. Woolfley, was alerted to return to the States. The division had been through some of the hardest fighting in the European Theater. It had suffered huge losses. It had no record of blitzkrieg offensives or mile-devouring advances. But it had more than that. The 106th had a story of valor and honor; of men who had "stuck it out" against the most powerful force the Germans could muster and had lashed back with the courage of lions. The men of the 106th could not be broken with pride.







THE STORY OF THE 9TH
ARMORED DIVISION



This is the story, told in broad outline, of a fighting division. The gallant exploits of individuals of the Ninth Armored Division cannot be treated adequately in the brief space allotted here. But in reading this little book you will identify yourself with the places and battles recorded.

The Ninth Armored Division's brilliant achievements were made possible by the actions of brave men fighting as a united team. This, then, is the story of that team. It is a team in which every member can justly feel the deepest pride.

Every man, I am sure, is aware of the personal sacrifices that were required to win the war. The deeds of our comrades who fell at Bastogne, Remagen and on the road to Leipzig will burn forever bright in our memories as we continue to uphold the principles in which we believe.

James H. ...

Brigadier General, Commanding

THE STORY OF THE *9th Armored* DIVISION

MARCH 7, 1945: High atop the hill overlooking Remagen and the majestic Rhine River, Lt. Col. Leonard E. Engeman, Redwood Falls, Minn., trained his field glasses on the valley below. The commander

of the 14th Tank Battalion actually jumped with excitement when he spotted the bridge.

The Ludendorff bridge was still intact!

German vehicles were moving across the span—across the only Rhine bridge Nazis had failed to blow in their frantic withdrawal from the hammer-like blows of the mighty Allied war machine.

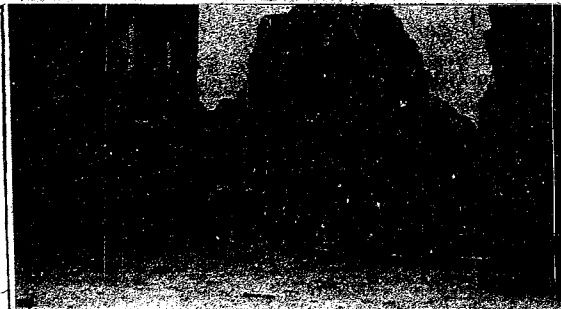
It was apparent that Americans — this task force from Combat Command B of the 9th Armored Division — had arrived before they were expected. Otherwise, the Germans would have allowed more time for their remaining vehicles and troops to escape across the river.

But even if the Germans had waited too long, there was no assurance they would make the capital mistake of failing to blow the bridge. Col. Engeman reasoned the enemy probably would wait until his tanks roared into Remagen and then would cheat them of the prize by setting off the charges.

He acted quickly. After summoning a platoon of the 14th's Pershing tanks—new tanks with 90mm guns that could handle anything the Germans had—Col. Engeman gave instructions to Co. A, 27th Armd. Inf. Bn.:

Go down into the town. Get through it as quickly as possible and reach the bridge. The tanks will lead. The infantry will follow on foot. Their half-tracks will bring up the rear. Let's make it snappy.

2



With their long-barreled 90s pointed down into the valley, the Pershings clattered over the winding road toward Remagen. Infantrymen, accustomed to working with tanks, trotted along behind.

Tanks and doughs moved swiftly against spotty resistance, mostly from snipers. Prisoners were taken from houses on the outskirts of the town. Quizzed about the defenses in the town and at the bridge, one PW volunteered the information that the bridge was scheduled to be blown at 1600.

Early that afternoon, similar information was obtained by the 52nd Armd. Inf. Bn. at Sinzig, several miles away. Civilians there corroborated the report that the Germans were to set off the blasts at 1600.

These reports were relayed to Brig. Gen. William

3

M. Hoge, Lexington, Mo., CC B commander, who sent the following message to Col. Engeman at 1515:

You've got 45 minutes to take the bridge.

Checking the progress of the task force immediately, Col. Engeman radioed Lt. John Grimball, Columbia, S. C., commander of the tanks:

Get to the bridge as quickly as possible.

The lieutenant reported:

Sir, I am already there.

The Pershings wheeled into firing position near the west end of the bridge, prepared to smash any opposition across the river. One of the first targets was a locomotive which pulled a string of freight cars along the east bank. Tanks knocked out the train.

Infantrymen, spurred on by Lt. Karl Timmermann, West Point, Nebr., dashed along the main street of Remagen toward the bridge.

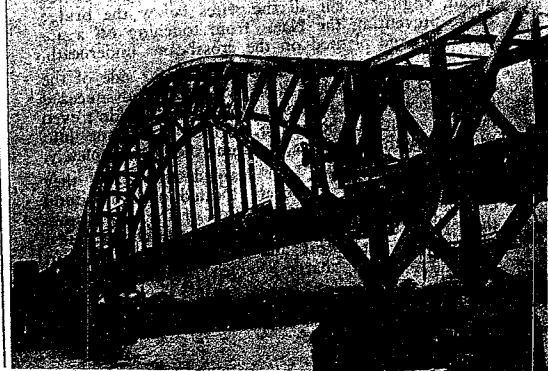
Time was running out and German engineers at the bridge realized their peril. They set off a blast in the roadway leading to the west approach of the bridge, blowing a large crater which they hoped would slow down tanks and infantry.

As 9th Armid. troops forged ahead, machine gunners opened up from each tower and the tunnel on the east side of the bridge. Anti-aircraft guns blazed.

Ten Minutes TO SAVE A BRIDGE

THE bridge—large and ugly—and the river loomed ahead. Floor plankings had been laid over the tracks on the bridge to convert the span from railroad to vehicular traffic. The river ran swift and deep between the towering cliffs. No one knew the strength of the enemy on the other side of the river or just when the explosions would be touched off.

Lt. Timmermann gathered his forces near the



bridge, gave them instructions. It was 1550. In the face of murderous fire, the 27th Armd. doughs had just 10 minutes to cross the river if the Germans were running on schedule.

As the men started onto the bridge, a heavy blast rocked the span two-thirds of the way across. The attacking platoon halted momentarily, then took off again when it saw the three spans still standing.

Three members of the 9th Armd. Engr. Bn.—1st Lt. Hugh Mott, Nashville, Tenn.; Sgt. Eugene Dorland, Manhattan, Kas.; S/Sgt. John Reynolds, Lincolnton, N. C.—dashed onto the bridge to cut the demolition wires.

All hands, especially the engineers, worked with a speed never attained before. As the doughs rushed ahead, engineers cut all the wires below the bridge deck, preventing the Nazis from touching off a 40-pound charge planted on the crossbeams underneath.

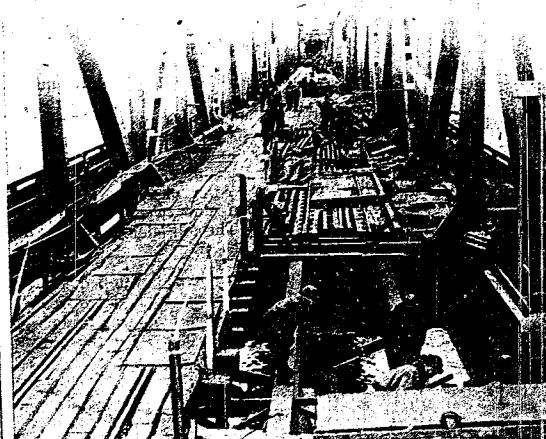
Next, engineers raced across to the far side of the bridge to cut the main cable. Sgt. Dorland squeezed the cable with a pair of small pliers but couldn't even dent it. Without hesitating, he fired three shots into the cable with his carbine, smashing the line completely.

Ninth Armd. men later learned how close they came to disaster. Engineers located one 500-pound charge of TNT about two thirds of the way across the river. Its cap had gone off but the charge failed to explode. Lt. Mott and his two sergeants also found 350-pound charges, which had not been set

off, in the piers. One of the cables leading to the main charge had been severed, possibly by artillery.

While engineers were hard at work, doughs dashed across the bridge, firing as they went. Enemy fire didn't disturb them nearly as much as the thought that the bridge might be blown up at any minute. It was a long drop to the river.

The leader of the first platoon, T/Sgt. Joseph Delisio, New York City, silenced the machine gun



fire from the right tower by rushing up the stairs and capturing the two-man crew. Sgt. Mike Chinchar, Rochelle Park, N. J., assisted by S/Sgt. Anthony Samele, Bronx, N. Y., and Pfc Artus Massie, Patterson's Creek, W. Va., took care of the machine gun in the left tower. They threw the gun into the Rhine and took the gunner prisoner.

Now, infantrymen received covering fire from the towers. First across the Rhine was Sgt. Alexander A. Drabik, Holland, O., who was closely followed by Pfc Marvin Jensen, Slayton, Minn. On their heels were Samele, Delisio, Chinchar, Massie, S/Sgt. Carmine J. Sabia, Brooklyn; Pfc Martin Reed, Assaria, Kan.; Pvt. Joseph K. Peoples, Warrenton, N. C.

Reaching the east end of the bridge, Drabik and several others cut to the left. Some moved into the railroad tunnel while the remainder, led by Lt. Emmet Burrows, Jersey City, N. J., started up a steep basaltic cliff to wipe out snipers in a house on the cliff. The climb was so steep that the men used shrubbery and trees to pull themselves up. After clearing out the snipers, Burrows and his men underwent a terrific artillery and mortar shelling. The hill later was called "Suicide Cliff" and "Flat Hill."

A complicated command problem developed for Gen. Hoge at the time of the crossing. The III Corps had not yet received word that the Remagen bridge had been captured and sent down orders for the 9th to move south across the Ahr River.

By driving swiftly along the west bank of the Rhine, the 9th could link up with Third Army forces and prevent thousands of Germans from crossing the Rhine to the south.

But the division already had troops on the east bank of the Rhine and needed all its forces for the bridgehead operation. Gen. Hoge held those troops on the east bank while he contacted Maj. Gen. John W. Leonard, Toledo, O., division commander.

The decision to hold the bridgehead will live in military history. It brought highest praise from Allied commanders. Gen. Hoge had sensed every hazard. German forces across the river were an unknown quantity. This could well be a trap. Artil-



lery might knock out the bridge after the division had crossed over.

The reward seemed worth all risks. An Allied bridge across the Rhine would be of immense strategic and tactical importance. It might be a blow from which the Germans never could recover.

Gen. Hoge, with full confidence in his troops, obtained authority from Gen. Leonard to stick with the bridgehead and to expand it. "A moment for history" was *Time* Magazine's comment later.

While awaiting III Corps confirmation of the decision, CC B prepared to spring its might on the bridgehead as Combat Command A was ordered to relieve CC B's south column at Sinzig. On the north, the 89th Cavalry Recon Sqdn. (Mech.), relieved 1st Bn., 310th Regt., 78th Div., which had been attached to the 9th.

Third Corps ordered an all-out fight to build up the bridgehead as soon as it was informed of the Rhine crossing. CC A was instructed to hold the bridgehead over the Ahr River.

Foot troops—coughs who could dig in and hold their positions—rushed across the bridge. A heavy fog cloaked the span that first night as the first tanks started across about midnight. They were Shermans of the 14th Tank Bn.; the roadway wasn't wide enough for the new Pershings. Sgt. William J. Goodson, Rushville, Ind., commanded the first tank to span the river.

A serious threat to the over-all operation loomed when a tank destroyer from the 656th TD Bn. slipped

into a hole in the bridge flooring, then balanced precariously on two beams. Because of the delicate balance, the vehicle was unable to use its own power to extricate itself. Meanwhile, armored reinforcements, sorely needed to repel the inevitable German counter-attacks, were prevented from crossing.

Commanders worked feverishly to remove this obstacle. For a time they considered dumping the tank destroyer into the river but decided against that move because it might further damage the bridge. Meanwhile, foot troops continued to make progress.

Moving with extreme caution, salvage crews finally towed the TD from the bridge, enabling men and vehicles again to pour across the bridge in an unending stream.



Speed and Daring PAY OFF AT REMAGEN

GEN. Dwight D. Eisenhower was first to proclaim the success:

The whole Allied force is delighted to cheer the First Army whose speed and boldness have won the race to establish the first bridgehead over the Rhine. Please tell all ranks how proud I am of them.

Reported the New York Times:

The Germans misjudged by a fateful ten minutes the speed at which the 9th Armored Division was moving... To all who utilized that ten minutes so advantageously goes the deepest gratitude this country can bestow.

Ninth Armd.'s movement to Remagen possessed a story book flavor. First Army's capture of Cologne was hailed as one of the major successes of the big Allied drive. But the Hindenburg bridge at Cologne went the way of all Rhine bridges. As the right flank of the Army, troops of the 9th Armd. struck swiftly towards the Rhine.

As its tanks roared through Euskirchen, the 9th gained speed. The closer the division got to the river, the faster the columns moved. Near the end of the

historic dash, half-tracks crowded with infantrymen were streaking through town after town.

The speed of the advance so startled the enemy that he was caught off-balance. Pay-off of that speed and daring was the capture intact of the Ludendorff bridge—the bridge that became a dagger pointed at the heart of Germany. Before two months had passed, that dagger was plunged to the hilt in the German heart.

The German press and radio remained silent about the crossing for two days, but the full import of the disaster did not escape the Nazis. Field Marshal Kesselring, rebuking his troops for the costly failure at Remagen, said: "We have suffered unnecessary losses and our present military situation has become nearly catastrophic."

But while the United Nations cheered, the fight to hold and enlarge the area raged with intensity. The enemy quickly turned the bridgehead into a crucible of crashing bombs and bursting shells. Precious reserves of planes and self-propelled guns were expended with reckless abandon in the savage fight to knock out the bridge.

This was one of the war's hottest spots. German artillery shells whistled in from the Rhine hills. Nazi planes sneaked up to the sector from behind the hills, made fast runs for the bridge. Enemy pilots, ordered to "get the bridge" at any cost, paid a tremendous toll.



No sooner was the order given to exploit the bridgehead than Remagen became an MP's nightmare. All roads leading to the bridge were clogged for miles with vehicles and men. Amid magnificent confusion, traffic continued to flow across the Rhine under the direction of Col. Walter Burnside, Columbus, O., commander of Combat Command R.

Confusion was rampant on the east side of the river as well. Germans were in such a hurry that their convoys sped through the night with headlights blazing. The Americans had gambled and won a bridgehead. The Germans were gambling to erase an error.

The bridgehead was crowded. American flak wagons were banked bumper to bumper. Artillery of every caliber lined up in the hills west of the Rhine and fired over the river with telling effect.

Luftwaffe pilots who braved the murderous ground

barrage to drop bombs on the bridge usually paid with their lives.

Enemy artillery was particularly accurate. When work was begun on a ponton bridge downstream from the railroad bridge, German guns zeroed in on it. One shell after another crashed into the target. But engineers continued their hazardous work.

Civilians were moved from Remagen to reduce the enemy's chances of getting reports on the effectiveness of the artillery fire.

Engineers toiled day and night on the railroad bridge to keep it in operation. Holes caused by air and artillery attacks were quickly sealed. Officers and men of the 9th Armd. Engr. Bn. sweated out heavy fire to keep traffic moving.

As soon as they could rally their forces and send reinforcements from the north, Germans counter-attacked savagely with tanks and infantry. The Nazis employed every stratagem and trick in the book to get at the bridge but were thwarted in every attempt.

They sent a barge carrying explosives down the river but the craft was captured. They filled the river with floating mines, but these were picked off by riflemen. Especially trained swimmers in rubber suits who towed floating explosives drowned or were captured.

Finally, the bridge which had stood for 16 days despite bombs and shells, toppled into the Rhine. The

framework had been weakened by enemy fire and by the terrific loads carried across. But when the span gave way, March 17, Americans didn't need the bridge any more.

Ponton bridges already had been thrown across the Rhine and now were carrying the full load of men and materiel.

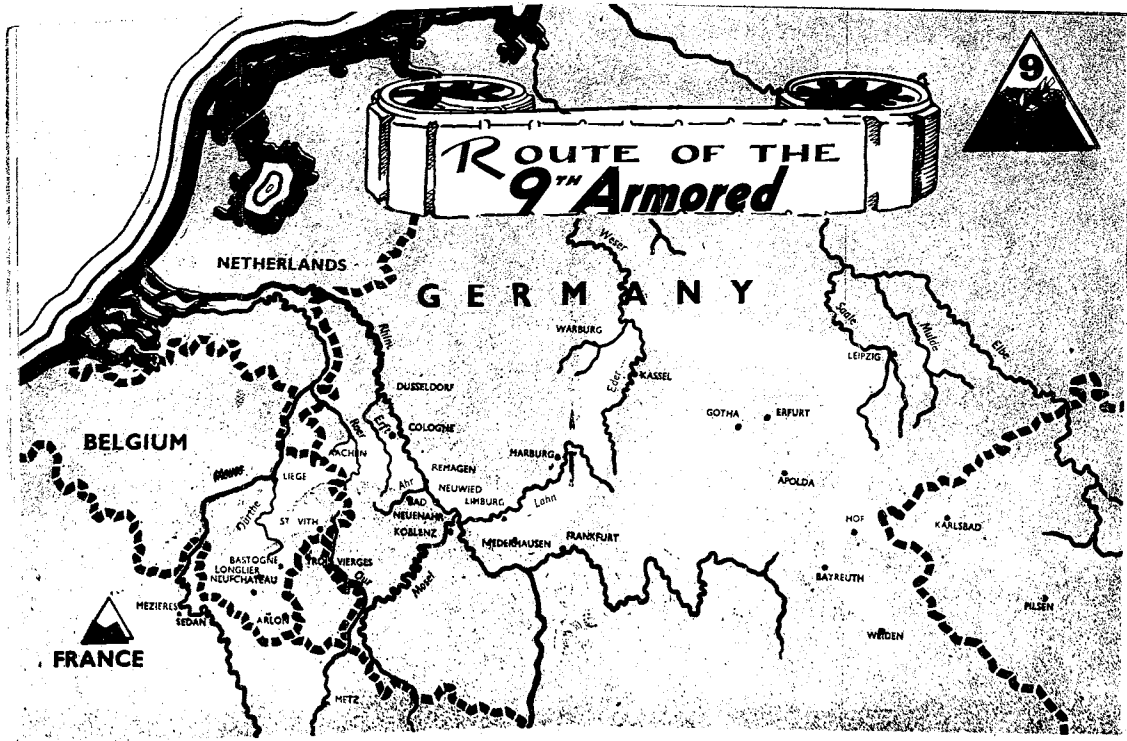
The Ludendorff bridge had served its purpose well. The men who had died to keep it in operation had performed a mighty task. A storm of annihilation was about to break over the Wehrmacht.

Heroes STEP FORTH IN THE ARDENNES

TROOPS of the 9th Arm'd. Div. felt somewhat like Gen. Omar N. Bradley did about the Ardennes. They welcomed a German counter-attack but they didn't want it to be so big. Gen. Bradley since has spoken of the Remagen bridge seizure and the Ardennes campaign as two of the turning points of the war. The fortunes of the 9th were strongly interwoven with both.

The Ardennes gave the 9th its first opportunity to show what it could do in a major battle. Its baptism was a bitter defensive action fought under the most







difficult conditions. After the Ardennes, combat came much easier.

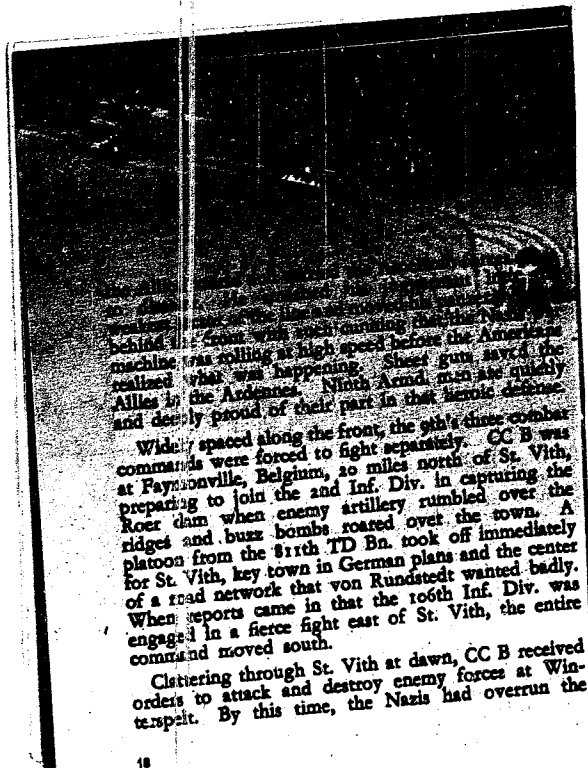
Gen. Leonard sent his troops into the front lines for the first time along the Luxembourg-German frontier in October, 1944, soon after they had arrived in the little duchy. Although 9th Armd. technically was in VIII Corps reserve, the division commander wanted the men to get the feel of combat. Because it was a comparatively quiet sector, he obtained permission for the units to relieve other troops in the line for periods of conditioning.

The 9th underwent this battle training for nearly two months. Troops operated in an historic invasion area. The Eifel Hills had been selected by von Rundstedt for his classic blitz in the spring of 1940. But this was 1944; it was winter and the Americans were here now.

Gen. Eisenhower and Gen. Bradley paid the division a visit at Mersch, Luxembourg, in November. Infantry outfits were strung out along a wide sector of the front. The 9th was backing them up.

Dec. 16, 1944 : VIII Corps' sector came to life with a terrific roar. German artillery opened up all along the front. Infantry divisions in the line were the 106th, a new, untried outfit to the north, and the 28th and 4th, to the south, both of which nearly had been exhausted by recent action.

Von Rundstedt hardly could have picked a more propitious time and place to strike the blow that stunned



...the 9th's three combat commands were forced to fight separately. CC B was at Fayonville, Belgium, 20 miles north of St. Vith, preparing to join the 2nd Inf. Div. in capturing the Roer dam when enemy artillery rumbled over the ridge and buzz bombs roared over the town. A platoon from the 81st TD Bn. took off immediately for St. Vith, key town in German plans and the center of a road network that von Rundstedt wanted badly. When reports came in that the 106th Inf. Div. was engaged in a fierce fight east of St. Vith, the entire command moved south.

Clustering through St. Vith at dawn, CC B received orders to attack and destroy enemy forces at Wimpert. By this time, the Nazis had overrun the

106th's front and were driving up to St. Vith from the south. The 27th Armd. Inf. Bn. struck this advancing German force with such power that it succeeded in pushing the Nazis back across the Our River.

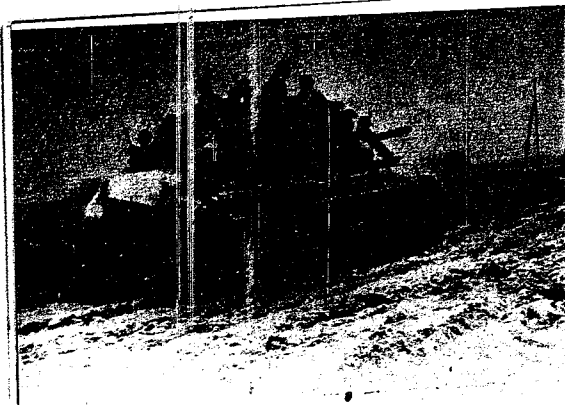
Without flank protection, CC B was forced to pull back from the Our that night. This was the first of a series of disappointments for the command in the St. Vith action.

Next morning, a task force was sent north of the city to beat back an enemy armored column. One medium tank company of the 14th Bn. knocked out six tanks. CC B kept German forces out of St. Vith until relieved late Dec. 18.

German forces surged forth again in an effort to knock out the command's stronghold. In addition to the 1st SS Panzer and 62nd Volksgrenadier Divs., Nazi units included elements of the 116th Panzer and the 18th Volksgrenadier Divs.

Despite ammunition and food shortages, the lack of air support and the constant threat of being cut off completely, CC B continued to smash the relentless attacks. An abandoned dump was located, rations salvaged by the men as they fought. Troops of the 9th Armd. Engr. Bn. and the 89th Cav. fought as infantrymen.

When the 27th Armd. Inf. Bn.'s CP was captured, Gen. Hoge sent tanks and doughs to recapture it; they did. Although rumors spread among the troops



that they were surrounded, men stuck to their guns. A BBC broadcast declared: "The brightest spot along the western front is at St. Vith."

"If this is a bright spot," remarked one GI, "what the hell is going on everywhere else?"

German artillery, which had been shelling CC B's CP ever since the beginning of the attacks, pounded dead on the target Dec. 21. Six officers and men were killed, 20 were wounded.

Considerable heavy fighting continued before CC B withdrew from the sector and moved back over the

escape route opened up by the 82nd Airborne Div. CC B had kept the enemy out of St. Vith for six days. The enemy paid a high price for his failure to take the town quickly.

CC A, commanded by Brig. Gen. (then Col.) Thomas L. Harrold, Troy, N.Y., defended a front line sector near Beaufort, Luxembourg. The 60th Armd. Inf. Bn. controlled the front when the Germans unpacked their power punch and the entire combat command went into action when the magnitude of the attack was realized.

Four to five battalions of German artillery ranging from 88s to 240s pounded the sector. Telephone communications were knocked out immediately. Nazis then began infiltrating. A regiment of enemy infantry advancing southwest down Mullerthal Draw through the 4th Inf. Div. sector attempted to get behind the 60th's positions. Artillery, mortars and rockets pounded relentlessly.

Contact with the surrounded rifle companies was maintained only through a radio operated by Lt. Ira D. Cravens, Springfield, Ill., forward observer for the 3rd Armd. FA Bn.

When CC A took over, it had instructions to maintain its positions until they became untenable. The command led off with a counter-attack, Dec. 18—a counter-attack that upset the 276th Volksgrenadier Div.'s schedule for the drive on Luxembourg City.

CC A now turned to aid its isolated rifle companies.

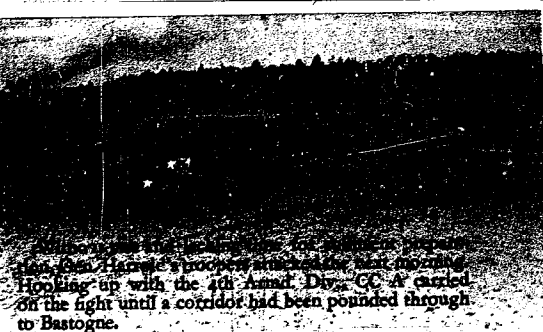
The Stars and Stripes gave this account of the withdrawal:

Nobody told the doughs of the 60th Armd. Inf. Bn. to pull out, so they stayed and fought until word finally got through to them. A few days later they showed up in German helmets and with blankets draped over their shoulders, their rifles slung with bayonets fixed. They walked through German lines that way... They kept right on going until they reached the U. S. lines. After that, they fought some more.

Upsetting THE GERMAN TIMETABLE

CC A HELD its sector in Luxembourg despite everything Germans threw at it. The 3rd Armd. FA Bn. hurled thousands of shells into enemy positions, turned infantrymen when necessary. Tanks of the 19th Bn. broke up countless attacks while backing up the doughs. Recon men of the 89th Cav. also fought as front-line riflemen.

When CC A was relieved Dec. 26 by CC A of the 6th Armd. Div., it experienced an even more severe test. Anticipating a rest, the combat command began a long night march to Etalle. While the column was on the road, orders were received that put CC A in the fight to relieve besieged Bastogne.



Gen. Patton's spearheads attacked the next morning. Hopking up with the 4th Armd. Div., CC A carried on the fight until a corridor had been pounded through to Bastogne.

Still the fight continued. New Year's Eve, CC A thoroughly smashed a powerful German armored force that tried to cut Bastogne's supply corridor and isolate Gen. Patton's spearheads. Thirty-two panzers were wrecked in a tremendous battle with 9th Armd. tanks.

The third combat command, CC R, commanded by Col. Joseph Gilbreth, Columbus, Ga., perhaps had the roughest assignment of any outfit in the Ardennes. It was CC R that stood and slugged it out against the overwhelming might of the German panzers smashing toward Bastogne. Had it not been for CC R, Nazis would have taken the town before the 101st Airborne Div. arrived there to make its historic stand.

Small CC R task forces of tanks from the 2nd Tank Bn. and doughs of the 32nd Armd. Inf. Bn. took up positions along the roads leading to Bastogne from the east. Their mission was to block the roads at all



costs. They clung to their positions even when surrounded. Misses of German tanks rolled around them; enemy infantry infiltrated in the darkness.

There were no front lines in this melee. Artillerymen, tankers and engineers fought as doughs. The 2nd Tank Bn. encountered elements of nine German divisions. The 73rd Armd. FA Bn. fought its way out of a trap, kept its guns in action.

Although casualties were heavy and all three of its battalion commanders lost, CC R was officially credited with delaying the enemy for 36 to 48 hours east of Bastogne. When its surviving forces fell back into Bastogne, CC R was assigned to maintain a mobile reserve known as Task Force Snafu.

TF Snafu became a potent force in the ensuing battles. Organized chiefly as a trouble-shooter for the 101st, this unit operated on a 10-minute alert and sped to threatened areas as needed. Bolstered by armor, it proved to be an ace in the hole.

CC R received the Presidential Unit Citation for its action at Bastogne.

Because its forces were widely separated, 9th Armd.'s outstanding fight in the Ardennes didn't receive the

attention it deserved until the battle was over. Then, military men pointed out the remarkable job the division had accomplished. Commendations came from two army commanders, Gen. Courtney H. Hodges and Gen. George S. Patton, Jr., from three corps and four divisions.

By training and background, 9th Armd. troops were well equipped for the furious Ardennes fighting and for succeeding roles.

Made up largely of former horse cavalrymen of the famous 2nd Cav. Div., the 9th was activated July 15, 1942, at Fort Riley (Camp Funston), Kan. One unit, the 3rd Armd. FA Bn., dates its battle record back to 1794. It fought in every major military campaign in American history.

The 9th trained for nearly a year at the Fort Riley reservation, then went to the Mojave desert near Needles, Calif., for additional hardening. Reorganized as a light armored division, the 9th participated in Louisiana maneuvers where its army commander was Gen. Hodges.

The 9th was well known before it saw combat. It put on two firing demonstrations in the spring of 1944 while stationed at Camp Polk, La. The first was for American press and radio representatives; the second for the press of Allied and neutral nations.

In August, 1944, the division sailed for England aboard the *Queen Mary*. After drawing equipment in the Tidworth area, the 9th crossed the Channel, then

made a six-day march across France. Its units entered the lines in Luxembourg.

Gen. Eisenhower's Chief of Staff, Lt. Gen. Walter B. Smith, assaying the value of the Remagen bridge over the Rhine said: "It was worth its weight in gold."

The time had come for the Allies to cash in on the valuable property acquired in the Remagen deal. From that toe-hold, seized by the 17th Armd. Inf. Bn., had grown a military project of great dimensions.

The story is that when Gen. Bradley informed Gen. Eisenhower of the bridge seizure, the Supreme Commander said casually: "Why, hell, Brad, put a corps across."

When the time came for the Allies to capitalize on their advantage all along the Rhine River line, the Remagen springboard already had been built, exploited. Gen. Bradley didn't stop with just one corps across.

To the north, the long-scheduled "main event" was about to come off. This was the combined operation which had been in the making so long. Preparations by the British Second and the American Ninth Armies were hidden behind thick clouds of smoke. The Germans now were off balance. The threat from the north had been anticipated, but the Remagen bridgehead had thrown such an added burden on German defenses that Nazi confusion was multiplied.

With the Remagen bridgehead already well extended toward the north, Gen. Hodges began expanding it to the south. CC B struck south along the river to

Ehrenbreitstein, March 22. The division now was transferred from III to V Corps, which moved across the river to take over the southern end of the trans-Rhine sector.

While Gen. Hoge gave attack orders to CC B unit commanders, he received word from division headquarters that he was to assume command of the 4th Armd. Div. CC B troops heard the news with genuine regret. Col. Harrold took over and commanded operations until a bridgehead was established over the Weid River. Then, Col. Harry W. Johnson, Lewisburg, Pa., Division Chief of Staff, assumed command of CC B.

Col. Burnside, CC R commander, became Chief of Staff, and Col. (then Lt. Col.) Charles Wesner, Oshkosh, Wis., commanding the 16th Armd. FA Bn., took over CC R.

9th Armored

IN ON THE KILL

As the 9th wheeled south along the Rhine, the long-hailed combined operations began in the north. Gen. Bradley's remark that First Army could break from the Remagen bridgehead any time it chose seemed to be the signal for the big push. CC B suddenly turned east in a lightning advance.

Racing over rugged terrain, CC B's tanks hit the

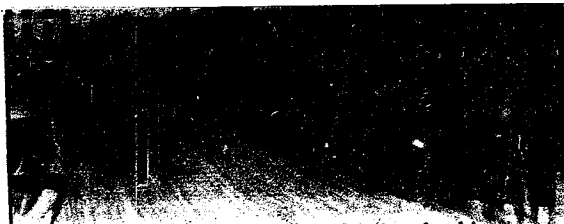
autobahn leading toward Limburg, hooking up with 7th Armd. Div. tanks. Armor of both divisions sped abreast down the wide highway until the 7th was ordered to shift directly east. When tanks of CC B's 19th Bn. reached Limburg, the armor immediately darted across the bridge over the Lahn River. Three tanks got across. A fourth was on the span when the Germans set off charges. The tank teetered on the far brink, then slowly pulled onto the far side. However, these tanks now were cut off and the Nazis attacked savagely with bazookas.

The tankmen were rescued when Co. C, 32nd Armd. Inf. Bn., threw a makeshift bridge across the river and infantrymen fought their way into Limburg.

Capture of the city was highly significant. Not only did it mark the complete breakout of the Remagen bridgehead, but it was the forerunner of swift armored advances across Central Germany that put American forces in position to help seal the industrial Ruhr.

The first German prison camp was captured at Limburg and its occupants liberated. Gen. Leonard visited a Limburg hospital and met patients who had been former members of the division. "You are in good hands now," he encouraged them.

Ninth Armd. combat commands next raced in two directions. While CC B and CC A made a record advance to the north, CC R dashed south along the autobahn to link up with Third Army forces near Niederhausen.



CC B covered 67 miles one day during the drive to the north. CC A advanced 70 miles in 11 hours. German troops surrendered in droves. CC A alone took more than 1200 PWs March 29.

Considerable resistance was encountered at Fritzlar, site of a large German airport. CC A captured 13 planes and another aircraft was shot down by Cpl. Odus C. Todd, Eubank, Ky., 14th Tank Bn. A round from Todd's 76mm struck the plane in the tail assembly, promptly bringing it down.

The 9th's advance to the north helped complete the encirclement of the Ruhr. German forces struck at the steel ring in the Warburg area, but few succeeded in escaping. CC B beat off a strong counter-attack near Bonenberg, April 2. Germans hurled 250 infantrymen and from three to five tanks at the town.

CC B sent reinforcements and a large number of the enemy was caught in the open by artillery fire and direct fire from tanks. The Nazis withdrew after suffering heavy casualties.

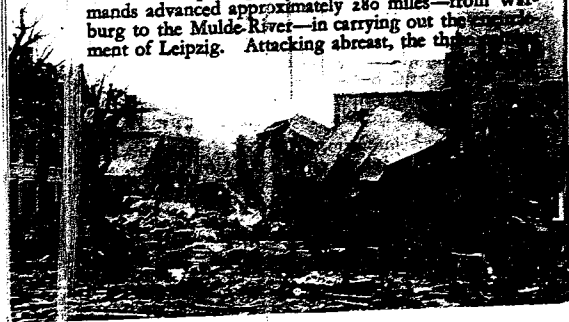
The number of prisoners ultimately taken from the

Ruhr pocket far exceeded the total anticipated. Altogether, the Allies captured 327,000. This was the first great dividend of the Remagen bridgehead. Gen. Eisenhower commended all forces involved in the Ruhr operation:

This victory of Allied arms is a fitting prelude to the final battle to crush the ragged remnants of Hitler's armies of the west, now tottering on the threshold of defeat.

The 9th now assumed a spearheading role, leading the way for First Army's drive eastward. The race through Central Germany began April 10. Division tanks smashed so deeply into the enemy's rear that Nazis became hopelessly confused. Communications were slashed, vital supply points seized.

In their April operations, the 9th's combat commands advanced approximately 280 miles—from Warburg to the Mulde River—in carrying out the encirclement of Leipzig. Attacking abreast, the three



commands captured hundreds of cities, thousands of prisoners, knocked out scores of German tanks, guns and vehicles.

Lt. Col. Wesner and his driver, Cpl. Sam Pernicci, East Point, La., captured a bridge intact over the Saale River near Naumburg. When they removed charges from the bridge, the 9th's column rolled on without stopping.

Rugged fighting developed through the thick defense belt around Leipzig. Germans used hundreds of ground-mounted anti-aircraft guns, 500 of which were either knocked out or found abandoned by CC A.

The same combat command captured a radio-radar station at Audgast, reputed to be the most powerful in Germany, as well as seizing an airfield at Polenz containing 250 planes.

The 2nd and 69th Inf. Divs. completed the capture of Leipzig, Germany's fifth largest city, after the 9th had completely encircled the area.

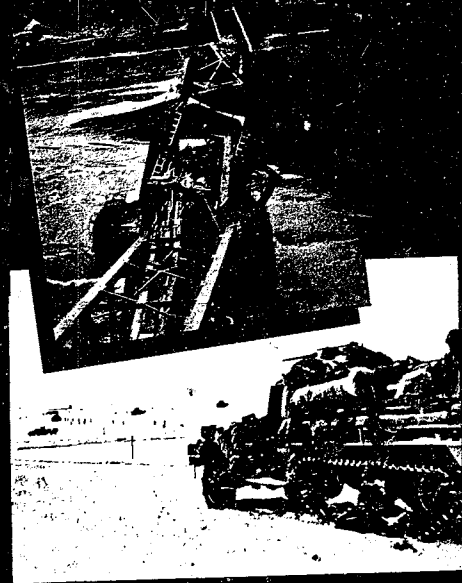
The division's drive to the Mulde, in the military sense, split Germany in two. Instead of rolling eastward to link up with Soviet forces, the division was taken out of the lines for a well deserved rest.

An additional assignment remained, however, before the Germans were thoroughly beaten. When the enemy threatened a prolonged fight in Czechoslovakia, the 9th was sent on a long march south to join Third Army and help administer the coup de grace.

CC A advanced into Czechoslovakia with the 1st Inf. Div. By the time the combat command linked up with the Red troops near Karlsbad, the Germans were completely kaput.

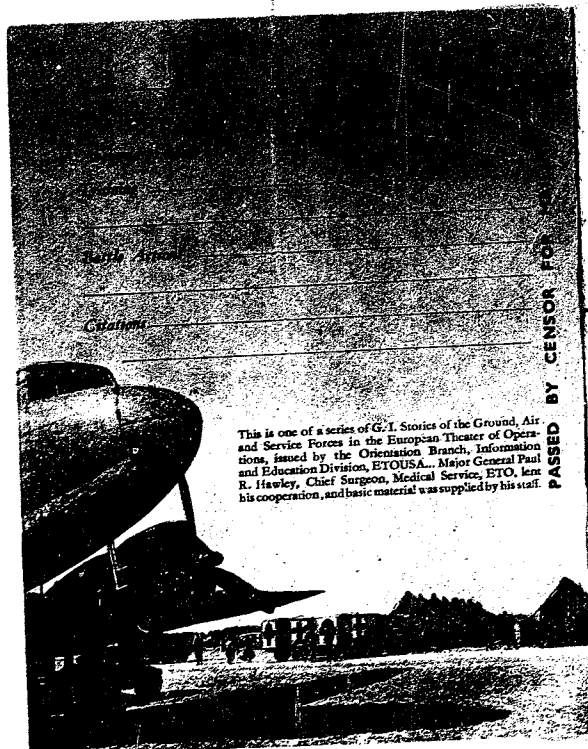
Being in the fight until the closing moments was more than an ordinary triumph for the gallant men of the 9th Armd. The Germans had reported them completely destroyed on three separate occasions. Yet, despite bitter fighting, sometimes against heavy odds, the men of the 9th held without yielding until their mission—the destruction of the enemy—was accomplished.

Germany surrendered unconditionally at Rheims, France, May 8, 1945, two months to the day from the time the 9th seized the Ludendorff railroad bridge at Remagen which sped victory for the Allied Nations.









Name _____
 Battle Station _____
 Station _____

This is one of a series of G.I. Stories of the Ground, Air and Service Forces in the European Theater of Operations, issued by the Orientation Branch, Information and Education Division, ETOUSA... Major General Paul R. Hawley, Chief Surgeon, Medical Service, ETO, lent his cooperation, and basic material was supplied by his staff.

PASSED BY CENSOR BOARD

The full story of the Medical Service of the European Theater of Operations has been written by thousands of splendid officers and men of the Medical Department. It is a story of bravery, of which many acts have been recognized in awards as high as the Congressional Medal of Honor, and many others have passed unnoticed. It is a story of devotion to their fellow men, the rewards of which are only the gratitude of the sick and injured and in the inner knowledge of duty well performed. It is a story that cannot be compressed into one volume, nor into a hundred volumes. To these magnificent medical soldiers this booklet is dedicated.

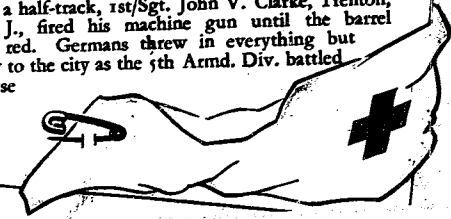


P. R. Hawley

Major General, U. S. Army, Chief Surgeon.

The Story OF THE MEDICAL SERVICE, ETO

ATOP a half-track, 1st/Sgt. John V. Clarke, Trenton, N. J., fired his machine gun until the barrel glowed red. Germans threw in everything but the key to the city as the 5th Armd. Div. battled a surprise





the thin... height of the withering cross-fire was the sudden silence of the sergeant's gun. "Medics! Medics! Nate—I've been hit!" came the agonized cry. S/Sgt. Nathan Glassman and Pfc John Curto, both of New York, heard the call and took off.

Curto went down momentarily with a shrapnel gash below an eye, but recovered to reach Clarke's side and help Glassman dress the gunner's stomach wounds. Lying on their sides, the two Medics worked under a hail of murderous shrapnel. Then began the job of inching, dragging the wounded man from the shell-torn terrain.

The war ended for Sgt. Clarke, but the battle for life just had begun. A short distance away from the bursting shells and whining bullets, Sgt. Clarke's wounds were checked by a front-line surgeon at a Battalion Aid Station. A trip by ambulance to the Collecting Station was the next stop.

Within a few hours after he was hit, the gunner had undergone four examinations. Blood and plasma

injections had alleviated shock, spared possible death. Sulfa drugs and penicillin had thwarted painful, killing infection. While the big guns still thundered in the distance, Sgt. Clarke lay on the operating table at the 58th Field Hospital. Four days later, he was aboard a hospital train en route to the 48th General Hospital in Paris where he was tagged "Z of 1"—Zone of Interior. He soon would be returned to the States.

Sgt. Clarke's story is the story of the Medical Department. He fell on a muddy slope at Mainz-on-the-Rhine, but he might have fallen with the Airborne beyond the Rhine, in a back alley of Bastogne, at Carentan, or on a Normandy beach. Wherever a shot was fired, Medics stood ready—ready to patch the wounded and rush them to the doctors, nurses and technicians who waited, close behind the lines, to continue the job.

While armchair strategists argued whether or not Africa was the second front, Maj. Gen. Paul R. Hawley, Chief Surgeon of the European Theater of Operations, was assembling in England some of the top U. S. medicine and surgery talent. These specialists became the sparkplugs of an organization destined to become the greatest in war time medical history.

Starting with one hospital two years prior to D-Day, the general and his staff developed a vast network of 108 hospital plants in England. Most of these were 1000-bed general and 750-bed station hospitals.

Like hospitals in metropolitan cities, these installa-



They were complete with doctors, nurses, dieticians, physical therapists, laboratory technicians and administrative staffs.

Thus began an organization that was to include more than 254,000 personnel and 315 fixed and mobile hospitals by V-E Day. It handled 369,181 battle casualties in 10 months and an equal number of disease and non-battle cases.

At the same time, the Medical Department solved special problems for the Air Corps, including flight fatigue. Methods of treating frostbite and otitis, an inflammation of the ears incurred from high altitude flying, were studied, improved. In addition, airmen wounded during combat missions over the Continent were cared for.

Insisting on precise treatment standards because no one patient would be handled by the same medical officer throughout the course of treatment, Gen. Hawley

and his staff prepared a Manual of Therapy standardizing important medical and surgical procedures.

This new concept of war medicine resulted in a sudden slash in mortality rates of wounded soldiers. In World War I, 8 percent of the wounded died. In World War II, the figure in the ETO was 3.9 percent. Contributing factors were vast amounts of medicine, blood plasma, whole blood, sulfa drugs, penicillin and new anesthetics like sodium pentathol which could be transported easily and administered without elaborate equipment.

Gen. Hawley and his Chief of Professional Services, Col. Elliott C. Cutler, placed but a portion of their faith in medicine alone, keying the entire organization to the principle that the earlier the surgery the better the soldier's chance of full recovery. The watchword was: "Get the surgeon to the patient, not the patient to the surgeon!"



D-Day - SIDE BY SIDE WITH FIGHTING MEN

JUNE 6, 1944: Medics invaded the Normandy peninsula alongside the fighting man. Medics jumped with the paratroopers, stormed ashore with the infantry. Wherever a fighting man was wounded, an aid man soon was at his side, distinguishable only by his red cross and lack of weapons.

At H Hour minus 3, Airborne Surgical Team No. 1, Third Surgical Group, glided to crash landings with the 101st Airborne seven miles inland from the French coast. Under heavy enemy fire from the outset, the team administered 25 blood transfusions to crash casualties from on-the-spot donors. Approximately 100 casualties were treated before the seaborne invasion was launched.

Airborne surgeons carried 200 pounds of medical equipment. Enlisted personnel brought additional supplies. Emergency treatment completed, the surgical team braved enemy fire to haul heavy equipment from wrecked gliders.

Following the troopers, this unit entered the Norman village of Hiesville where it set up a hospital in a chateau. Life-saving surgery soon was being performed on three operating tables improvised from litters

placed on boxes. Patients were blanketed with parachutes collected by two of the men.

The team sustained only one casualty throughout the entire hazardous action. Capt. Charles Margolies, Brooklyn, suffered a minor injury when he was evaded three days later when he received a serious head wound.

In achieving success in the first mission of its kind, this team established the value of similar operations for the future. By minimizing the time lag between injury and surgery, the loss of life was immeasurably curbed. The success, although unprecedented, was but typical of the work being done by similar groups.

On the beach, while D-Day still was being calculated in H Hour plus minutes, members of the Third Airborne Surgical Group worked laboriously under heavy enemy fire. Fighting men came in wave after wave. So did the Medics.

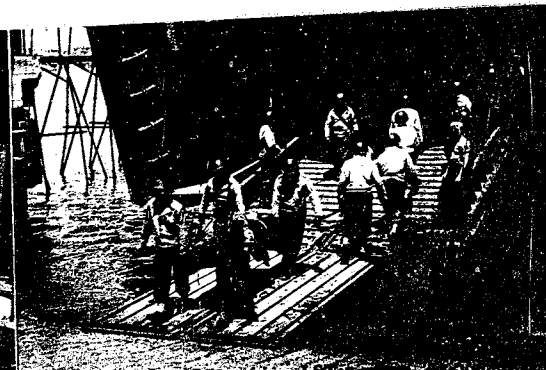


Maj. Evan Tansley, Trenton, N. J., led ashore one of the first teams, which was attached to the 5th Engineer Brigade in support of the 1st Inf. Div. The major reported: "There were no Medics on the beach when we got there. The first wounded to fall were lying about on the sands under heavy shell fire and without cover."

Throughout the day, the team collected wounded and administered aid under direct fire from the still visible enemy. Late that night, the Medics moved into a tank trap 200 yards off the beach and continued to work in total darkness. By morning, 250 casualties had been evacuated, among them Medical Corps Capt. George Freedman, Chicago, and Capt. Bill Ferraro, Springfield, Ill. One other officer and four enlisted men were lost to the team during that first day.

A vital link in the evacuation chain during those crucial days were LSTs. Special litter brackets accommodating 140 casualties had been built into the sides of the barge-like vessels. Additional wounded were placed on the tank deck.

As the LSTs beached and disgorged their heavy materials of war, litter bearers and vehicles brought casualties aboard via the ramps. Rhino ferries plied between the shores and LSTs; DUKWs carrying 11 litters left the sands to churn to the waiting LSTs where they drove up the ramps, unloaded their wounded and returned to shore. LCTs, drawing only 18 inches of water, were beached, loaded with casualties and



dispatched to the waiting LSTs, where, from ramp to ramp, they could unload and race back.

Aboard the LSTs, surgical teams made up of men like Capt. Joe Messey, Cpl. Chuck Brokschmidt and Pfc Howie Sinks began life saving surgery in operating rooms improvised from tarpaulins. They fought 54 sleepless hours to save the wounded as their ship tossed and rolled through heavy seas and enemy air and E-boat attacks on its way to England. Such cross-channel evacuation required the closest cooperation between Army and Navy.

Back on the beaches and the hards of England, casualties were sorted and immediately dispatched to installations prepared to administer the type of medical attention required. Patients whose condition permitted were loaded into ambulances and driven to transit

hospitals. More seriously wounded were moved to hospitals set up near the port. There, patients were treated for shock, X-rayed, operated.

Patients remained at these installations until they could make the journey inland to general hospitals where definitive treatment could be administered. The over-all procedure was coordinated with train schedules and space available in the hospitals.

Heroes ARE BORN ON NORMANDY BEACHES

As the invasion continued in full fury, grim-faced doughs lashed through enemy fire that spewed from cement and steel beach fortresses. When the fire was so devastating that infantrymen were forced to take cover, Medics were the last to take shelter. Describing a particularly rugged encounter, a grimy mortar squad leader said: "It was too hot even for the Medics."

Among the first medical units ashore was the 261st Medical Bn., especially trained for amphibious landings, making its fourth major invasion in support of an engineer brigade.

This outfit landed H plus 2, set up its equipment

within point blank range of the receding enemy and began emergency treatment of the casualties. When engineers were too busy to clear the area of mines, medical soldiers undertook the unaccustomed task. In six hours they had de-mined the field, established a clearing station and begun major surgery. A Presidential Unit Citation later was awarded the 261st.

Treatment of casualties by this battalion during those first hectic days was superior. Blood plasma, sulfa drugs, penicillin—everything known to surgery and medicine that could be brought in—was available for whomever needed it.

Among those who distinguished themselves during the action, and in the preceding days of preparations, were: S/Sgt. Frederic E. Hoyle, *Medico, M.C.*



T/4 Walter Silva, Fall River, Mass.; T/5 William A. Kuhn, Maplewood, N. J. All were awarded the Bronze Star.

These men were not alone. They were but typical of the hundreds who worked everywhere along the sands and in the fields under constant fire. Sixty hours after landing on D plus 2, the 51st Field Hospital had handled more than 1900 casualties. This unit was one of the first field hospitals ashore and was followed closely by the 13th, 42nd, 45th and 47th. The 128th and 91st were the first Evacuation Hospitals in France.

It was a women's war, too, because nurses came with them. This was only D plus 4. As the war moved inland, stories of bitter fighting and heroism, in which the Medical Service ranked high, were told.

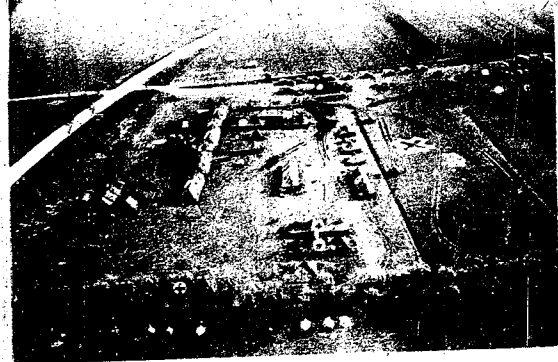
While waiting on the beach to be evacuated, Infantryman Pfc Alfred Savcie, Conimicut, R. I., said: "It takes plenty of guts to go through what the Medics are right now. We were 12 miles inland when we were ambushed and I went down. There was a hot scrap going on but stretcher bearers got to me anyway. It was a long trip back to the beach—especially for them. I haven't any kicks about the trip because they had to dodge sniper and machine gun nests all the way."

A short distance away, 11 men of the 619th QM Depot failed to see an "Achtung Minen" sign. All went down from the unexpected blasts. The explo-

sions brought an enemy mortar barrage. Despite the danger from both mines and mortars, Sgt. Louis Silverstein went into the field after the men. T/5 Tony Bloise, Cpl. Dan Thomas and Pfc Bill Hansen followed. The citation awarding Sgt. Silverstein the Silver Star for his leadership read: "... heroic action in the best traditions of the Medical Service."

Such instances of heroism were being duplicated throughout the Normandy fields and villages. By the time Cherbourg fell and the battle of St. Lo rocketed into prominence, the first general hospitals arrived on the Continent.

As the battle knifed deeper into France, the fixed installations—general and station hospitals—moved to Normandy. Sites were chosen and engineers built roads and concrete floors. Medics swung picks and



lugged sacks of cement. Later, they pitched tents and began receiving casualties.

Tents were a temporary measure. As soon as the work of the Medics was under way, engineers, starting with the operating rooms, began construction of semi-permanent huts to replace tents. Treatment of casualties went on uninterrupted.

Then, Gen. Patton's Third Army broke out of St. Lo and streaked across France. Medics soon learned there was little damage to buildings suitable for hospitals. Many buildings had been used by the Germans for similar purposes.

The 108th General Hospital took over the ultra-modern Hospital Beaujon in Paris just four days after the Nazis had evacuated, leaving several Canadian patients behind. Show place of the Luftwaffe for two years, the 13-story, American designed structure was built in 1934 as a French civil hospital.

This was hardly typical of hospital plants taken over by the Americans in France, Belgium and Holland, however. Often it was necessary to utilize school buildings and military barracks and to convert them quickly into surgically clean, modern, army hospitals. The 56th General Hospital in Belgium took over a location from an enemy horse-drawn artillery unit and removed tons of hay and manure from the stables to transform the installation into an immaculate 1000-bed hospital. The staff settled down to work through the devastating buzz bombings that followed.



EVACUATION CHAIN *10 Links* TO LIFE

By the time France was totally liberated and Allied Armies were well on their way to Berlin, there was sufficient elbow room on the Continent for the Medical Service's 10-link chain of evacuation to function in all its varieties.

The basic chain: (1) company aid men (2) litter bearers (3) battalion aid stations (4) division collecting and clearing stations (5) field hospitals (6) evacuation hospitals (7) hospital trains, planes and ships (8) general hospitals (9) convalescent hospitals (10) general hospitals in the United States.

Company aid men, litter bearers, ambulance drivers and battalion aid personnel—all combat Medics—rank high among the heroes of this war. Tales of their heroism were recorded daily. To the combat soldier,

some are legendary figures. But still they weren't recompensed with additional combat pay, a fact that Gen. Hawley long fought to change. Cartoonist Sgt. Bill Mauldin pegged the situation with a drawing captioned, "Ya don't get combat pay, cause ya don't fight." Yet, more than 2000 combat Medics died from D-Day to V-E Day.

An infantry lieutenant told this story: "We were pinned down by a machine gun nest. One of the boys, against orders, went after it and at the same time the Germans laid down a heavy barrage. The guy got hit. Next thing I knew our Medic was out after him and one of the doughs was with the Medic. It was a miracle that they ever got him back without all of them being killed. I turned them both in for the Bronze Star. The dough got it, but the Medic didn't because he was only doing his duty."

Three Medics with the 5th Armd. Div.—Pvt. Transito E. Sandoval, Trinidad, Colo.; Pvt. Raymond L. Anderson, Washington, D. C.; and Pvt. Stephen Znof, New Bedford, Mass.—received Silver Stars after driving an ambulance through heavy enemy small arms fire to rescue two men left behind in a burning building from which infantry had withdrawn.

A combat Medic with the 5th Medical Bn., Pvt. Harold A. Garman, Albion, Ill., received the Congressional Medal of Honor. His unit was evacuating three severely wounded men in an assault boat across the Seine when machine guns opened up. Disregarding personal danger, Garman plunged into the river,



**Chief Surgeon:
Gen. Hawley**



**Operating Room,
Field Hospital**





ANC, Always On The Job



Evacuation Hospital, France

swam directly into the withering fire and towed the boat to safety.

T/5 John Hoglund, Providence, R. I., wears a Purple Heart and a Bronze Star. While under heavy fire, this Medic stayed on a bridge site with engineers for 17 hours, tending their wounds. Using only a pen-knife and sulfa drugs, he amputated a soldier's foot.

Col. Mc Fayden, 26th Inf. Div. Chief of Staff, said: "Combat Medics perform several times a day acts of valor which performed one time by an infantryman result in a military award."

Pfc R. G. Conway, 379th Inf., wrote the following which appeared as an editorial in *The Stars and Stripes*:

The second platoon of Able Co. was flushing out some houses in a German town. A call rang out. "Medic!" Out he came, disregarding any danger to himself. On both arms he wore the red cross which was his only weapon. He ran a few feet, then stumbled and fell. Word passed up and down the line. Soon everybody knew that we no longer had a Medic. The boys remembered the many times he had helped them. He was cool, calm, and above all, a friend to everyone. And now he was gone, killed by a shot from a sniper.

Teamed with company aid men were litter bearers, who also performed heroically under many difficulties. In deep snows of the Hurtgen Forest and Vosges Mountains, they rigged skis on litters, often waded deep, swift streams with litters high above their heads.

To gain speed with their evacuations, litter bearers used sleighs, half-tracks, tanks, jeeps, hay racks.

Front-line doctors were in charge of battalion aid stations, first stop for litter bearers. Typical of these was Capt. Ed J. Hackett, 87th Cav. Recon Sqdn., whose posthumous award of the Distinguished Service Cross read: "On many occasions he went forward under enemy fire to aid wounded and evacuate. In September, in the woods near Malmaison, France, he went to within 10 yards of where the enemy was dug in to aid a wounded man. In doing so he was mortally wounded."

Leaving the aid station, wounded were transported by ambulance to collecting and clearing stations where they were tagged for urgent treatment or travel priority. Ambulances were in operation continuously. Much of the work was done at night and some drivers crawled along bomb-pocked roads following the glow of a cigarette cupped in the hand of an assistant driver walking ahead.

Not all the dangerous work was done at the front. T/5 John S. Lavino drove his ambulance out on a



wrecked pier to pick up an injured Canadian seaman. During the round trip of more than a mile, he was in constant danger of being washed into the sea. Lavino was awarded the Soldier's Medal.

Forward ambulance drivers transported patients either to field or evacuation hospitals. Field hospitals, compact mobile units working under tents, primarily were concerned with severely wounded, non-transportable cases. These units worked as far forward as a division clearing company to bring surgery closer to the battlefield.

To relieve unexpected strains on field and evac hospitals, special surgical teams, working out of auxiliary surgical group headquarters, rushed in to care for certain types of wounds. Each team had its specialty: orthopedic, thoracic, neurosurgical.

Maj. Tansley and his team, after following in the wake of the fighting forces, were ordered to relieve pressure on a field hospital during the Battle of the Bulge. The major didn't return to headquarters, but, as a PW, he cared for 240 wounded Americans imprisoned at Heppenheim. He worked with Capt. Lea W. Merrill, Berkeley, Calif.

Making the hazardous glider flight to Bastogne to give medical care to the wounded of the 101st Airborne were Maj. Lamar Soutter, Boston; Capt. Edward Zinschlag, St. Louis; Capt. Henry M. Hills, Jr., Iowa City; Capt. Foy Moody, Corpus Christi, Tex.; Sgt. John Knowles, St. Joseph, Mo.; T/5 Jack Donahue,



Newark, N. J.; T/4 Lawrence Rethwisch, Jersey City;
T/4 Clarence Metz, Chicago.

A 101st sergeant said: "The prettiest sight in the world were those docs gliding in. You've got to hand it to them—some of them never had been in a plane before. They saved a lot of lives in that church where they performed emergency operations all night after landing."

Evacuation hospitals were located a few miles back of the division clearing stations. These hospitals had 400 to 750-bed capacities and retained patients longer than did field hospitals. Semi-mobile, they kept up with the advance, moving into an area, erecting tents and receiving first casualties, all within a few hours.

During 3 drives when casualties were high, 10 to 12 operating tables were in use 24 hours a day. More than 10,000 operations were performed by the 2nd Evac alone during eight months on the Continent.

Men with minor wounds often returned to duty from the evacs, but others requiring additional treatment and long convalescence were sent to Com Z general hospitals by trains and planes. After Paris was liberated, hospital trains became a vital link in the evacuation chain. These trains, almost complete hospitals

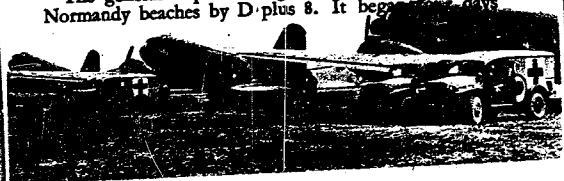
within themselves, made runs from battlefronts to rear line hospitals or evacuation ports.

Staffed by three officers, four nurses and 35 enlisted men, the trains had their own emergency operating room and pharmacy. Seven or eight ward cars transported litter cases and one or two coaches handled walking wounded. A litter type car accommodated 30 casualties, an ambulatory car approximately 50.

The first American hospital train to support the invasion was improvised from the French 40-and-8s. These cars were discarded when Cherbourg was opened and the modern trains arrived from England. Typical of the 47 trains built by the French and British for the U. S. Army Medical Department was "Old 27," staffed by Hospital Train Group No. 43. This outfit brought the first hospital train to the Continent, was first into Paris and Belgium with it, blazed the way into Germany.

At a press conference in May, 1944, Gen. Hawley went on record in favor of large scale evacuation by air. "We will evacuate by air to the maximum extent that airplanes become available for Medical Department use..." he said.

The general hoped to begin such evacuation from Normandy beaches by D plus 8. It began four days



sooner. Thousands of casualties were sent by air to England from fields just behind the lines. Others were returned to Paris to be flown on to the U. K. C-47s, after flying vital supplies to the front, took on patients, litters being fitted to collapsible racks. Twenty-four patients made each trip along with a surgical technician and a flight nurse.

Even more spectacular was trans-Atlantic air evacuation. Daily flights of the Air Transport Command's C-54 Skymasters took off from Paris to land in New York 30 hours later, making two stops en route. In the first seven and a half months, 3700 casualties made the trip to the States. More than 15,000 were evacuated from England before the Paris-New York run originated. Only one plane was lost. Sixteen to 18 patients were carried on these flights. When seriously wounded were aboard, flight surgeons accompanied surgical technicians and specially trained flight nurses.

Large-scale air evacuation could come only through progressive thinking and a willingness to try everything to insure early medical care. This was illustrated when 24 casualties, two glider loads, were evacuated from the Remagen bridgehead.

The idea for shuttling casualties across the Rhine to hospitals on the west bank aboard Stinson L1s came from an artillery observer-pilot who watched ambulances inch along through a bottleneck caused by a ponton bridge. The new plan was accepted immediately by Col. William H. Ampacher, Norman, Okla.,

First Army Surgeon's Operation Chief. Three planes were fitted with one litter rack each, leaving room for an ambulant patient to crouch behind the pilot. Stinson ambulance planes soon were handling more than 100 patients daily.

THAT GOOD SOLDIER — THE ARMY *Nurse*

ONE recipient of speedy evacuation opened his eyes for the first time after being hit to look into the smiling face of Capt. Beth Veley, San Jose, Calif., Chief Nurse, 103rd Evacuation Hospital. "You shouldn't be up this far. It's too dangerous," the wounded lieutenant said. He didn't know he was talking to a veteran of two sieges. Capt. Veley was one of the last nurses off Bataan and a month later was aboard the last plane out of Corregidor. It was women like Capt. Veley to whom Gen. Hawley referred as, "That good soldier—the Army Nurse."

Nurses were injured and killed as they attended fighting men. One morning, Lt. Frances Slanger, Boston, wrote *The Stars and Stripes* her impressions of the American soldier. She penned: "The wounded do not cry. Their buddies come first. The patience and courage they have is something always to behold." A German shell burst in the area and fragments



Lucretia Slinger. "I am dying," she said quietly, she was taken to the operating tent. She died half an hour later as bravely as the men she had nursed.

Lt. Slinger was the first American nurse to die from enemy action in the ETO. She and her companions had waded ashore in Normandy on D plus 4. Without stopping to change their wet clothes, the nurses went on duty in a field hospital.

Of 17,838 nurses in the ETO, four were killed in action, one taken prisoner, 17 received the Purple Heart, 194 were awarded the Bronze Star and 211 given the Air Medal.

Army nurses worked tirelessly—12 to 16 hours a day—as they followed advancing armies. Their work increased as a nurse shortage reached acute proportions. In 1940 a 1000-bed general hospital had 120 nurses. The number was cut to 105 in 1943, to 83 in 1944, to 74 in 1945 when five hospitals arrived on the Continent without any nurses to staff them.

Despite the urgent need for more trained nurses, standards did not drop. With Lt. Col. Ida W. Danielson, directing the ETO nursing service, they handled more patients, put in longer hours to insure the results of good surgery.

Good surgery was no myth. Amputations were fewer than in the last war. One reason for amputation is gas gangrene, a menace greatly curtailed by prompt surgery. Another is the new use of important blood vessels. A plastic tube was developed to splice arteries until secondary vessels could adjust themselves to the increased load.

In a hospital in England, 33 patients that might have died only a few years ago—who certainly would have died in the last war—fully recovered. These 33 men had bullets or shell fragments removed from their hearts or large vessels around the heart.

While the war raged in Europe, a civilian in New



York appeared in a collar advertisement, later in a Broadway play. He was a discharged veteran of the African campaign whose face had been half shot away. Painstaking plastic surgeons had restored his face; dental surgeons had set his jaw, wired his teeth. There was to be no Legion of Broken Faces in this war.

Backing the physician and surgeon in their fight to save lives were the miracle drugs, sulfa and penicillin, and the improved use of whole blood and plasma. The immediate use of the sulfa drugs, carried both in powder and tablet form by combat and company aid men, was greatly responsible for minimizing wound infection. Both sulfa and penicillin have powerful anti-bacterial action which prevents and reduces infection.

Plasma, although not a substitute for whole blood, is an invaluable supplement to it in combatting shock. It keeps circulation going and acts as a carrier for red corpuscles. Its full value was attained when a method for drying and packaging was discovered, thus making plasma simple to administer and possible to ship.

The story of whole blood is a saga. Said Gen. Hawley: "Whole blood saved the lives of thousands of Allied soldiers. I believe its use constitutes one of the greatest single improvements in medical technique over that of World War I."

On D plus 1, a refrigerator blood truck landed on Normandy beaches. Despite heavy enemy shell fire and danger from land mines, Cpl. Anthony P. Masanotti, Bridgeport, Conn., and Pvt. Jack M. Simmons,

Denver, began immediate delivery to medical installations. A second truck was landed two days later. When they were emptied, they were returned to the beach, reloaded and took off again.

By D plus 10, the advance blood bank detachment landed. Cpl. William H. Long, Germantown, Ohio, and Cpl. Theodore E. Armour, New York City, shared a foxhole with the blood refrigerator. Countless lives were saved by this early delivery of whole blood in those first few days. A regular delivery system soon was instituted. Danger was ignored. One driver had four tires shot away by enemy snipers in a single day. Another had his cab riddled with shrapnel while crossing a bridge at Carentan.

During an armored push, a field hospital moved in behind the tanks. When the tanks withdrew, the unit was surrounded by the enemy. Later, a blood truck attempted to reach the hospital but was stopped by an MP who warned the driver. But the truck rolled on—escorted by two Sherman tanks.

Blood was fired in shells or dropped by parachute to isolated units. Douglas Skymasters flew chemically preserved blood from the States to the ETO blood bank in Paris. Often this blood was life in the veins of a wounded man four days after leaving a donor in the States. Refrigerated blood was flown daily from England and special planes roared on to forward areas where refrigerator trucks delivered it to field evacuation hospitals.

One thousand pints were flown daily from the

States. American troops in France and England donated 600 pints each daily. Tremendous amounts of whole blood were used during the fighting on the Continent. Pre-invasion estimates, based on the Italian campaign in which one pint for every five wounded was used, proved low. Instead, one pint of blood was required for every two men who fell.

The ETO blood bank in England began operations in March, 1944. Five thousand pints of chemically preserved blood were ready for D-Day, but in the first months of fighting it was necessary to bleed slightly wounded men so that the severely injured could receive transfusions.

Medical installations from the front lines to the hospitals in England required an endless flow of medical supplies from the States. Months in advance, supplies were collected in England and arrangements made for shipment each day of the invasion.

Waterproofed, covered by canvas and loaded on skids, supplies were moved onto beaches with their "warehouses" around them. This ingenious plan not only protected many tons from the weather but also allowed them to be pulled from the water undamaged where they had been tossed by shell blasts.

As armies moved inland, medical supply depots leap-frogged along. Emergencies arose occasionally; certain supplies weren't available on the Continent. Requisitions then were cabled to the U. K., or the States, if necessary, and critically needed items were rushed by air.



"THAT MEN MEANT"

THE mission of the Medical Department is the conservation of manpower by furnishing the disabled with such aid as will speedily restore them to health and fighting efficiency.

Following hospitalization, each convalescent soldier engaged in a rehabilitation program beginning with moderate exercises and progressing to full participation in physical activities. In addition, patients participated in a full schedule of instruction in military subjects. The result: thousands of patients, on release, were ready to assume full duties immediately.

Preventive Medicine was partially responsible for lowering the over-all death rate. From the moment the soldier dons his uniform, he comes into the province of this branch. Military Occupational Hygiene, a division of Preventive Medicine, is responsible for

the adequate clothing, laundry and bathing facilities and cheerful environment of the soldier. It guards against such dangers as gasses in tanks and pillboxes, conditions in foxholes that can result in trench foot and other threats to health.

Preventive Medicine determined the army's nutritional needs. It set standards for food provided by the Quartermaster and for the drinking water that the Engineers chlorinate and distribute. Sewage and garbage disposal regulations also were established.

More spectacular was this branch's successful struggle against typhus—a disease which caused more deaths in previous wars than high explosives. This menace sprang from the filth and destruction within Germany late in the war. It was found among prisoners, labor battalions and in the Wehrmacht.

A line of defense more effective than the Maginot or Siegfried—a "cordon sanitaire"—was thrown up along the Rhine and Waal Rivers. Before crossing this line, all German civilians and displaced personnel were examined and dusted with DDT powder, deadly to the typhus bearing body lice. This powder was 100 percent effective in combatting typhus in Naples during the Italian campaign. Only two cases were reported among Americans, both medical officers working with the disease. Two other cases were found among soldiers recovered from German prison camps.

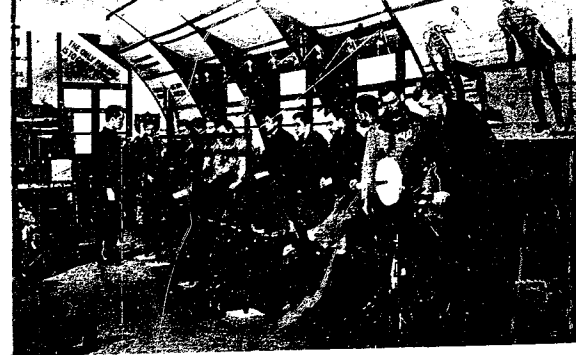
The success of the Medical Department in this war is due to the tremendous efforts of highly trained and specialized personnel in its various corps—medical,

dental, veterinary, sanitary, nurse, dietitian, physical-therapist, pharmacy and medical administrative.

Enlisted men, many of whom were entirely foreign to hospital work, were trained as surgical, medical, X-ray, dental, laboratory and sanitary technicians. Others became wardmasters, clerks, drivers, litter bearers and front line aid men.

Each Army in the ETO had its medical authority and responsibility lay in the hands of various key men—surgeons who supervised the medical installations under their command. Hospitals were scattered widely over France, Belgium, Holland, England and were grouped according to locale under base sections, each with a base section surgeon.

Gen. Hawley's office, maintaining supervision over this vast network, was composed of separate divisions



which coordinated in their ultimate aim. They were Dental, Intelligence, Hospitalization, Operations, Personnel, Preventive Medicine, Nursing, Veterinary, Field Survey, Historical and Professional Services, including the chief consultants in Surgery, Medicine, Dermatology, Neuro-Psychiatry, Plastic Surgery, Orthopedics and other specific branches of medicine and surgery. Included in those divisions was Supply without which none of the others could function.

This is the story of the Medical Service in the ETO. It is the story of the one phase of this war dedicated to the preservation of life rather than to death and destruction. It does not end with the last shot, the last skirmish, or the last casualty. It will continue until each of the wounded has recovered, until all of the sick are well, until the last man is sent home for final care.



PHOTOS U.S. Army Signal Corps, and Photo-Lab, Office of the Chief Surgeon, ETO. Printed by Paul Dupont, Paris.

