

1945

# The pictorial history of the 493d Armored Field Artillery Battalion of the 12th Armored Division in the European Theater of Operations

Paul H. Shepard

United States Army

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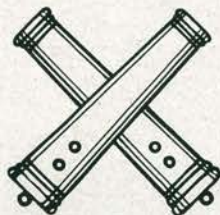
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*The*  
**PICTORIAL HISTORY**

*of the*  
**493 d ARMORED  
FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION**

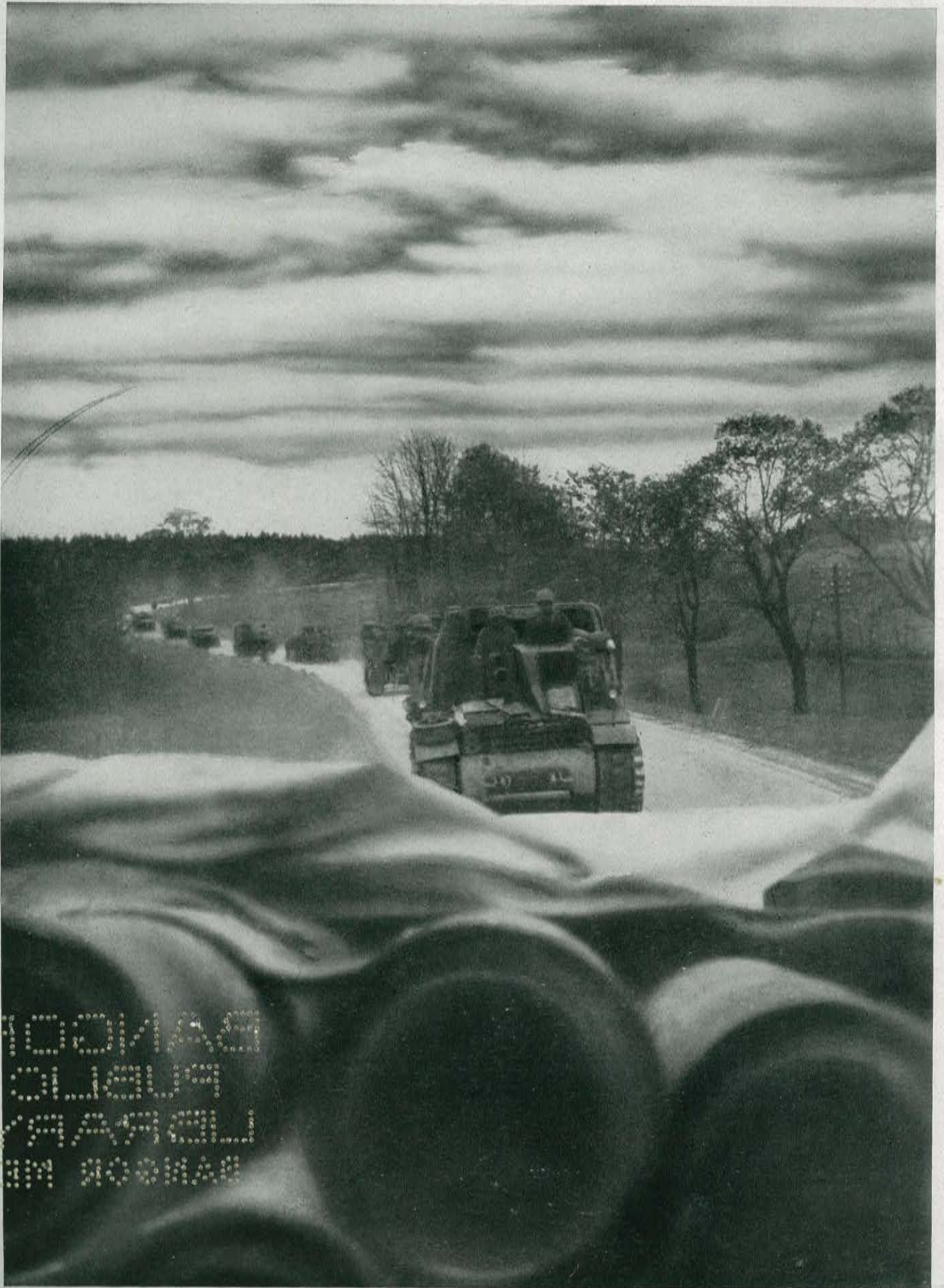
**OF THE 12th ARMORED DIVISION IN THE  
EUROPEAN THEATER OF OPERATIONS**



*Edited by*  
**Tec5 PAUL H. SHEPARD JR.**



*Written and Photographed  
by the Officers and Men of the Battalion*  
**1945**



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THIS BOOK,  
BEING NOT ALONE  
A HISTORY OF THE ACTION,  
IS A TRIBUTE AND OUR PLEDGE  
TO THE MEMORY OF THOSE GALLANT MEN,  
OF THE 493rd  
ARMORED FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION,  
WHO DIED FIGHTING.

Peter L. Varrone

Everette C. Carter

Sam Foster

Edward F. Maile

William F. Parker

Henry L. Marble

Emmett T. Elliott

# 493<sup>d</sup> PICTORIAL HISTORY

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MAP, ROUTE OF MARCH

HEADQUARTERS  
493D ARMORED FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION  
A.P.O. 262, U.S. ARMY

31 May 1945

SUBJECT: Commendation

TO : All Officers and Enlisted Men of the 493d Armored Field  
Artillery Battalion.

I wish to express commendation and appreciation for your spirit, aggressiveness and valor which you have so continuously displayed throughout your training and especially throughout your every combat mission.

From your first action near Weisslingen and through Singling, Ludweiler, Bischweiler, Brumath, Colmar and south, Singling, Etzlingen, Klein Rosseln, and on through Trier, Ludwigshafen, Wurzburg, Schweinfurt, Nurnburg, Dillingen and the Danube, Augsburg, Munich, Murnau and Oberau, all tasks were accomplished with magnificent leadership and initiative on the part of all personnel. Your outstanding devotion to duty and desire to see a job well done, commands much respect and reflects great honor upon yourselves and the 493d Armored Field Artillery Battalion.

Those who stood so gallantly beside you and have fallen during the trying hours are deserving of our highest honor. Their loss has been most keenly felt by all and they will be remembered by an entire nation and held in the highest esteem.

It is with the utmost pride in your accomplishments and most sincere appreciation of your efforts that I, who was privileged to command you in these operations, wish you every continued success whether it be in combat or in civilian life.

*Charles D. Hartman, Jr.*  
CHARLES D. HARTMAN, JR.,  
Lt. Colonel, F. A.,  
Commanding.





LT. COLONEL CHARLES D. HARTMAN, JR.

Entered service as Battalion Assistant Communications Officer of Hq., 16th FA Jan. 12, 1937. Was subsequently Battery Executive and LnO in the 16th FA. Served as Battery Executive, Battery Commander and S-3 in the 8th FA, and as Battery Commander, S-2 and S-3 with the 54th FA.

Became Executive and S-3 of the 493rd AFA 16th June, 1942, and assumed the duties of Battalion Commander, 494th AFA on the 12th August. Was Executive Officer of Artillery Command, and became Battalion Commander, 493rd AFA 28th April, 1943. Home town: Arlington, Virginia.



Lt. General Alexander M. Patch



Maj. General Roderick R. Allen

## THE COMMAND



Col. Charles V. Bromley / Lt. Col. Harry E. Lardin /  
Brig. General Riley F. Ennis



Colonel Charles R. Gildart



Major Robert E. Meier



Major Carl C. Morgan



Major Charles R. Oliver



Captain Delmar J. Hayter



Captain John W. Burtchaell



Chaplain Allen G. Dillon



Captain David M. Gordon



Lt. Howard W. Wright



Lt. Robert E. Lee

Battalion officers not shown above are Major Frederick W. Carstens and Captain William F. Murray

# KENTUCKY TO FRANCE

1942-1944



## THE FOUNDATION WAS LAID FOR A FIGHTING TEAM

The 493rd Armored Field Artillery Battalion was activated on 15 September 1942 at Camp Campbell, Kentucky as a part of the 12th Armored Division. Major General Brewer was designated as Division Commander and Major Barry D. Browne the Battalion Commander.

The cadre was strengthened on 24 October 1942 with the first replacements and the Mobilization Training Program was begun on 9 November 1942. On May 6, 1943 Colonel Barry D. Browne was transferred to the 11th Armored Division and Colonel Charles D. Hartman, Jr., became the Battalion Commander. The training program continued throughout the summer with much time during August spent on field problems. Orders were received on 2 September 1943 to move to the Second Army Maneuver Area in Tennessee for fall maneuvers. On 1 November 1943 the maneuvers were completed with a superior rating from the Army Commander for the Division. The Battalion then reorganized under the new Tables of Organization and moved to Camp Barkeley, Texas, on 9 November, 1943.

The Division was under command of the XXIII Corps at this time and numerous tests were given in preparation for overseas duty. On 20 July 1944 the readiness date was received, movement orders followed on 8 August, and

Major General Greene assumed command of the Division. The advance detachment left for the New York POE on 29 August and the Battalion followed on 9 November 1944. All preparations were completed at Camp Shanks, New York, and the Battalion boarded the U.S.S. General Bliss on 19 September. General Greene was transferred on 17 September and Major General Roderick R. Allen was designated as Division Commander. The Battalion departed for overseas on 20 September 1944, crossed the 30th Meridian Line on 27 September, and arrived in the European Theater of Operations. The U.S.S. General Bliss docked at Bristol, England, on 1 October and the Battalion moved to Tidworth Barracks, England, to begin preparation for the move to the continent.

The advanced detachment landed in Cherbourg, France, on 20 September and was occupied making preparations for the arrival of the Battalion. On 9 November the Battalion began movement in LST's to the continent, docking at Le Havre and on 17 November 1944 moved to an assembly area near Beaunay, France. On 29 November the Battalion was moved overland to Luneville, France, arriving on 1 December 1944. All preparations for combat were made and the Battalion was committed on 5 December 1944.

# BATTLE DIARY

Day and night with the Hellcats of the "Red" Artillery Battalion... The following chronicle is compiled from the daily S-2 reports between December 5, 1944, and May 4, 1945, five months of almost continual commitment to action. This is the official log of the men of Commancho in combat. It begins with the division's first battle near Sarreguemines, France, and records the incessant offensive and holding actions, during the bitter winter months, and the subsequent races across Germany.

The second gun section, Battery A, 493rd AFA, fired the Division's first combat round a moment after this picture was taken, near Weisslingen, France, December 5, 1944. This was the first of over 44,000 rounds of 105 M.M. ammunition expended by the Bn during the next 150 days.



Tuesday, 5 December 1944

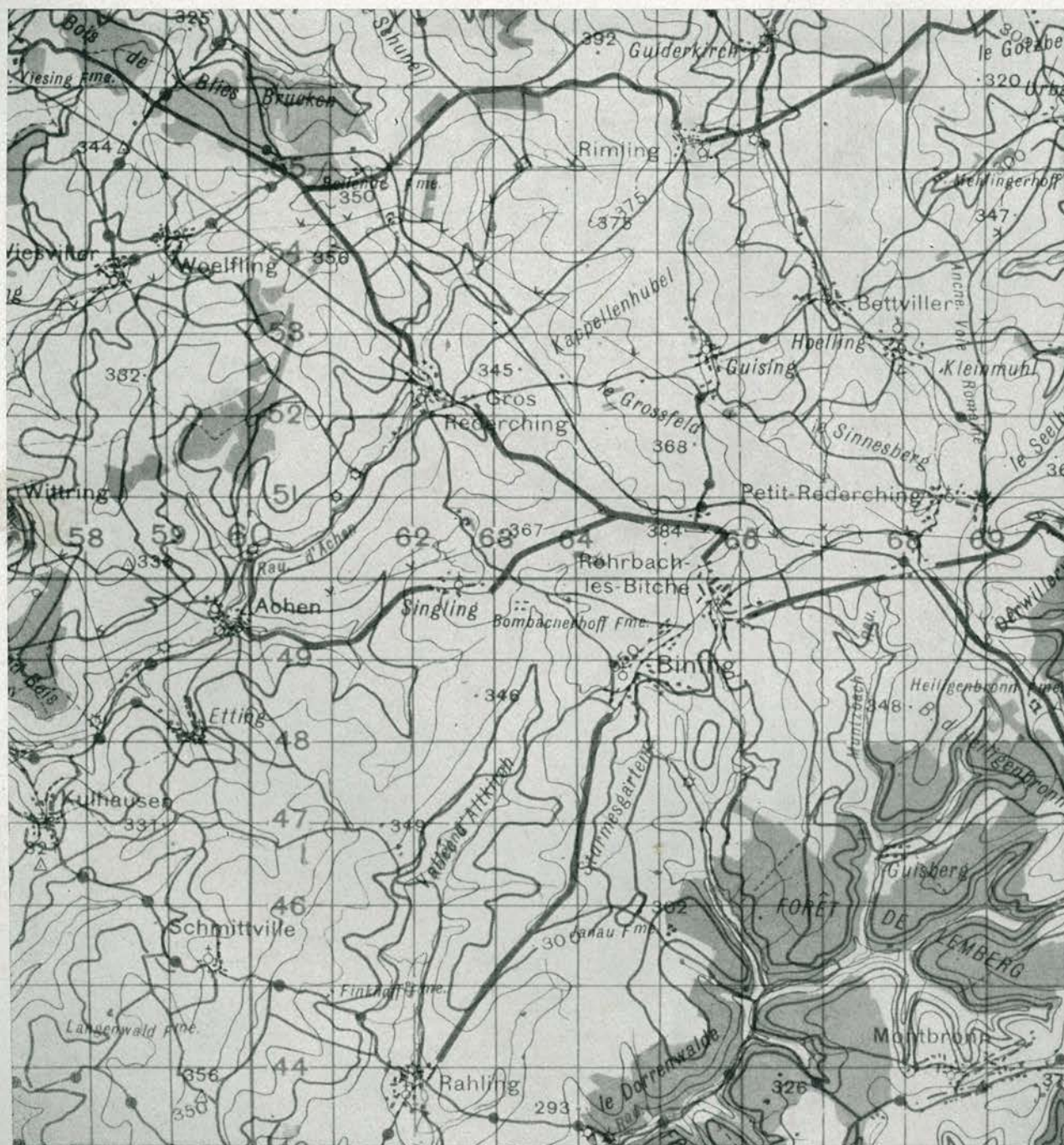
Battalion assigned mission of General Support of 44th Infantry Division Artillery. Departed Luneville, France, 0730, arriving Weisslingen, France, at 1630. First round fired by division was fired by 2nd section, "A" Battery, 493 Armored Field Artillery at 1635. Computed to have landed on Montbronn, France (coordinates 69-44 Map 1). A stalemate in firing was reported by 44th Inf and no other missions were fired. No contact with enemy by members of this battalion.

Wednesday, 6 December, 1944

FO details were sent for instructional purposes but Bn was alerted for move at 1030 and FO details were withdrawn before contact with enemy was made. Bn remained in position.

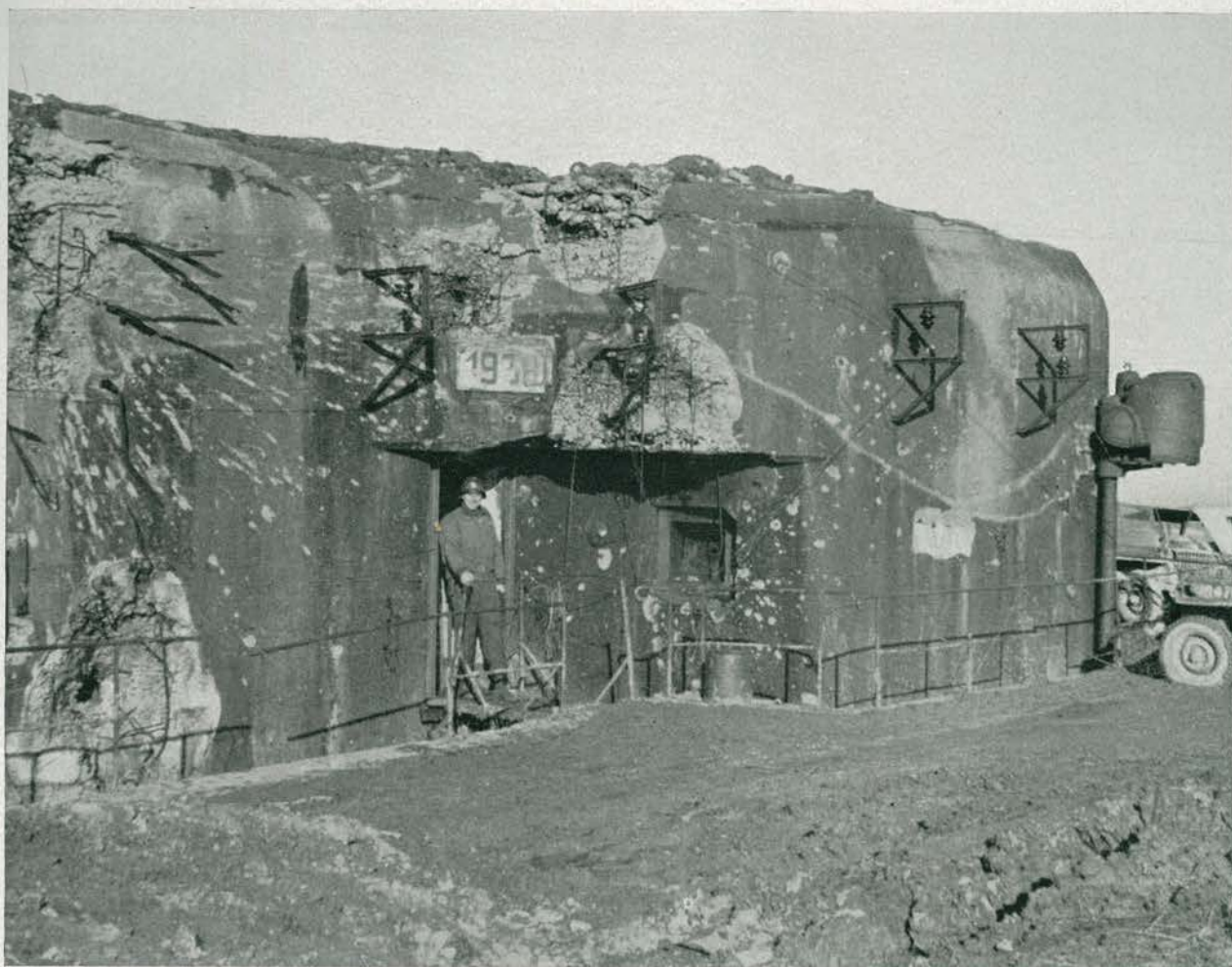
Thursday, 7 December, 1944

Bn ordered to rejoin Division Artillery. Displaced 0940. CP established at Rahling, France (62-44), at 1715. Batteries ordered to clear road to allow for withdrawal of relieved units. Bivouacued at 620-470.



MAP 1

The battalion's first battle area. A cold, tough, unwelcome segment of the Maginot Line which changed hands several times during the struggle against the German 17th SS Panzer Division.



Complete with showers, living quarters, air conditioning and moats, the Maginot forts were several stories deep and connected to each other by tunnels. Yet they failed to hold the ground, in spite of being placed on high hills, since this area changed hands several times during the winter. A few miles to the north, the Siegfried Line, almost as elaborate, featured rising gun turrets which sank back into the fort after firing.

#### **Friday, 8 December, 1944**

Batteries infiltrated to positions north of Rahling, and reported in position ready to fire 1145. Enemy artillery landed vicinity of CP. No casualties.

#### **Saturday, 9 December 1944**

Bn CP area received enemy artillery fire at 1140 and 1210 coming from approximate position 642-506. Lt. Bales evacuated due to hand injury.

#### **Sunday, 10 December, 1944**

Bn continued to support the attack for Rohrbach (658-498). At 1100 the attack was held up at Rohrbach by pillboxes, mines and 88 MM guns. Rohrbach captured at 1500.

#### **Monday, 11 December 1944**

Bn assigned mission of direct support of Force 1 (43 Tank Bn and 66 Armd Inf Bn). Force 1 attacked at 1000 to seize Guising (658-528). Attack was made with tank and infantry teams. It was stopped just west of Guising by anti-tank guns, mortar and arty fire. Many heavily fortified pillboxes were by-passed in the advance. Dark found our force just short of

the objective and they were forced to withdraw several hundred yards to secure their positions for the night. The attack will be resumed early Tuesday morning.

Bn displaced from Rahling, at 1030, to Singling, France (625-500), arriving 1215.

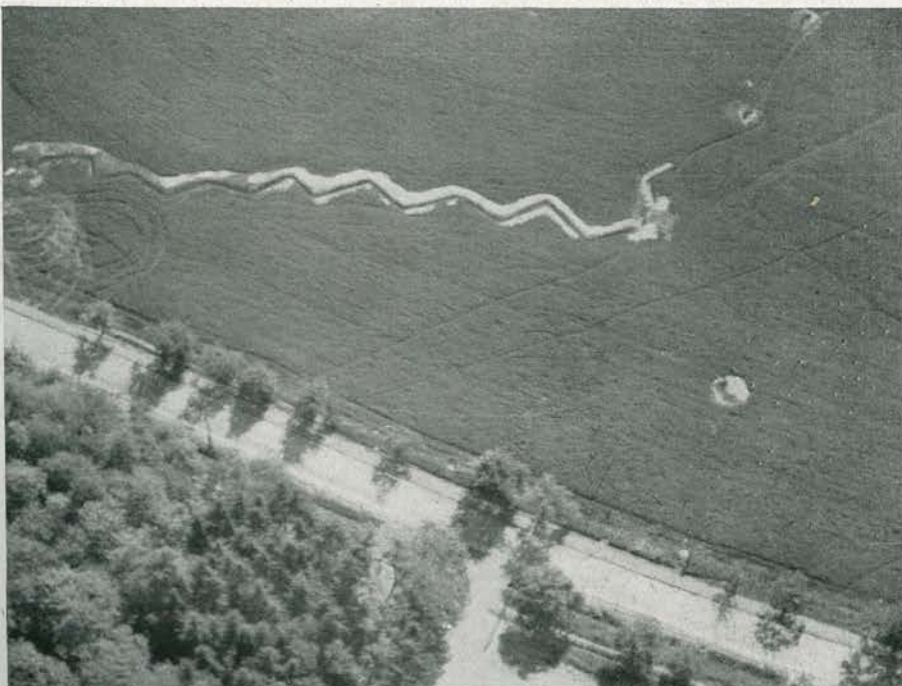
#### **Tuesday, 12 December, 1944**

Attack jumped off early this morning with the initial objective, Guising. The attack was successful and met only moderate resistance. Mines were encountered in Guising and held up the progress until noon. Guising was overrun and the attack moved on toward Bettviller (672-534), our main objective. Late this afternoon Bettviller was seized and secured by Force 1. This puts our forward elements within 2 miles of German border.

German elements were observed withdrawing to the NE late this afternoon and were pounded heavily with artillery fire. Improved observation and visibility allowed a maximum of support from the artillery. Enemy inf and observation posts were fired upon by our batteries this afternoon. Enemy Tiger tanks were observed



No man's land. Characteristically bare, and vaunting "dragon's teeth" and a banged-in pill-box



Slave - dug trenches — failed.



Two men of the 493rd were killed and three wounded by the shell which struck this house along a muddy street of Singling, France.



Investigating a "Kaput" Heinie tank.

operating north of our objective but refused to close with our tanks. Air was active for two short periods on our sector today and excellent results were obtained on enemy columns by dive-bombing and rockets this morning.

Today's operation cleared our forward elements of the main Maginot Line forts. These are 3000 yards north of our present position and are very elaborate, with connecting tunnels, living quarters, showers and lifting gun turrets.

Supported units having reached their objective and the enemy having withdrawn to the NE caused a lull on our sector today. No contact was made with the enemy, although front line troops received intermittent shelling from enemy artillery prior to noon. Our batteries fired unobserved fire on the reported location of the artillery and the firing ceased. Poor visibility prevented the firing of any observed missions. A short period of waiting may be expected.

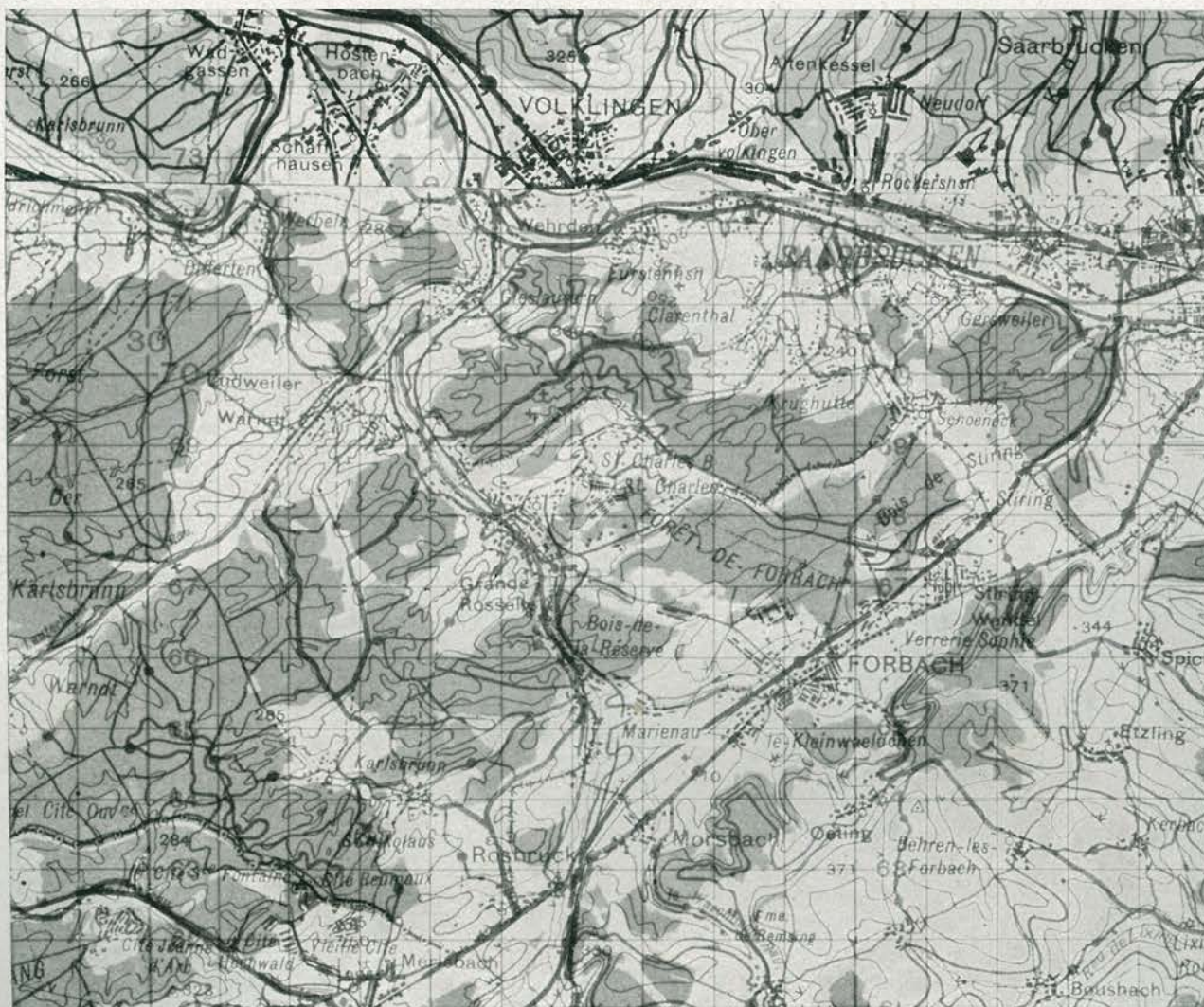
Force 2 of this division is operating on our right and made contact with the enemy. Enemy unit on our sector is the 11th Panzer Division.

#### Thursday, 14 December, 1944

The only contact with the enemy today was made by Div Recon elements in front of our sector. Our front line forces received artillery fire early today. We fired unobserved fire in reply and the firing ceased. Battery positions and CP were shelled by enemy light artillery at 1700 today. We received 7 casualties, three of which were evacuated.

#### Friday, 15 December, 1944

No contact was made with the enemy by supported units. Front line elements received artillery fire. We silenced the enemy fire with a battalion Time-On-Target. Liaison planes on reconnaissance this afternoon located an enemy



MAP 2

When the German offensive pushed American forces back into Belgium during the Bulge battle in the middle of December, the Allies retained only two tiny toe holds on Germany proper. One of these holds was the contested Ludweiler area where we supported the 106th Cav against violent enemy action. In the spring we assisted the 70th Infantry and our combat commands in battering the Krauts back through Forbach to the Saar River near Volklingen.

Pillboxes had to be eliminated one by one with "blockbuster" shells and bombs before the infantry could push through the Siegfried Line.



Machine Gun and adjusted "C" Btry. Excellent effect was reported.

#### **Saturday, 16 December, 1944**

The Bn relieved from combat duty. Displaced at 1230 from Singling, France, arriving in rest area at Wolfskirchen at 1745. Distance marched, 22 miles.

#### **Sunday, Monday, 17-18 December, 1944**

Bn remained in position at Wolfskirchen, performing maintenance on vehicles and weapons.

#### **Tuesday, 19 December, 1944**

Assigned mission GS of CCB. Displaced from Wolfskirchen, arriving in new position vicinity of Bettviller at 2200. Were shelled on road near Rohrbach at 1700. No one injured.

#### **Wednesday, 20 December, 1944**

CCB is composed of 56th AIB and 714th Tank Bn with the 66th AIB in reserve. Contact was made with enemy elements by our Recon patrols. MG, mortars and infantry were encountered in our sector. Lt. Wright and survey party received enemy mortar fire while attempting to establish a forward OP today. The 87th Div is operating on the left of CCB with the 44th Div still on our right. No gains were reported by either unit.

Our firing today consisted of a registration on a base point and firing 50 rounds of propaganda on Ormersweiler.

#### **Thursday, 21 December, 1944**

Remained in GS of CCB. No missions were fired until late this afternoon when several TOT's were fired in vicinity of Utweiler. Units of CCB attacked early this morning following closely behind a heavy artillery preparation, based on information furnished by patrols from

92nd Cav Rcn. The attack was very successful, gaining up to 2000 yards and yielding 80 prisoners. Due to the heavy artillery preparation our casualties were very low. This new drive puts elements of our forward lines within the German border. No gains were reported by units on our flanks.

#### **Friday, 22 December, 1944**

Some unobserved missions were fired late this afternoon. CCB made no attacks during the day, but 82nd Rcn elements were active and many prisoners were taken. Enemy encountered were digging in and resisting with MG, small arms and mortars.

#### **Saturday, 23 December, 1944**

Bn relieved of GS of CCB and assigned mission of Direct Support of 106 Cav Group. Moved from Bettviller to bivouac vicinity of St. Avold, France.

#### **Sunday, 24 December, 1944**

Occupied positions NE of Ludweiler, Germany (33-70, Map 2). No missions were fired due to lack of defilade.

#### **Monday, 25 December, 1944**

Enemy was inactive on sector of supported unit and few missions were fired. The 106 Cav Gp consists of 106 Cav, holding the north sector of our front and the 121 Cav Sq on the south (right) sector. This Cav Gp is a crack outfit with many hard fights to its credit. Col Wilson is CO for the Gp. Operating on the left of the Cav sector is the 95th Inf Div and on the right the 103rd Inf Div.

#### **Tuesday, 26 December, 1944**

Remained in position near Ludweiler. The enemy was very inactive on our sector today



One of many Maginot fortresses along the French-German border which offered extensive observation for recon parties and artillery observers. Its guns long inactive, this bunker no longer commands the hill, nor does the knocked out Kraut tank.

and our forward OP's fired at every presentable target. Our main targets were small inf parties, a RR train and vehicle activity. Good effect was reported on all observed missions. A Russian slave worker, apprehended by front line troops last night, gave us the location of two arms factories just west of the Rossel River. Additional fire was requested from Corps Arty, who fired 48 rounds of 8 inch howitzers on target. This afternoon we fired colored smoke to mark location of same target for Air to bomb. Late this evening the target area was still covered with smoke and results could not be observed.

#### Wednesday, 27 December, 1944

The enemy was more active on our sector today, and supported elements engaged the enemy in Volklingen (36-73). Small arms and MG fire was exchanged. Few casualties were inflicted by either force. Four rounds of enemy artillery fell on the CP of 106 Cav late this afternoon and wounded four men. Our targets for today were 50 enemy in building (an adjustment by S/sgt. Czeiner of "C" Btry resulted in 5 direct hits on bldg), enemy inf, a power house and RR cars.

Advance party of 242nd FA Bn, 105 towed Bn, arrived this evening. They reinforce our fire

while we remain in this position, and take over DS when we move out.

#### Thursday, 28 December, 1944

The sector of supported units was inactive today and due to poor visibility few missions were fired. An enemy patrol was fired upon this morning and Lt. Wolcott, operating an OP in front of our outpost line, made an adjustment on enemy infantry with excellent results. Late this afternoon we fired a few rounds at RR train on our west sector. Results could not be observed.

#### Friday, 29 December, 1944

The 242nd FA relieved this Bn of DS of 106 Cav Gp today. However the Bn remained in, and was assigned the mission of reinforcing fires of the 242nd until orders to join Div Arty arrive. The enemy remained inactive and retained a defensive attitude. Missions fired today consisted of an adjustment on enemy in buildings this afternoon.

#### Saturday, 30 December, 1944

Bn continued reinforcing fires of 242nd FA. Poor visibility and lack of activity resulted in



Stripped forest, "ploughed" ground and pillbox after artillery preparation.

few missions being fired. Harassing fires were fired during the night. CP moved to rear, for better security, and is now located in Lauterbach, Germany (283-660). Div has been withdrawn from front line, placed in reserve and will be committed in case of an enemy offensive. This Bn will rejoin the Div when it is committed. Reports of enemy paratroopers being dropped behind our sector had not been confirmed late tonight.

#### Sunday, 31 December, 1944

15 harassing missions were fired last night. Poor visibility and lack of activity resulted in only one other mission being fired.

A PW stated that a company (estimated strength 150 men) was to attack our positions night of Dec 31-Jan 1. Attack to be launched in vicinity of Hostenbach (335-745) or south of Gieslautern (346-710). The 242nd FA and 493 AFA plus Corps Arty opened up at 2300 in an effort to prevent the expected attack. Approximately 2330 the attack was under way. Three FO tanks were sent to Ludweiler to support the Cavalry. The New Year came in with our Bn shooting hot lead at the Nazis. At 0130 we were shooting at targets on this side of the river. Bn was alerted at 0220, Jan 1, with "B" and "C" displacing immediately. "B" was pulled off the road and set up firing positions in rear of CP. The attack seemed to be halted by 0400.



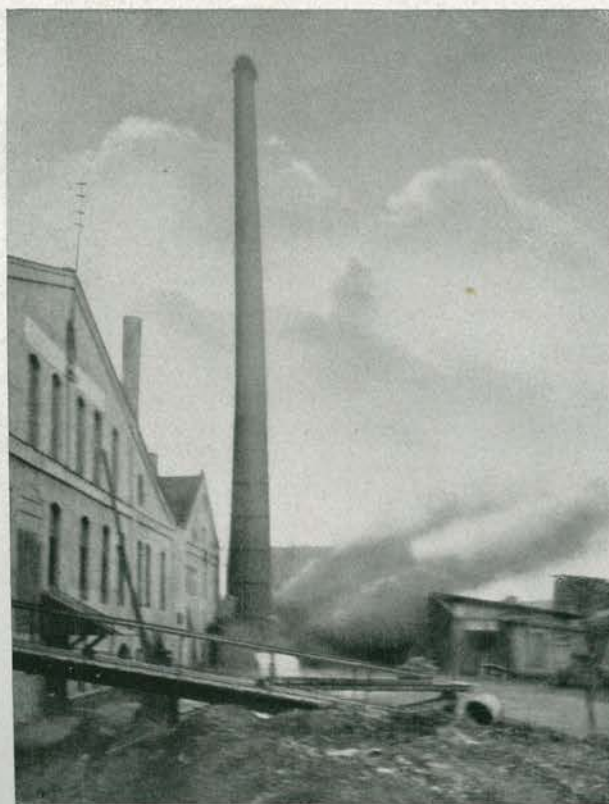
The 66th brings 'em back through our positions.

### Monday, 1 January, 1945

The enemy force which attacked our sector last night has been estimated by GP Hqs to have been made by about 400 men in the north and about 200 to 400 men on the south. The main forces hit in the vicinity of Hostenbach in the north and Petite Rosell (approx 364-692) in the south sector. 121st Sq withdrew from the bridgehead after a hard fight and reformed its line along the Rosell River. It has been holding fast there all day. The 106 Sq was hit in more strength and fought a stiff delaying fight throughout the day. Late this afternoon they were holding firm just north of Ludweiler.

This Bn fired over 1400 rounds of ammunition during the attack with good results reported by front line troops. Other firing Bns opened up with normal barrages and other prearranged fire on possible areas of approach during the early stages of the attack, and fired unobserved missions called for until 0400 when the attack slowed down. Just before noon the enemy again attacked and many observed missions were fired. Late this afternoon smoke was fired on Gieslautern to mark it for air support to bomb. Darkness found the 106th fighting desperately to hold Ludweiler. The fighting slowed down after dark and our forces were holding fast but contact had been lost with elements of the 95th Div, which had sent a Bn of inf to attack and secure the high ground to our NE. Early this evening they had not succeeded in taking their objective.

Both ME 109 planes and P-47's with German markings were used by the enemy to support the



An obvious landmark begins to topple, its base shattered by TNT and the efforts of our engineers

attack. Paratroops dropped behind our lines are believed to have landed near Piesen and are perhaps wearing civilian clothes. The enemy succeeded in gaining about 2000 yards along our entire north sector but paid for every yard in blood, meeting stubborn resistance all the way. Few prisoners were taken by our forces but extremely heavy casualties were inflicted with many enemy killed and wounded. The casualties of our supported units were not excessive.

### Tuesday, 2 January, 1945

The 106th Cav's lines held fast throughout the night, north of Ludweiler, and they launched a counterattack early today. The attack met only limited resistance until noon when the assault of the hill 1200 yds north of town was attempted and our forces met heavy enemy fire. An artillery preparation was called for and a heavy concentration from our firing batteries and those of the 242nd FA succeeded in neutralizing the enemy completely. The Cav went in, mopped up and seized the hill.

At 1330 Bn received orders to join the 44th Inf Div Arty at Herbitsheim, France. We were assigned mission of reinforcing fires of 156 FA Bn. Survey and registration was not possible and no missions were fired during the night.

The 44th Inf was hit hard by both tanks and inf on the night of Dec 31 and has been under attack constantly for two days. They were forced to withdraw on most of their sector and many front line companies suffered heavy losses. The 2nd Bn of the 253rd Inf Regt, a part of the 63rd Inf Div, was called in to assist the 44th. 2400 found all units under heavy pressure with another enemy attack under way.

### Wednesday, 3 January, 1945

Bn was assigned mission of observing for 2nd Bn, 253rd Inf and continued to reinforce 156th FA. The enemy attacked hard on the right of our sector and during the early morning forced a penetration in our lines which reached to Achen (598-495, Map 1). Heavy fighting was reported along our entire sector. At 1300 Bn was relieved of observation for 253rd and assigned mission of observing for the 2nd French Armored Div in an attack on the Achen salient to seize Gros Rederching (622-522). Capt. Murray with detail was assigned as Liaison Officer. Lt. Carlson and Sgt. Boland, of "B" Btry, were provided with tank crews as FO's and Sgt. Foster of "A" Btry as Inf FO. The French attacked late this afternoon and reached their objective early this evening. A group of enemy inf were by passed and cut off in Achen. This attack brought contact with the Div on our right and made our front more secure. Early night activity of the enemy was limited to patrol action.

The enemy units attacking on our sector are the 37th and 38th Regts of the 17th SS Panzer Div.

### Thursday, 4 January, 1945

Several TOT missions were fired. At 1100 a heavy concentration of enemy arty fell on a

friendly truck column NE of our position. We fired counter-battery on three suspected enemy btry locations and the enemy fire ceased. Late this afternoon "A" Btry adjusted on an enemy mortar position. The fire for effect flushed 200 infantrymen out of the woods. "B" and "C" were brought in and a total of 150 rounds were fired on the target with good results reported. Harassing fires were scheduled for the night.

Supported inf units made limited gains throughout the day and reorganized their lines. An attack is planned for tomorrow on our right sector to secure our lines and make connection with the 100th Div. The 2nd French Arm'd Div withdrew from the front today and our Ln and FO parties were ordered in.

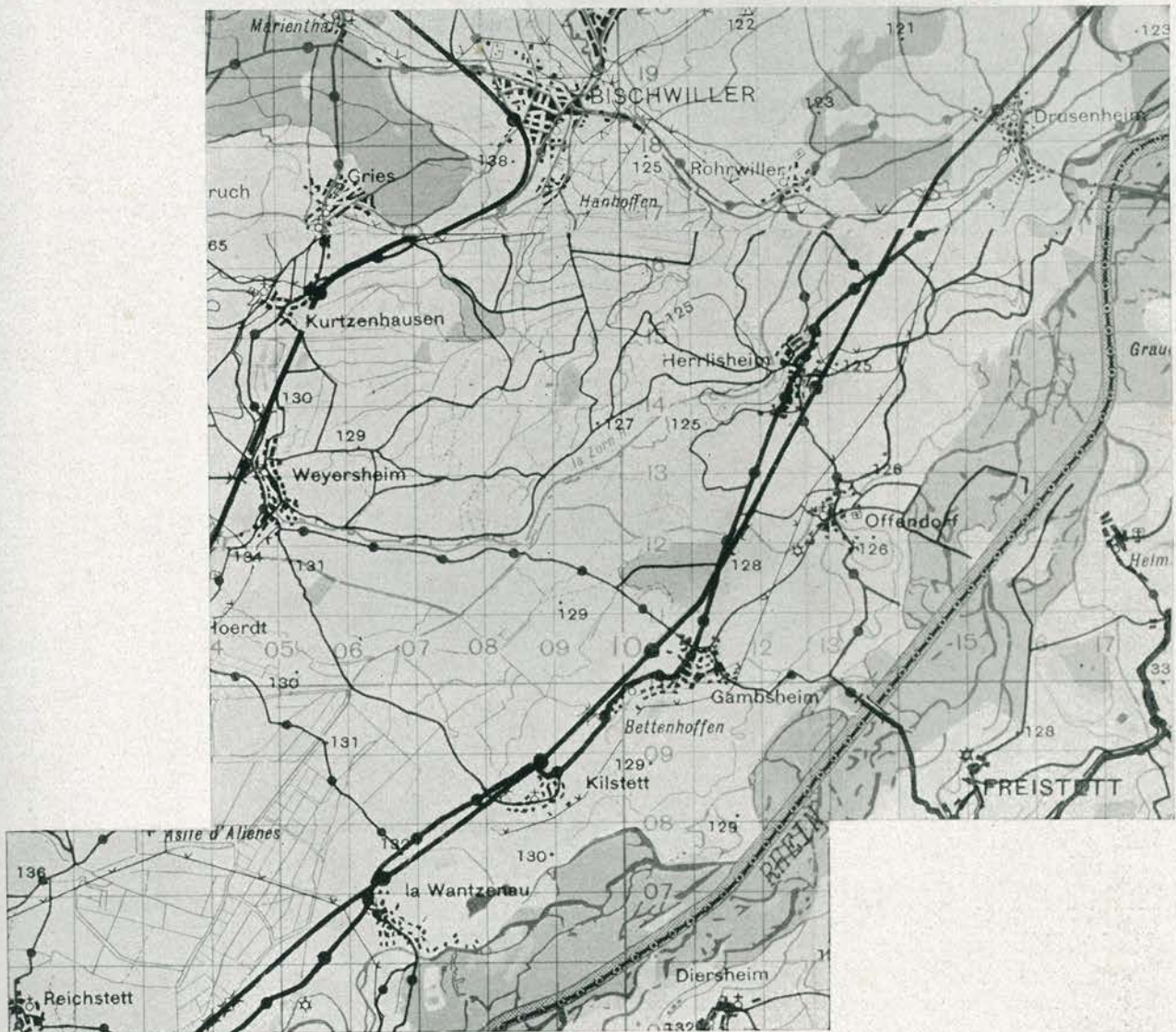
The 2nd Bn of the German 38th Inf Regt made the attack on Achen with estimated 600 men. But the Krauts were so heavily hit by

artillery and mortar fire that only 150 men reached their objective. They were cut off by the French attack. Yesterday and early today the 253rd Inf launched an attack on Achen and succeeded in killing or capturing most of this force.

**Friday, 5 January, 1945**

The enemy was inactive on the sector of supported units and few missions were fired during the morning. The 253rd Inf cleared Gros Rederching and restored our lines.

At 1300 Bn received orders relieving it of mission and ordering it to displace to Lauterbach, Germany. Mission: DS 106 Cav Gp. Advanced parties, including M-7's moved out and made the march under adverse weather and road conditions. Some harassing missions were fired during the night using map data.



MAP 3

The bloody battleground where the consensus of opinion places the Division's bitterest fight. The Germans threw powerful forces across the Rhine near Gamsbsheim in an attack that was intended to link up with the Colmar salient toward the south and crush Strasbourg in between. To the north, the bastions of Hagenau and Hatten were famed by their American defenders of the 79th Inf and the 14th AD. The 12th Armored's sacrifices in this area contributed largely in saving Strasbourg.



Item: German looses head over Naziism.

#### Saturday, 6 January, 1945

The front lines have remained static for several days. The 121st Cav Sq is holding firm the ground west of the Rossel River. In the north, the 106 Cav holds from the north of Ludweiler to the NW to Werbeln (317-720). Due to poor visibility and enemy inactivity the only missions fired today were a registration and a few harassing missions.

The attack launched by the enemy on New Year's Eve was made by two Bns of the 861st Regt. These two Bns were so completely destroyed during the attack that the third Bn never launched its planned attack, which was to follow the first two Bns the rest of the night.

#### Sunday, 7 January, 1945

Bn remained in support of 106 Cav Gp with few missions being fired during the morning. PW's gave the location of an enemy Bn and Company CP. A Bn TOT was fired at these targets.

At 1300 the order was received for Bn to re-join Div. Ate supper at the halt while waiting to join Div march column. The march was made under extreme weather conditions with temperature far below freezing and a blinding snow falling most of the way. Midnight found the Bn still on the road.

#### Monday, 8 January, 1945

Bn arrived in Bastendorf and remained until noon when the order was received to move to Bischwiller, France (09-18, Map 3), and join CCB. Bn arrived in Bischwiller, occupied firing positions, but was unable to register prior to darknees.

#### Tuesday, 9 January, 1945

A few rounds of heavy enemy artillery fell on our positions during the night. No damage re-

ported. At 0900 Bn assigned mission of reinforcing the 494 AFA Bn. The mission of the 494 DS of CCB.

CCB attacked yesterday against the bridghead of approximately 1000 Germans that have crossed the Rhine to our east. Due to blown bridges tanks were unable to cross the Moder River (12-17) and the attack was held short of the town of Herrlisheim (12-14), which was set fire by our artillery and tank fire late yesterday.

Today the attack was resumed and a combination tank and inf team captured Herrlisheim. This afternoon, over 100 PW's were taken and many Germans were killed in the attack. Enemy aircraft were out today and strafed friendly elements near Bischwiller. No casualties reported. The enemy has been much more active with artillery fire on this front for the last few days, using heavy as well as medium and light. On the main front to the north the enemy launched an attack at 1300 today, and succeeded in breaking through our front lines with tanks and half tracks to the town of Hatten. At 1800 the attack had been halted with nine enemy tanks destroyed.

Enemy making the attack on the Rhine bridghead are elements of the 21st Panzer Div, 405th Adm Div and 81st Tng Bn. It is believed the enemy will continue to build up the bridghead to the strength of one or more divisions and attempt to attack from the bridghead in the direction of Haguenau at the same time a major drive is launched from the north.

#### Wednesday, 10 January, 1945

Bn continued to reinforce the fires of the 494 AFA which remained in DS of CCB. Elements of the 56 AIB which crossed the Moder River and attacked the town of Herrlisheim succeeded in taking the northern part of the town and more tanks from the 714th Tank Bn were sent forward early today to help secure the town. Heavy en-





Cautions elements of our column spearhead enter a village.

emy artillery fire was encountered and AT guns opened fire on the tanks north of town, preventing any of the tanks from entering. Elements of the 56th that had remained in the town throughout last night were under heavy pressure and many casualties were suffered.

Due to the level terrain and large amount of enemy artillery being used, every attempt to enlarge our forces was met with a heavy barrage. Forces that had succeeded in reaching the town were under constant pressure during the day and due to the enemy artillery it was impossible to evacuate the many casualties that had been inflicted on our troops. Darkness found them under heavy attack and in a poor defensive position, with the enemy pressure building up. The

only escape route is across a Bailey Bridge several thousand meters north of the town and the entire route subject to heavy artillery and direct AT fire.

A few hours after dark orders were given for a withdrawal of all the forces in Herrlisheim to the west bank of the Moder. Artillery barrages were prepared to cover the withdrawal. At 2325 the first of the barrages was fired and our forces started to move north from the town toward the bridge, heavily loaded with casualties and under heavy pressure from two sides by enemy fire.

The 79th Inf, holding the main front to the north, had restored its lines after the armored breakthrough yesterday and reported many enemy tanks and HT destroyed. The First French



Poc-marked field where the Germans caught hell.

Army, holding along the Rhine River to the south, reported no new progress.

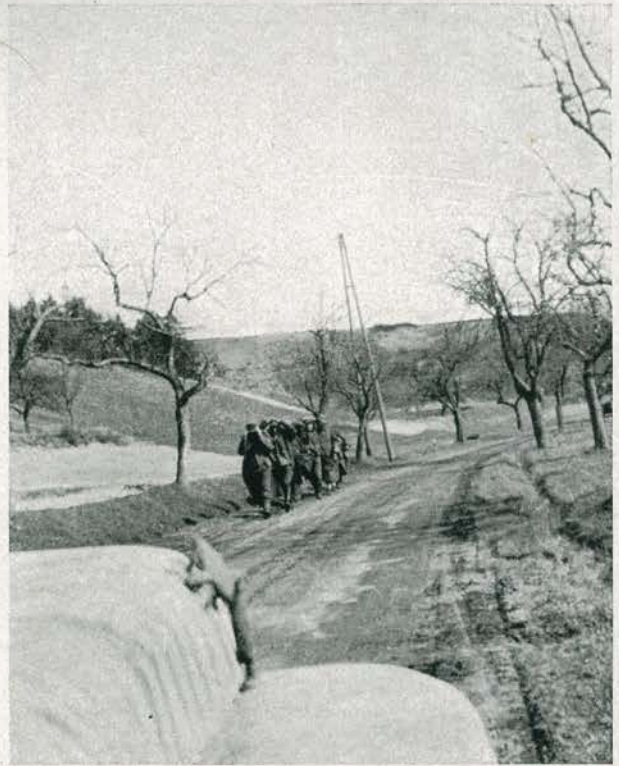
#### Thursday, 11 January, 1945

Very heavy concentrations of artillery were fired to protect elements of CCB during their withdrawal from Herrlisheim. With artillery protection our forces were able to withdraw in a few hours and take up new positions west of the river. The German forces holding the Rhine bridgehead proved to be in much greater strength than was anticipated and the attempt to dislodge them from the town proved to be a costly venture in men and equipment. Many of our tanks were destroyed and a large number of our infantry were killed, wounded or missing. All our forces gave a good fight to the enemy and inflicted many casualties, but the enemy proved to be in too strong a force.

The weather was a great obstacle in any operation today with the temperature below freezing and visibility limited to a few hundred yards. All planes were grounded. Late today patrols from the 92 Cav were sent forward to Herrlisheim and reported the enemy to be digging in along the canal just west of the town. Due to poor visibility and lack of contact with the enemy few missions were fired by our batteries today. Early this evening enemy artillery began to pound our positions from the SE and rounds of 150 MM fell at intervals throughout the night. Counter battery measures were put into operation but results were not evident.

#### Friday, 12 January, 1945

No change in position was made. The heavy artillery that landed on our positions during the early part of last night ceased at 2300. Corps Arty fired a sound registration as counter-battery and no more heavy has fallen. 75 MM HE fell during the night with over 200 rounds landing



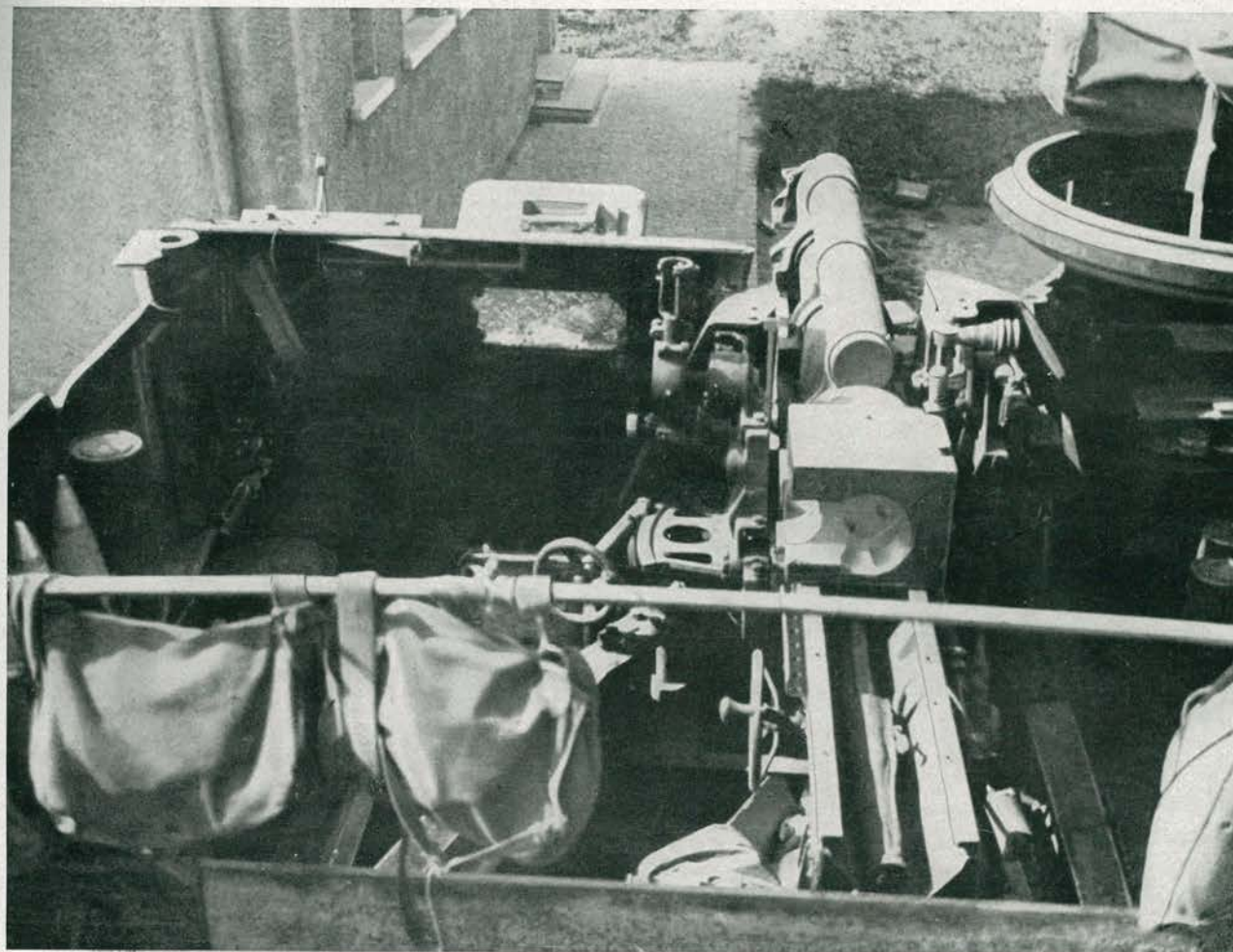
Finished Wehrmacht head for the rear without a guard.

on and near our positions. This fire is believed to be from roaming guns on this side of the Rhine. Enemy activity was limited to patrols and an attempt to repair a foot-bridge across the Moder River. Lt. Evans, Bn FO with the 56 AIB called for a Bn TOT on the bridge. Result: no more bridge building party.

A smoke mission was fired this afternoon to allow supported inf elements to advance to better defensive positions. Failure to coordinate the



Liberated Frenchmen line the roads toward home.



493rd cannoneers' place of business for almost three years

missions resulted in the infantry not advancing and it was necessary to wait for darkness to make the advance, reports being received late tonight that the new positions have been occupied.

Temperature remained below freezing and visibility limited.

#### **Saturday, 13 January, 1945**

Visibility cleared and many missions were fired by the air observers. The main targets were enemy infantry and vehicles. Enemy artillery remained inactive except for a few rounds of heavy shells which fell on Bischwiller.

The 79th Div assisted by attacking elements of the 14th AD made some progress in an attack against the enemy salient on the north near Hatten. They reported very stubborn resistance. The enemy was still attacking in small forces against the lines of the 45th Div to the NW of our sector.

#### **Sunday, 14 January, 1945**

The enemy remained inactive except for a 50 man patrol which infiltrated our lines. Aerial observers report continued signs of digging in and they adjusted fire on three vehicles, knocking out two of them. The front lines remain unchanged.

**NOTICE!** Bn has received warning to be on the alert for a possible enemy attack tomorrow, January 15.

The corps front remains very active with strong resistance all along the nose of the Bitche salient. The enemy continues to use heavy patrols, mortar and artillery fire on all sectors. At 2200 the Germans launched a three pronged drive with unknown numbers of tanks and infantry aimed at Hatten.

#### **Monday, 15 January, 1945**

The enemy was inactive on the bridghead to our east. Visibility was poor and the weather remained below freezing. Late this afternoon the long awaited order to attack was received. The 493 was assigned DS CCA which consists of 66th AIB, 17 AIB, 43 Tk Bn and elements of 119th Engineers and 92 Cav. Forward observers and Liaison parties were sent out. The outline of the operation calls for a coordinated attack with CCB attacking just after midnight from the north, objective Herrlisheim. CCA will attack prior to daylight and seize the Steinwald Forest (10-11) and town of Offendorf. At 1030 tonight firing batteries started firing a preparation in the sector of CCB's operation.



The walled cities made good fortresses — when the Germans had time to get ready.

The 1st French Army is to attack at 0930 and seize the town of Gamsheim. (11-10)

The enemy made two attacks today on the sector to our north. The first one was launched with infantry and tanks on the town of Hatten, the other at 0545 in the same area. Those attacks were met by elements of the 14th AD. Latest reports tonight stated that the situation was under control.

#### Tuesday, 16 January, 1945

493 AFA assumed its mission of DS of CCA when the initial attack jumped off early this morning. "A" and "C" companies of the 66th, coming east from Weyersheim (05-13), started the advance for the Steinwald Forest, which was the first objective. Approximately 300 yards from the woods the doughboys received cross fire from machine guns dug in. Hitting the ground, the men remained pinned down as the Germans built up their machine gun, rifle and artillery fire. Our troops called for artillery but apparently it was not sufficient as enemy fire continued to strafe our men. Smoke was then called for, and under this protective cover the infantry withdrew approximately 1500 yards to the west. Of the two full-strength companies making the advance, 75 men had withdrawn safely. Others are expected to show up and one officer reported seeing about 100 others along the road. Although losses are heavy it is believed that the first reports will be greatly reduced when the final count is in. "A" Btry's RO team of S/Sgt.

Foster, PFC's Cox and Kennely are reported as missing.

Meanwhile "A" and "C" companies of the 43 Tk Bn had advanced to the open area north of the woods being followed by the 17 AIB. They received no fire and maneuvered around in this area for an hour or longer. As if by signal, AT guns opened up on them. Lt. Bales made two adjustments on 88's, knocking out the 88 in each case. Our FO's report nine of our tanks burned out, including the FO tanks of Lt. Bales and Lt. Carlson. Both tank crews escaped without injury. After sustaining these losses the 43rd withdrew to the west. The 17th, being some distance in back of the tanks, withdrew intact.

On the CCB sector the 56th AIB jumped off and soon advanced some 600 yards. Continuing the attack toward their objective of Herrlisheim, they met increased resistance. 400 yards north of Herrlisheim contact with the right flank company was lost and the left flank company withdrew. Later the right flank company withdrew also. To our south the French met heavy resistance and were stopped 400 yards south of Gamsheim.

To sum up the day's activities; for the newspapers — we made a planned withdrawal; for the men — we took one hell of a beating!

#### Wednesday, 17 January, 1945

CCA resumed the attack at 0430 with Co "B" 66th inf and one Co of engineers, supported by tanks, jumping off to seize the Stainwald Forest. Some 200 yards short of the woods, the inf received machine gun and rifle fire, pinning them down. The engineers were engaged in attempting to clear a mine field so the tanks could advance. The mine field was protected by mortar fire and the mines were frozen in the ground, making it impossible for the engineers to succeed. Finding their position untenable, the inf withdrew to their jumping off point, being followed by the engineers and tanks.

The 17 AIB and 43 Tank Bn jumped off for their objective, Herrlisheim. They succeeded in taking three quarters of the town before noon. Early in the afternoon the Germans counter-attacked strongly from the NE, east and SE. Heavy artillery fire stopped this attack within a few hundred yards. Tonight, we hold the southern half of Herrlisheim. This force captured 200-500 PW's.

To our north, CCB attacked to the SE. After advancing 1000 yards they were stopped by heavy mortar and machine gun fire. By mid-morning they had withdrawn from the attack. The attack was resumed at noon and met with initial success. However AT, mortar and MG fire soon opened up and CCB withdrew under a smoke concentration fired by the 493 AFA.

Lt. Carlson had his second tank in two days knocked out, escaping injury each time. Lt. Bales has not reported his location since early morning. Lt. Hill received rifle wounds and was evacuated. Cpl. Moore, "A" Btry took over from

Lt. Hill and is doing an excellent job. Lts. Wolcott, Evans and Goeman were recalled for a rest. "C" Btry's RO team is out of action. While advancing with Co "B" 66th Inf, Penney was injured by mortar fire. Lt. Arbuckle and Cpl. Beckman went to his aid and succeeded in pulling him into a trench where first aid was administered. Another mortar shell then injured Lt. Arbuckle and Cpl. Beckman. Lt. Arbuckle and Penney were evacuated. No word yet from S/Sgt. Foster, Cox and Kennely.

#### Thursday, 18 January, 1945

At 0200 the Germans counter-attacked our position in Herrlisheim, bringing the CP of the 17th AIB under direct fire, overrunning and burn-

were reported to be in the town by 2255. Their occupation was of short duration however, as they were retreating by 0020, January 19.

#### Friday, 19 January, 1945

This morning reports of enemy tank and inf movements to the west were received. At 1500 they attacked with forces assembled in the Stainwald Forest. They moved west to within 1500 yards of Weyersheim. This force was engaged by the 23rd Tnk Bn, 66th AIB, 493, 494, and 495 AFA Bns plus P-47's from the TAC. Our FO's report that it was a first class show with our combined forces giving the Krauts a real thrashing. Lt. Evans reports that of 7 enemy tanks observed, 6 were burning. Capt. Murray



A German slave flees the area which was our target.

ing it. The Bn was cut off in Herrlisheim until 1500 at which time the 493rd laid down a smoke barrage and the 17th withdrew under this cover. The 66th, who were reinforcing the 17th, took up positions 400 yards SW of Herrlisheim and dug in. FO's Lt. Wolcott and Lt. Staffenauer were with the 23rd Tk Bn which was deployed in the open area bounded by Herrlisheim, the Zorn River and the Stainwald Forest. At dusk the 66th and 23rd withdrew to the west of the Zorn and took up defensive positions for the night. Contact with the 43rd Tk Bn has been lost for the past 24 hours.

To the north, CCB cancelled its plans for jumping off at 0950 but at 1500 two companies of the 92 Cav plus tanks attacked for the railroad grade crossing at 138-160. Stopping short of their objective by a few hundred yards, one Rcn Co plus Co "L" of the 314th Inf Regt dug in for the night. The second Rcn Co and the tanks withdrew to the vicinity of Rohrwiller. Germans counter-attacking for Rohrwiller at 2230

quotes a reliable source that 24 enemy tanks were knocked out in the battle, which covered an area 2000 by 4000 yards. The few remaining German tanks withdrew to the Stainwald Forest. While this tank battle was taking place other enemy tanks and inf advancing SW from Herrlisheim came into the rear of the 66 AI. Our inf then withdrew and took up positions west of the Waldgraben Canal.

It is reported that one Bn of the 314th Inf Regt is surrounded at Drusenheim (16-18). The 493 fired one mission in support of the troops there late tonight.

CCB's sector was quiet today. Co "L", 314th Inf Regt, pulled back into the woods at 14-17 and took up positions.

#### Saturday, 20 January, 1945

The front was generally inactive today except for small groups of enemy infantry digging in. They were the targets for practically all missions fired. Capt. Wilson, making a tour of the OP's,



The 66th digs in, in preparation for the jump off. Camouflaged German tank in rear burns as a result of a grenade.

observed Krauts in the open and adjusted fire on them. Results were very good. Late tonight the Germans, strength unknown, attacked in the vicinity of Weyersheim, but the attack was repulsed.

Latest word from the Drusenheim sector indicates that the Bn of the 314 Inf, which is surrounded in Drusenheim, is still intact and is infiltrating safely back through the German lines. All rumors concerning the return of various numbers of tanks of the 43 Tk Bn were without foundation as of 1300. Contact with this Bn has been lost since 17 Jan. Personnel of the 17 AI continue to report in with some turning up in the French sector to our south.

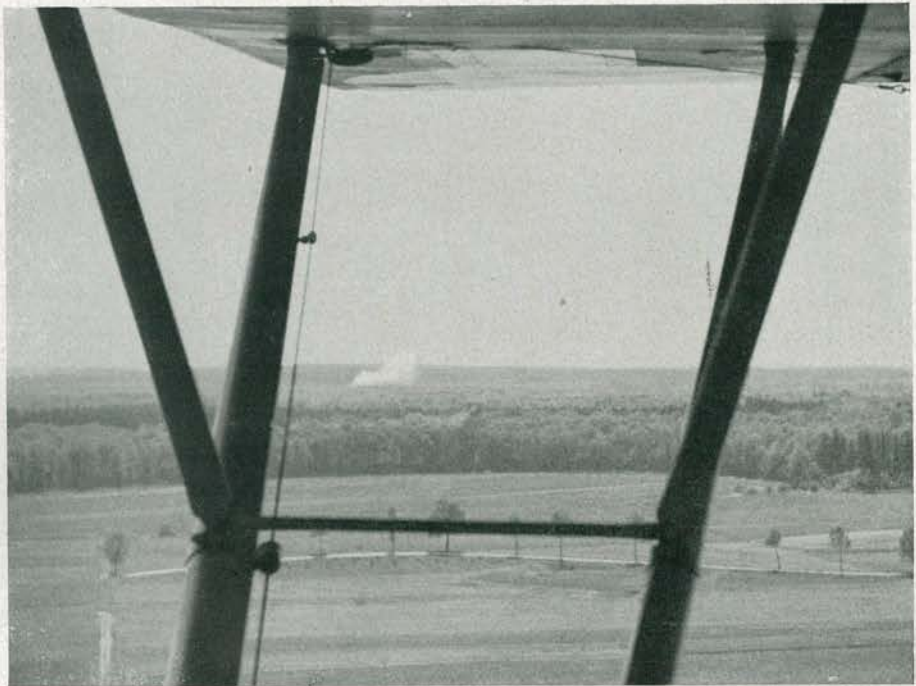
Bn displaced at 1700 to new positions south of Brumuth. Our mission is to reinforce the 132nd FA by taking over direct support of the 3rd Bn, 143 Inf Regt (36th Div). Our infantry and tank Bns in the line are being relieved by units of the 36th.

#### Sunday, 21 January, 1945

A strong patrol of SS troops was practically wiped out by the 23rd Tk Bn last night as they attacked for Weyersheim. This morning two enemy tanks plus infantry tried to peirce the lines of the 3rd Bn, 143 Inf, but were repulsed. This afternoon 6 tanks with strong forces of infantry launched an attack against the 2nd and 3rd Bns.



The jump off, and the pinned-down infantry await adjustment by Arty observer to neutralize the enemy machine gun fire.



"Charlie Three" or "Dog Four" directs fire on an enemy ammo dump.

Kraut infantry tried the left flank of the 2nd Bn and final results disclosed that the 2nd Bn had taken 115 Nazi prisoners. This drive seemed to be a diversionary movement, however, as the 6 tanks accompanied by infantry moved out to strike at the line dividing the sectors of the 2nd and 3rd Bns. Our troops knocked out two of the six tanks but were forced to withdraw slightly. The original front lines have not been restored.

On the north flank of the Div front our troops withdrew from Rohrwiller and took up positions on the east edge of Bischwiller. The 23rd and 43rd are still in the line and are doing an excellent job.

Official notice has been received that Cpl. Moore, "A" Btry, was seriously wounded and evacuated to the 57th Field Hospital. PFC Kurtz of "A" is still missing.

#### Monday, 22 January, 1945

Reduced enemy activity resulted in very few missions being fired as we continued to reinforce the 132nd FA. Small groups of infantry and an occasional tank were the only targets presented.

The 2nd and 3rd Bns restored their original line, wiping out the bulge in their lines. To the north our troops occupied positions approximately 800 yards east of Bischwiller. On the south the French recaptured Kilstett (090-085, Map 3),



German border defenses included howitzers in pillboxes.

taking 300 prisoners. This attack restored the original lines held by the French.

Static OP's have been set up in Weyersheim and Hoerdt. It is planned to keep these OP's under the supervision of an officer who will conduct classes in gunnery to selected personnel. These EM will have the opportunity of firing problems with Germans the target.

#### **Tuesday, 23 January, 1945**

The 199th AFA Bn of the 14th AD relieved this Bn of its mission. We displaced from positions near Brumuth, France, arriving in Vendenheim, France. Our stay here was very short as we were alerted to displace at 2200. The firing batteries plus the S-2 and S-3 sections were in new positions by 2400. CP located in Reichstett, France (01-05). Our new mission is to reinforce the 3rd French Inf Div Arty.

#### **Wednesday, 24 January, 1945**

The Bn remained inactive today as the enemy offered no targets. Batteries were registered and alternate positions were selected. The CP was moved 300 yards to the south. Lt. Lee was sent out on Liaison to the 3rd French Inf Div.

#### **Thursday, 25 January, 1945**

Increased German activity resulted in approximately 1100 rounds being fired by this Bn as we continued to support the French. Under cover of darkness the Germans sent a patrol to cut communications between Kilstett and la Wantzenau (065-065). After cutting communications they sent a force of 150 attacking for Kilstett. Following initial German success the French counter-attacked and drove them back to the vicinity of Gambenheim. This Bn fired four concentrations in support of the French troops. Harassing missions were also fired throughout the early morning hours.

Lt. Steffenauer, manning an OP in Kilstett this afternoon, found plenty of targets including a German OP, labor party preparing obstacles on a railroad crossing and an attempted attack on Kilstett. The German OP was destroyed, explosives at the railroad crossing were set off and the attempted attack was stopped completely. In the case of the attack on Kilstett, the Germans used the bridge which is the Bn BP. We obliged by cutting loose on the BP and the Germans. Results were very good.

#### **Friday, 26 January, 1945**

The Bn had a very quiet day as the enemy remained inactive. Two registrations and one unobserved mission on enemy trenches were the only missions fired. Poor visibility prevented operations at the OP. Harassing missions are being fired tonight.

#### **Saturday, 27 January, 1945**

The Bn had another quiet day, the only firing being a base point registration and one unobserved mission. Lt. Czeiner and party were at the OP in Kilstett but poor visibility prevented any firing of observed missions.

Enlisted men are now going on pass to Strasbourg.

#### **Sunday, 28 January, 1945**

We did no firing today as our front was unusually quiet. Lt. Weisz and party were at the OP in Kilstett but poor visibility continued.

#### **Monday, 29 January, 1945**

Enemy activity was on the increase today. Three heavy explosions were heard in enemy territory. Investigation revealed that two of the explosions were of bridges blown out. The third was in an area containing 8 pillboxes but observation was impossible. Capt. Burtchaell, Lt. Gerl-



Direct hit by artillery fire on an enemy strong point in a farm house. Another house, already hit, burns at the left.



ing and party, were chased out of the OP in Kilstett by direct fire from three enemy tanks. These tanks were later spotted by the air observer but clearance could not be obtained for

him to fire on them. Vehicles were observed moving north from Gamsheim. Two registrations were made by the aerial observer. No other firing was done.



MAP 4

The colorful campaign which freed Colmar and eliminated the Colmar Pocket occurred largely in this area. At Rouffach our recon elements met the French Moroccians coming up from the south and this region of the Rhine valley, with its walled cities and Alsatian French, was subsequently liberated. When our Bn pulled out for Wolfskirchen the German elements had been shattered and the bulge wiped out.



Our leading elements enter Colmar on the heels of the Germans.

**Tuesday, 30 January, 1945**

Lt. Weisz and "A" Btry's RO team manned the OP today but poor visibility prevented the firing of any missions. French patrols were active and they reported the Germans had pulled out from some of their defensive positions. Capt. Murray reports that the French have taken Bettenhoffen (099-098) and are sending patrols into Gamsheim. The French continue to improve their positions. Patrols from the 36th Div report no German activity in Herrlisheim or Offendorf.

**Wednesday, 31 January, 1945**

The French have taken Gamsheim. They encountered very little resistance but found nu-

merous mines and booby traps. The Stainwald Forest was taken by the 36th Div. The lack of resistance offered in these areas adds substantially to previous reports that the Germans are withdrawing from this immediate sector. All reports from areas vacated by the Germans mention mines and booby traps, so exercise extreme caution as we advance into these areas.

**Thursday, 1 February, 1945**

Bn displaced and closed in new positions at 1330. CP located at la Wantzenau, France. "B" Btry fired a high burst registration and "C" fired a high burst time correction. No other firing was done.



That notorious 88.

The French continue to improve their positions in Gamsheim and sent patrols to the east and NE of the city. German infantry were observed digging in north of the canal between the Stainwald Forest and Offendorf. The enemy holds Offendorf in unknown strength, and Herrlisheim with an estimated one Bn of Inf and a part of the 10th SS Panzer Div, perhaps one company.

#### Friday, 2 February, 1945

Billeting parties were ordered to report to Hq, CCA, at 0700.

#### Saturday, 3 February, 1945

Bn continue march and while on road orders were received to go into firing positions north of Colmar. Bn closed at 1600 with CP located at 718-439 Map 4. The 493rd was assigned to CCR, which includes the 17th AIB and 23 Tk Bn. Several missions were fired on Herrlisheim. One registration was started but darkness closed in before it was completed.

Plans for tomorrow were received late tonight. CCB is to attack to the SE from Colmar, while CCR attacks to the south from Colmar.



A ring of GI's surround a row of PW's as the latter get a shake-down prior to a trip to the cage. The two on the hood of the peep have already been searched. This occurred just south of Colmar, while the Bn was in position, supporting CCA.

Our Bn is now in DS of the 117th Cav. The 117th has the mission of holding a line along the railroad extending to the NE from the Stainwald Forest as flank protection for the 36th Inf Div. Capt. Mauck, LnO, and Lt. Czeiner, FO, were sent to the 117th Cav. Lt. Czeiner and air observer, Lt. Dupont, fired several missions on enemy infantry and mortars. Results were very good.

Bn alerted to displace at 1500. We were relieved from DS of 117th Cav. LnO and FO's called in. Displaced at 2100.

#### Sunday, 4 February, 1945

CCR attacked as planned with the 23rd Tk Bn advancing for Herrlisheim and the 17th AI advancing for Wettolsheim, Equisheim, Husseren, Voegtlinshoffen and Obermorschwihr. One platoon of the 23rd reached the objective, Herrlisheim, while AT guns held up the advance of the remainder of the Bn. The 17th meanwhile had advanced through the first three towns and had possession of approximately two thirds of Voegtlinshoffen and Obermorschwihr when ordered to withdraw to Equisheim. Late in the afternoon



Medics move forward with infantry and tankers through Herrlisheim (near Colmar).

two companies of the 17th advanced to Herrlisheim while the Bn was to follow immediately. The 103 Bn of the 28th Inf Div was also sent to Herrlisheim. Late tonight the enemy is reported to be holding the south one-third of Herrlisheim while we hold the rest.

Our objective was changed at 1300. The new plan calls for CCR to attack to the east from Herrlisheim with St. Croix the objective. CCA is to pass through CCR and continue the ori-

ginal advance to the south, while CCB attacks to the SE from Colmar. Numerous missions were fired by this Bn in support of CCR's attack. Results were good.

#### Monday, 5 February, 1945

CCA jumped off early from vicinity of Equisheim and advanced rapidly to the outskirts of Rouffach where they met the French who were coming up from the south. CCB followed CCA into Rouffach then turned to the east. Tonight, FO's with CCB are reported to be in Oberhergheim which is on the L'll River. CCR attacked to the SE from Herrlisheim. Their mission was changed several times but tonight elements of the 17th are in Niederhergheim.

The 28th Div has troops in St. Croix. St. Croix, Niederhergheim, Oberhergheim, Biltzheim, Niederentzen and Oberentzen are in flames tonight.

Lt. Col. Hartman was awarded the Bronze Star for meritorious service in Eastern France.

#### Tuesday, 6 February, 1945

Lack of enemy activity prevented the firing of any missions. One registration was completed.

Bn started to displace at 0700 and closed in new positions at 1300. Heavy traffic and a short stretch of bad road delayed the displacement. Rcn parties went forward again at 1430 and Bn completed its second displacement of the day at 1730. CP located in Niederentzen (736-277).

Men of this Bn had considerable success as Kraut hunters. "A" Btry men confronted 50 to 60 Germans which a French patrol was pursuing, forcing their surrender, in the woods SE of the CP. Later in the day, 30 to 40 were captured in the woods NE of the CP. One wounded German was found in the building later used as the CP.



In the path of our supported elements, air bombardment transformed enemy cities into this . . .



Artillery FO's assisted the doughs in capturing these prisoners in Unter-Erbach, near Singling, France.

#### Wednesday, 7 February, 1945

Bn had a quiet day as the enemy remained inactive. To the east the Germans have no apparent line of resistance short of the Rhine while to the west the only elements thought likely to be encountered are small groups of Krauts coming out of the Vosges. However, close surveillance is maintained over all roads and trails leading out of the Vosges and motorized patrols are checking all roads between villages.

#### Thursday, 8 February, 1945

Bn remained on alert all day for possible displacement to Huesseren area. Notified at 1500 that we would remain in present positions for the night.

#### Friday, 9 February, 1945

Remained on alert for displacement order. At 1330 we displaced for assembly area at Wintzenheim. Hq and Sv Btrys were split up between "A", "B", and "C" Btrys for night march to new sector. Started displacing at 1830. Still on road at 2400.

#### Saturday, 10 February, 1945

Bn continued march through the night and closed in Wolfskirchen, France, at 0830. Received notice that our mission is to support the 44th

Inf Div. Must be prepared to displace at 1330. Billeting party sent out to Witttring and Singling area (Map 1). At 1400 Bn was ordered to remain in present position for the night.

#### Sunday, 11 February, 1945

Advance party left for Singling at 1100 arriving at 1200. CP set up in the same building that was used in our previous assignment to this area. Remainder of Bn displaced from Wolfskirchen at 1330 but was held up in the Bining area because the road was under enemy observation. Under cover of darkness rest of Bn resumed its march from Bining and closed in positions at 1900. This part of the trip was completed under adverse weather conditions, as it was raining hard and very dark. We are reinforcing the 156th FA Bn and subject to recall by CCR on 2 hours notice.

#### Monday, 12 February, 1945

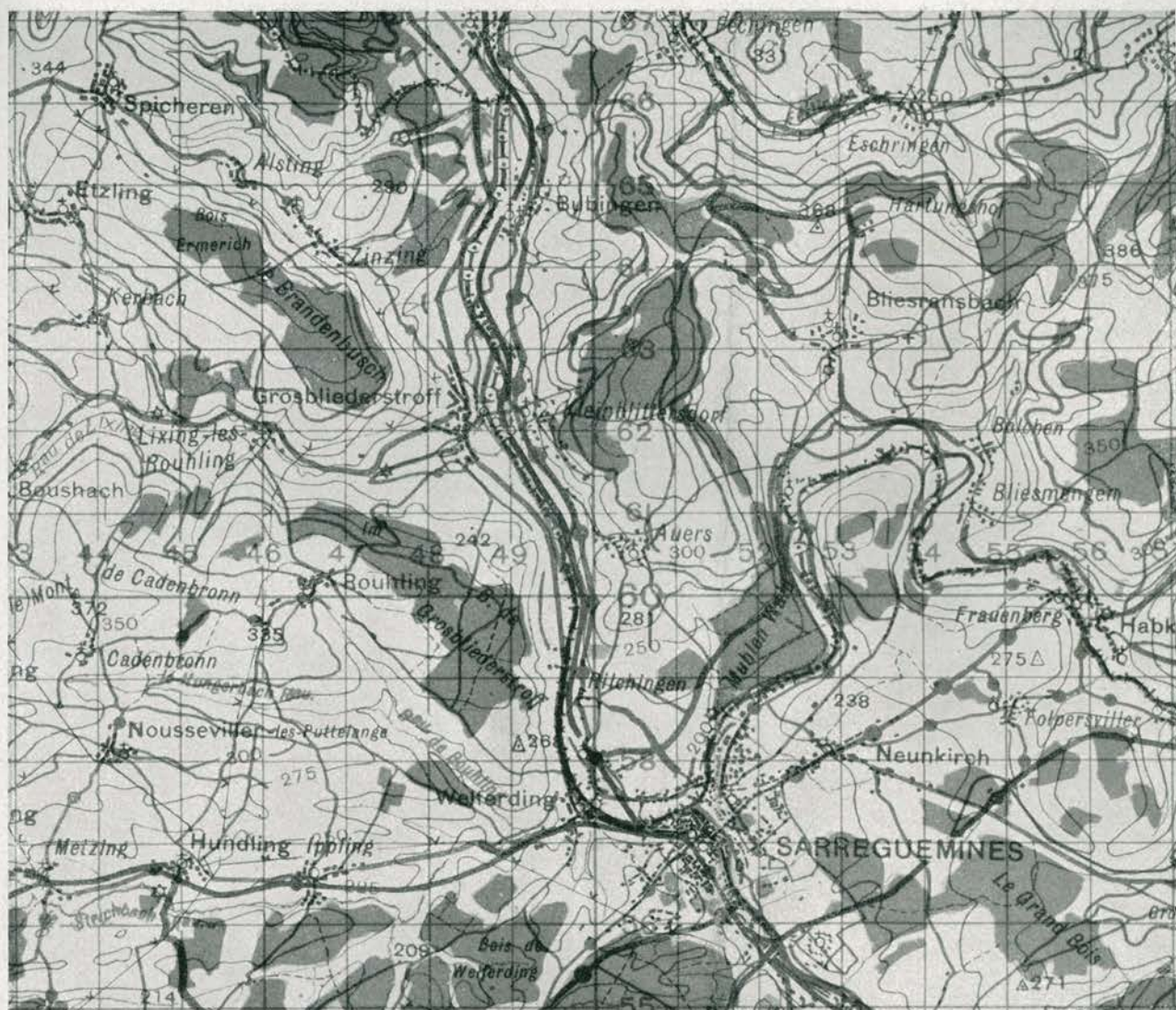
Inactivity on the part of the enemy resulted in no missions being fired. "B" Btry was registered with exceptional results. Initial data required a shift of 552 mils and the first round was a target hit. Three of the seven rounds fired in registering were target hits. Only seven minutes were required to register the btry.



The war was over for these Germans in February, 1945.



A far cry from the "Jugend" we encountered later, these oldster Nazis plod down the Sarreguemines main street, encouraged by doughs who brought them back across the Saar River from a raid on German Siegfried installations.



MAP 5

Our supported units forced the Saar River near the battered town of Saareguemines and took the towns to the north, then west, in the February stepping-stone assault which liberated Spicheren in the NW and went on to Forbach.

#### Tuesday, 13 February, 1945

The front was quiet again today as we continue reinforcement of the 156th FA. Five registrations were completed for the only firing done by the Bn.

The enemy on our front is the 17th SS Pz Div.

#### Wednesday, 14 February, 1945

We established liaison with the 861st FA Bn. Capt. Wilson was working with the 749th Tk Bn, making final plan for the attack tomorrow. FO's were called in, briefed, and sent to join their assigned units of the 749th. The plan calls for three infantry regiments to attack abreast for assigned objectives. If the infantry is stopped the tanks are to pass through them and continue on to the objectives. Fourteen bns of arty will be supporting this attack. The mission of the 493rd AFA will be DS of the 749th.

#### Thursday, 15 February, 1945

The attack today consisted of three regts of inf attacking abreast with the 114th on the left, 71st in the center and 324th on the right.

Co "F" of the 324th jumped off with Co "G" following. By 0730 they held the objective and started digging in along a line starting on the road 500 yards south of Gulderkirch and extending to the east along the north edge of Buchen Busch Woods (68-56). Co's "K" and "L" of the 71st jumped off from vicinity of Guising with Rimling as the objective. At 0855 they entered the town. Approximately 200 prisoners were taken by this force.

Co's "H", "G" and "F" of the 71st were advancing from Gros Rederching NE to the Schlossberg Ridge (Gd Sq 64-55). At 0730 after the inf had advanced to the NE end of the ridge, the tanks were ordered to pass through the inf.

From the NE end of the ridge one platoon of tanks cut back to the west for the Moronville Farm (634-550) and occupied it. They drew fire from the woods 700 yards north and Lt. Weldon, FO with Co "A", adjusted with good effect. The platoon then withdrew and circled around to approach the woods (their objective) from the south. Lt. Wolcott, FO with another platoon and the CO of "A" Co, continued to the north edge of the ridge and from this position (645-564) he adjusted on an enemy vehicle, knocking it out. At various times the enemy shelled the positions of our FO's.

#### Friday, 16 February, 1945

The Germans counter-attacked early this morning using small groups of tanks and very few infantry. They pierced the line in "A" Co, 71st Inf sector, for gains of 800 yards. By 1000 the line had been restored. The front was quiet the rest of the day.

Bn displaced at 1530. Firing batteries closed in positions vicinity Ippling (465-565, Map 5). CP located in Wolferding.

#### Saturday, 17 February, 1945

Bn received mission of reinforcement of the



Furious firing during a counter-attack on supported units. (Position near Rouhling, France.)

Our aerial observers were active all day. Lt. Miller adjusted fire on a tank, knocking it out. Lt. Dupont knocked out one for certain and claims two others. Our Bn was active throughout the day, firing 450 rounds in support of the attack. Very good results were reported. This attack gained approximately two miles on a 5 mile front.

General Patch, 7th Army CO, observed some of the action from the hill directly in front of our position.

861st FA Bn which is supporting the 253rd Inf Regt.

Under cover of darkness, "A" and "B" Co's crossed the Saar River between Wolferding and Sarreguemines, moving to the north between the river and the railroad track. "A" then cut sharply to the east for the high ground south of Auers (Auersmacher) while "B" continued north and then drove straight to the east for the high ground north of Auers. "A" and "B" took the high ground at 0930. "A" continued, taking





Cavalrymen skirt wired bridge to sever connections of demolitions, and secure bridge.

Auers late in the afternoon. "B" also continued to advance, reaching their second objective in the vicinity of Wintringenhof at 1500. An unconfirmed report stated that they took 250 PW's including one Lt. Col.

Several pockets of enemy resistance had been passed up in this rapid advance. One, the railroad station at 50-58, was fired upon repeatedly. TD's finally opened up with direct fire, setting the building afire. Nineteen prisoners were taken from this building.

At 1700 a German tank attack was reported midway between Bliesransbach and Bliesmengen. Five Bns of artillery were used in stopping this

thrust. The LnO in charge of firing said that the firing of the 493rd AFA was superior.

#### Sunday, 18 February, 1945

Numerous missions were fired, but the picture generally was obscure. Communications were poor, visibility low and descriptions of targets incomplete. Disposition of our front line troops was slow in coming in and a large part of the front was never definitely established. Most of the enemy action was reported in and around the vicinity of Auers, Kleinblittersdorf and Bliesransbach. Auers was in our hands but we withdrew to the high ground north and south of



Our air observer takes a look at an ex-German city.



Armor and more armor — at an assembly area in Germany.

town. The Germans then infiltrated the town in considerable strength. We shelled the town all night. Numerous reports of enemy tanks and infantry were received.

**Monday, 19 February, 1945**

Today's activities resulted in greatly improved positions for our troops. Several enemy strong points were cleaned out and our front line straightened. At the end of the day our front line touched the extreme south edge of Forbach, continues east to Etzling (437-447), dipping south to Grossblittersdorf and Kleinblittersdorf, then making an arc to the north, swinging back

to the south and west of Bliesransbach. The consolidations effected greatly strengthen our positions for tomorrow's attack.

This Bn fired many missions against enemy tanks and infantry. Our mission, reinforcing the 861st FA terminated at 1300 and we are now reinforcing the fires of the 883rd FA Bn. The firing batteries displaced to new position SE of Rouhling. Tomorrow's attack calls for the 1st Bn, 253rd Inf, to seize Alsting (46-65), the 2nd Bn to take Zinging and the 3rd Bn to take Spicheren. All three Bns are to continue the advance for the final objective, the high ground north and east of the three towns.



We were reinforced by "Dog" Battery — M-4's mounting 105's.

## Tuesday, 20 February, 1945

Targets fired were an enemy troop and vehicle concentration, two enemy vehicles, mortars, gun battery, two tanks and three flak wagons. Numerous barrages and harassing missions were also fired.

Today's operations resulted in the capture of Alsting and Zinzing. The Germans counter-attacked in vicinity of Zinzing but were beaten off in a short time. Except for the three towns mentioned, the front lines remain generally the same.

## Wednesday, 21 February, 1945

The 275th Inf Regt spent the morning in cutting the roads east and west of Spicheren and practically encircling it. By noon the inf was in position and started moving in. At 1245 a white

started our troops moved forward until reaching their objective, the high ground NE of Spicheren. Three of the Kraut attacks were made in estimated Co strength. PW's state that their attacks were broken up by our effective artillery fire, which cut them off, so they surrendered. 150 Pw's were taken.

Our troops started their attack at 0900, advancing slowly because of natural and artificial obstacles. They reached the high ground objective at 1500. The front was then quiet until 1950 when the Germans attacked our newly won positions. Arty broke up the attack. The last C/A at 2035 was the strongest of the day. They closed in on our troops holding the high ground from all four sides. The attack was sustained for 30 minutes and our artillery kept up its accurate fire, breaking up the attack on the east, north



Part of our column waits to cross the Lech River on a pontoon bridge.

flag was flown from the church steeple by the Germans and by 1345 Spicheren was in friendly hands. Many prisoners were taken. The attack continued for the high ground north and east of town. At 1824 the Germans counter-attacked our newly won positions SE of Spicheren. Very effective artillery fire stopped the counter-attack and our troops held their ground.

Targets fired by this Bn were infantry in open, infantry digging in, three enemy batteries, infantry holding up our advance and tanks with inf. Several barrages and harassing missions were fired. Major Meier, S-3, flew a mission this afternoon. He reported two fires in Forbach, which is the target for the TAC tomorrow.

## Thursday, 22 February, 1945

The Germans counter-attacked our positions five times today but failed in each attempt. These C/A delayed our own attack but once it was

and west sides. The Germans on the south were cut off but continued to fight.

The commanding general, 70th Inf Div, highly commended the artillery for its effective fire, giving it full credit for breaking up the counter-attack.

## Friday, 23 February, 1945

Bn continued to reinforce the 883rd FA today as the Germans continued to counter-attack our high ground positions. We fired six C/A missions. All efforts to pierce our lines were stopped by effective artillery fire. The only other mission was one fired at horse-drawn artillery.

Bn planned to displace to vicinity of Etzling and RO details had been sent out. However at 0955 we received a 6 hour alert from Div Arty for a Div move, so all RO parties were ordered back to CP. Bn awaits march order and details of movement.

**Saturday, 24 February, 1945**

After considerable delay Bn displaced to new positions vicinity Etzling, closing at 1745. Div alert is still effective.

Reports of a German breakthrough were greatly exaggerated. Our troops withdrew only a short distance as a result of the Kraut attack and were quick to regain the lost ground. Missions fired included an enemy strong point and direct fire weapons. Good effect was reported. Harassing missions were continued throughout the night. Enemy artillery shelled Etzling and vicinity. No casualties were reported.

Sidelight of the day was the arrival of the hot shower unit.

**Sunday, 25 February, 1945**

All was quiet on the front today. Expected enemy attacks failed to materialize. However several harassing missions were fired. Static OP's were manned by Lt. Evans and Cpl. Wetzel's RO teams. Observation was limited and they found no targets. Cpl. Cashdollar first set up the OP but he had to change locations was soon under artillery fire so he moved his crew back into town until the shelling subsided. Lt. Evans then went up to the OP with Cpl. Cashdollar. They were again pinned down by artillery fire.

A corps arty TOT, to include a concrete-blasting fire, was planned on an enemy strongpoint in SE part of Saarbrucken at 1200 and was to be followed by the TAC bombing the same spot at 1345. The enemy continued his harassing fire, dropping approximately a dozen rounds in vicinity of Etzling.

**Monday, 26 February, 1945**

Enemy artillery activity increased in our sector today. "B" Btry received 25 rounds of 105 MM

at 0945 while 25 rounds landed 300 yards in rear of CP. "A" Btry had one round land in btry position and several others hit close. "A" also received 12-15 rounds of mortar fire. At 1235 "C" Btry received 6-8 more rounds in their position and one stray landed in the rear of the CP. Telephone lines to all batteries, the OP, LnO and the 883rd FA were knocked out as a result of the shelling.

Enemy action was confined to a local attack at 0500 against our troops, approximately 500 yards SE of Stiring Wendel. The attack was beaten off without giving up ground. Fighting in Forbach has practically ceased as our troops have possession of all the town which is SE of the railroad. (Map 2.)

Capt. Burtchaell and his liaison section manned the OP today. Missions fired included AT guns, an enemy OP, enemy CP and two batteries of artillery. Our troops are making a planned withdrawal of 200-300 yards tonight which will put them on the crest of the ridge 800 yards SE of Stiring Wendel. This will provide better positions from which to defend and consolidate their gains.

**Tuesday, 27 February, 1945**

Our front remained quiet again today as enemy activity remained at a minimum. Several missions were fired at suspected enemy installations such as the Gestapo Hq, SS Hq and the military governor's Hq, all in Saarbrucken. Other missions included 25 enemy personnel and an enemy OP and battery positions. OP 1, manned by Lt's. Evans and Ford and Capt. Burtchell, was shelled again today.

**Wednesday, 28 February, 1945**

G-2 of 70th Div reported the entire Div front was quiet today. Despite the absence of enemy



Beaucoup prisoners.



Vehicles of CCA begin to move out.

activity we have fired numerous missions, including an enemy CP, patrols, personnel and vehicles, ammunition truck, personnel concentrations, buildings and billets. P-47's of the TAC bombed Saarbrucken again today. Flak was quite heavy but the Thunderbolts carried home their attack against an enemy strong point and a stretch of the railroad. Our observers at the OP witnessed the bombing.

Capt. Burtchaell and Cpl. Wetzel, with sections, fired several missions from OP 1 this afternoon. Lt. Czeiner and section found a new OP which has excellent observation into Forbach, Stiring Wendel, Schoeneck and Gersweiler. He reported the Americans and Germans were both shelling Forbach.

Bn is under XXI Corps effective 1200.

#### Thursday, 1 March, 1945

Our front remained quiet again today, although mortar and artillery fire was quite heavy at times. Missions fired were enemy vehicles, oil tanks, MG and AT positions and a 75 man working party in the north part of Saarbrucken. Suspected enemy locations which were fired include an outpost, CP's, billets and a house which might have been a CP. Capt. Burtchaell and Cpl. Wetzel plus crews received their daily shelling at CP 1. Capt. Wilson visited the OP this afternoon and fired several missions, getting target hits on oil tanks and railroad tracks. Lt. Czeiner and crew were fired upon by a sniper as they worked their way up to OP 2.

"D" Btry, 43rd Tk Bn, joined us this afternoon. They were with the 495th AFA at Wayersheim and gave a good account of themselves in the Inf-tank battle which occurred near there.

A P-47 from the 44th fighter Group made a crash landing in front of "B" Btry's position.

The pilot was considerably shaken up but otherwise OK.

#### Friday, 2 March, 1945

Enemy shelled our positions and attempted a counter-attack in vicinity of Forbach at 1700. C/A was repulsed without loss of ground. Missions fired included an enemy OP, a working party, infantry, artillery position, and a three gun SP battery which was spotted by our observers at the OP.

The demonstration of shells filled with flame thrower liquid was quite disappointing. Further experimentation will be required to make it work successfully.

#### Saturday, 3 March, 1945

Bn was relieved of its mission of reinforcing the 883rd FA and went into DS of CCA. The plan of attack calls for the 70th Inf Div to continue for the high ground objectives near Clarenthal (385-705). After the 70th has cleared Forbach and Stiring Wendel they are to continue on for the high ground while troops of CCA are to move into and occupy the towns, being prepared to defend them in case of German counter-attacks.

The 70th Div encountered stiff resistance including heavy mortar and artillery fire. Stiring Wendel and the NW part of Forbach are still in enemy hands tonight. 105 PW's were taken.

#### Sunday, 4 March, 1945

Today's operations found the 70th Div clearing practically all of Forbach and Stiring Wendel. Taking these towns proved a slow and difficult task as a house to house search was made in each town. The 70th is making limited gains all along the front despite heavy MG, mortars, arti-



The rarest sight: American girls. The Red Cross brought doughnuts and a touch of home. Here, at St. Nikolaus, Germany, they visited the firing batteries and even ventured to pull the lanyard.

illery and small arms fire. Gains ranging from 100 yards up to 1200 yards have been made.

CCA has not been committed as yet although Task Force 2 has taken up defensive positions inside Forbach. Task Force 1 remains in assembly area. Ln and FO assignments previously made continue in effect.

Lt. Steffenauer reported observing five Krauts walking down the street in Forbach in an area supposedly cleared. A friendly patrol began a search for the men. One was killed but the other four are still at large.

#### Monday, 5 March, 1945

Activity today centered on the west third of the Div front, where the 276th Inf Regt made substantial gains of 2500 yards on a 3000 yard front. Elsewhere, limited gains were made. The two task forces of CCA are now in position, Task Force 1 being in Stiring Wendel and Task Force 2 in Forbach. Our troops are not actively engaged in any of the action. Their mission continues to be defense of the towns in case of a C/A.

#### Tuesday, 6 March, 1945

The mission of CCA remains the same. Troops of the 70th Div repelled several C/A on their front but the front lines remain practically the same.

#### Wednesday, 7 March, 1945

Adverse weather prevented the 70th Div from attacking as previously planned. The only action on this front was the outposting of the POW hospital with 50 men and the cemetery with 20 men. Bn displaced to new positions vicinity of St. Nikolaus at 2330. (337-640)

#### Thursday, 8 March, 1945

Bn remained in DS of CCA but no action was reported on the front and we had a very quiet day. The firing batteries improved their positions and fired one registration.

#### Friday, 9 March, 1945

The 493rd and 494th AFA Bns compose an FA Group which is in DS of the 17th AIB. Col. Hartman is CO of the group. "C" of the 119th Engineers is attached to the 17th. Bn fired one registration and several missions for training purposes. The front was very quiet and actual targets were not available. All previous Ln and FO assignments were cancelled.

#### Saturday, 10 March, 1945

Today's action consisted of firing a few "service practice" missions. It is reported that the rest camp in Strasbourg is closing for both enlisted men and officers.

Two prisoners were taken the night before by the 17th and interrogation revealed there might be others willing to give up, so today we will fire a few propaganda shells.

#### Sunday, 11 March, 1945

Bn continued in direct support of the 17th Inf and fired harassing and interdiction fires during the night, and some service practice missions today. 20 rounds of propaganda were fired on Klein Rossel, but as yet no results have been received. Capt. Givens, Div Arty air section, adjusted "B" Btry on an enemy field piece, destroying it and some ammunition stored nearby.

#### Monday, 12 March, 1945

During the night 130 rounds of harassing and interdiction fires were fired. Sunday night our

and Div Arty's telephone lines were cut by someone who waited at that spot to fire on the wire repair crew. 70th Inf sent a patrol into the area but found nothing. Yesterday our OP saw and fired on the German's roaring lion, the Nebelwerfer, which was in the vicinity of Klein Rossel. The Bn fired a number of times and silenced the weapon.

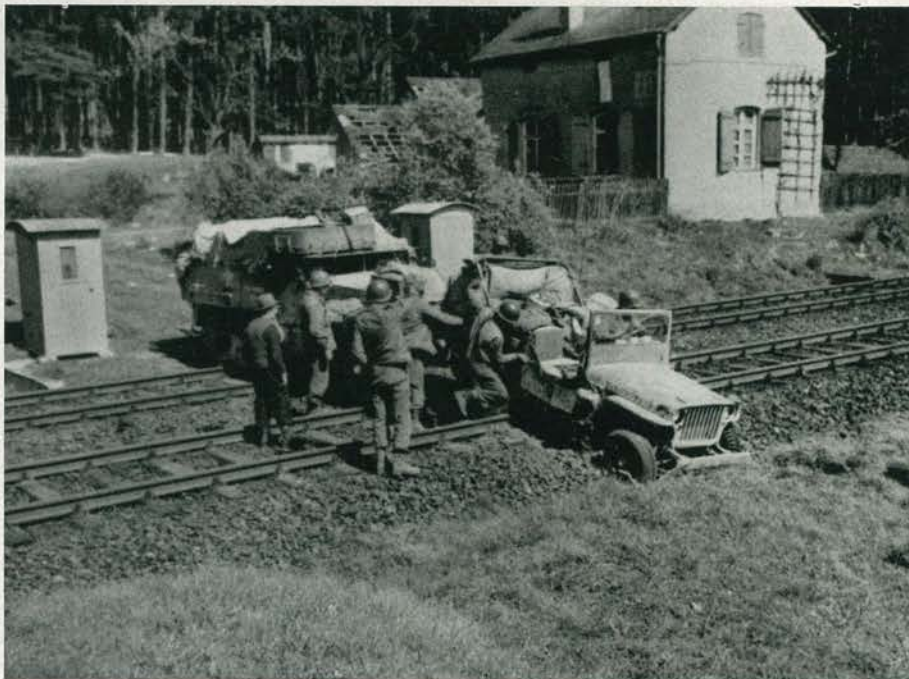
**Tuesday, 13 March, 1945**

Little firing was done during the day. About 1700 we were informed that patrols of the 70th Div had been at our objective, Klein Rossel, since 1525 and were advancing with no re-

sistance. Air observer reported the town full of American soldiers and civilians waving white handkerchiefs. Our plans were called off and LnO's and FO's returned to Bn. "Dog" Btry returned to the 43rd Tk Bn. During the night further reports were received of constant advances of the 70th until our no fire line was the same as the Saar River. Today the 493rd is to reinforce fires of 70th Div Arty.

**Wednesday, 14 March, 1945**

Most of the day was occupied by moving and the necessary preparations thereto. Bn closed into new positions at Klein Rossel (approx. 365-



TF 1 commander gets stuck while reconnoitering with the head of the column . . .



. . . So the artillery FO's pitch in to build a crossing.



Under the feet of the air observer — the German countryside across which the Nazi soldiers fell back, village to village, using the buildings of each as fortresses until blasted out.

692) at 1635. Firing for the day was limited to registration, plus an air adjustment by Captain Givens on enemy vehicles. Effect was good.

**Thursday, 15 March, 1945**

Bn continued in GS and reinforcing fires of 70th Div. During the afternoon we took over the fires of the 884th FA while they displaced. Missions were fired by air observer on enemy vehicles, men on bicycles. And Capt. Burtchell at the OP adjusted on a vehicular bridge across a tank ditch.

**Friday, 16 March, 1945**

Static OP's were manned today, considerable activity being observed. Many civilians were moving along roads and streets and bicycles were numerous. Missions were fired on inf in vehicles, inf in buildings, gun emplacements, OP's and CP's. Good effect was reported. The 70th Div will make a drive to cross the Saar River. Bn is now on a five hour alert.

**Saturday, 17 March, 1945**

Bn relieved of mission with 70th Inf Div as we received orders to join XX Corps, 3rd Army. New mission for Division: attack Mainz, Germany, from the west.

Displaced from Petite Rossel at 0845 with destination given as assembly area at Remich, France. Column halted at 1050 because of change in route and destination. Chow was served during halt. Column moved out at 1300 arriving at assembly area in Monneren, France, at 1700. Bn CO reported to CCA at 1950 for plans of next operation. Plans included: CCB and CCR to attack abreast with CCA to exploit the breakthrough.

**Sunday, 18 March, 1945**

Bn alerted at 0200 for immediate move, displacing from Monneren, 0500. Column moved until 0830 at which time it was halted to permit passage of other troops. Ln and FO's previously



Near Baumholder the Krauts line up to be searched as our column passes.





Combat command assembly area where naps were grabbed while awaiting the jump off on the last leg to the Rhine.

assigned were alerted to join their units. Div objective changed from Mainz to Worms with the 65 mile advance scheduled to be completed in 36 hours. 3rd Army MP's started the column moving at 1200 crossing the Moselle at Trier at 1315. Arrived vicinity Reinsfeld at 1700. Bn displaced again at 2130 for new assembly area.

#### Monday, 19 March 1945

Bn pulled in bivouac area vicinity Birkenfeld at 0300 with displacement from there four hours later. Arrived vicinity Baumholder at noon and displaced again at 2330. Division objective changed from Worms to Mannheim on east side of the Rhine. All LnO's and FO's recalled.

Evidence of huge losses to German supply columns was observed during today's march. Hundreds of PW's were being returned to rear areas while foreign men, being used in Hitler's slave army, were released. They lined the roads as they started for freedom after 20 months or more of slavery.

#### Tuesday, 20 March, 1945

Bn halted on road at 0300. Word was received that our mission and objective had been changed. Column started moving again at 0620, going

into firing positions in vicinity of Mehlingen-Neukirchen late in the afternoon. Batteries were registered but no other firing was done. Displaced at 2000.

#### Wednesday, 21 March, 1945

Bn continued on march, going into bivouac in vicinity of Grundstadt, Germany, at 0300. At 0700 German planes flew over our area and we opened up with heavy AA fire. Several times during the day the planes reappeared. The AAA boys claim five Nazi planes destroyed during the day. Displaced from Grundstadt at 0900, going into firing positions at 1525 near Gerelsheim. Bn displaced again, closing in new positions west of Oppau. Bn fired missions on infantry dug in, infantry in buildings, MG and AT guns. German 88's opened up on our Piper Cub with a total of 27 rounds. The pilot reported the plane lost a coat of paint.

North of our sector, allied troops were up to the Rhine along the entire front. Troops in our sector were preparing to move into Ludwigshafen, our last barrier in front of the Rhine. Mannheim, our Div objective, is on the East side of the Rhine, across from Ludwigshafen.



American PW's cheer their liberators.

#### Thursday, 22 March, 1945

Bn remained in position west of Oppau with CCA, to support the attack of the 376th Inf Regt, 94th Div, on Ludwigshafen. Capt. Mauck reported at 1830 that CCA will remain in support of the 376th until Ludwigshafen has fallen. Missions fired today include infantry, infantry and guns, MG's, possible 88's, and two registrations. A heavy artillery preparation was fired in support of the 376th.

"D" Btry, 43 Tk Bn, joined us tonight. At 2000 notice was received of Bn reverting to Div Arty control and to be prepared for movement.

#### Friday, 23 March, 1945

Bn spent most of the day preparing to displace, displacing and closing into firing positions, NW of Schifferstadt at 0900. Batteries were registered from these positions. At 1340 Bn again displaced, going into their second firing position SW of Schifferstadt at 1416. Batteries were registered. Later we displaced, closing into positions vicinity of Friesbach at 1900. Our firing for the day consisted of registrations only. The mission of the 493rd is reinforcing the fires of the 495th AFA.

#### Saturday, 24 March, 1945

At 1350 our mission was changed to DS of 92nd Cav. We were relieved of DS of 92nd at 1700 and were ordered to send LnO and Rcn parties to CCA. Displaced again at 1645 but column was stopped after a few miles because of a change in orders which sent us back into the positions we had just left. The only firing completed, except for registrations, was on river boats and ferries on the Rhine. The effect was excellent as Lt. Dupont had direct hits on two barges. Div returned to Seventh Army control at noon.

#### Sunday, 25 March, 1945

Bn received notice of probable displacement at 0620. Actual displacement by battery at 30 minute intervals was started at 1220. Closed in positions at 1620. Div is on a 36 hour alert. This period will be used for maintenance and refitting.

Word has been received that S/Sgt. Boland, "B" Btry, is a prisoner of war. He was listed as missing in action since the "Battle of Herrlisheim" on Jan 17.

#### Monday, 26 March, 1945

Bn spent the day performing maintenance of vehicles, weapons, and personal equipment. A guard was set up for patrolling Hafloch. The 493rd was assigned the NE section of town, setting up a road block for control of traffic in and out of the city, also a peep patrol of all streets and alleys.

#### Tuesday, 27 March, 1945

Bn used the morning in continuation of maintenance. At 1300 we received notice to be prepared for march order at any time after 1650. By 1345 word was received that march order might be given prior to 1650. At 1700 we received notice that movement tonight was not likely. At 2000 we were given march order with the IP scheduled to be crossed at 2040. This afternoon Major Carstens took a group of men from the Bn to clear up a pocket of enemy resistance in a woods nearby.

#### Wednesday, 28 March, 1945

The march continued with the Bn crossing the Rhine at 0120. Worms, the city where the crossing was made, showed the effects of our bombers. It was the most severely damaged of any German town yet observed. We closed in assembly area at Lorsch at 0300. The Div objective

is Wurzburg, a city 85 miles to the east. CCA was divided into two task forces. "A" Btry with "D" attached was assigned the mission of supporting Task Force 1 with Lt's. Wolcott and Czeiner as FO's. "B", "C" and Hq were assigned the support of TF 2 with Lt. Weldon and Lt. Rosgen as FO's.

Bn displaced at 1100 and spent the remainder of the day and night in a stop and go march. "A" Btry went into firing position and fired two missions. Resistance encountered by our elements were small arms fire, machine guns and road-blocks which resulted in numerous delays to our troops.

#### Thursday, 29 March, 1945

The march continued through the night until 0400 at which time column halted because of

enemy action. At this point we had traveled 24 miles from our starting point at Lorsch. Received word that the German 352nd Inf Div had their CP in this area two days ago. They were reported to have adequate ammunition, sufficient food (no hot meals), four machine guns per Co plus Panzerfausts. Morale was low. This area is supposed to be their outpost line of resistance.

At 1125 "C" Battery pulled out of column to take firing position but actually fired no missions. Remainder of Battalion less "A" moved into positions at 1440. From these positions we fired several missions at infantry in open and in woods. Displaced again with column being held up in Erbach. On move again by 1950. Main resistance today was small arms and machine guns covering road-blocks and bridges blown out.



Easter Sunday, 1945. The armor moves up and our Bn. prepares to defend itself against an impending enemy tank attack. P-47's helped drive the tanks away and disorganize enemy ground troops by bombing and strafing — but not without loss.



Bn. column pauses en route through wreckage of its own creation. The town is Erbach, Germany.

#### Friday, 30 March, 1945

Both Task Forces moved forward throughout the night but encountered heavy resistance early in the morning. "A" Btry with TF 1, moved firing position near Armorbach and fired a preparation for the tank and inf to go into the town. One section was sent forward to fire direct fire at enemy infantry in houses near the town, but the entire btry soon became involved in a fire fight and were firing 105 direct at Krauts on the hills surrounding the position. The fire proved extremely effective, killing many of the enemy and resulting in the capture of 31 PW's. "B" and "C" went into position and fired several missions on enemy vehicles and infantry. Effect was good. Enemy rear guard was overcome by 1630 and by midnight Bn had passed through Neunkirchen.

Approaching the town of Nassig leading elements encountered Panzerfausts and heavy machine gun and small arms fire. After suffering several casualties TF 1 withdrew to the high ground 1000 yards south of the town where they dug in and prepared to assault the town early in the morning.

#### Saturday, 31 March, 1945

Task Force 2 by-passed TF 1 and attacked toward the east, capturing 109 PW's and liberating over 400 Russian and Polish slave laborers. Missions fired throughout the day included preparations on the town of Madelhoffen and Rosbrunn, enemy vehicles and infantry, MG and AT guns.

P-47's supported our attack on enemy positions at the head of our leading elements. "A" Btry fired over 600 rounds of HE and WP as a preparation for the attack by TF 1 on Nassig. At the termination of the fire the TF rolled into the town and engaged the remaining Krauts. The town burned all day and an estimated 150 Germans killed and 160 PW's resulted from the artillery preparation.

#### Sunday, 1 April, 1945

Aerial activity dominated our sector today as the P-47's gave us overhead cover and attacked enemy ground elements. Men of the Bn were able to witness the bombing and strafing of targets holding up our advance. One pilot who was shot down reported that our troops were the



Supported by tankers, colored infantrymen search for snipers in the shell-smashed town of Erbach.



Our column passes German prisoners walking to the rear under the watch of liberated French and Russian PW's.



Members of a firing battery leave the column to hunt out snipers in the woods near Amorsbach.



Aftermath of the battle of Nassig. American and German dead lay side by side.

most advanced of any in this area. Crash landing was made adjacent "A" Btry area.

Missions fired were at tanks, infantry, MG and AT guns. We also fired MG's at enemy aircraft which flew over our area on four different occasions. Our AAA opened up with a tremendous barrage and at one time two enemy planes were seen burning. Four enemy tanks were shooting direct fire at us and could be seen from the Hq Btry area. Our batteries opened up on them and they dispersed. Mortar fire also fell in our area. Two men from the AAA were slightly wounded. A 3/4 ton wire truck had flat tires broken windshield and a splattered body as a result of this shelling. The mortar fire seemed to be of incendiary nature as the ground around the shell holes was scorched.

It has been reported that the Germans are jamming our nets and are sending fire missions to allied artillery which places fire on friendly troops. Thus far no action of this kind has been reported on our immediate sector.

**Monday, 2 April, 1945**

Bn had a quiet day. Only 1 mission plus one registration was fired. Lt. Wolcott fired on in-



Nassig burns from artillery fire, but the "home" life of the cannoneer goes on. As the tanks and infantry begin to fight their way into the village on the heels of a heavy concentration of white phosphorous and HE from the M-7's, the artillerymen take a breather and prepare chow by heating C rations and coffee.

Although the fighting is a couple thousand yards away, the nearness of the slit trench and carbine indicate the continual danger of surprise attack, shelling or strafing and that the GI in the foreground is ready for chow or Germans.



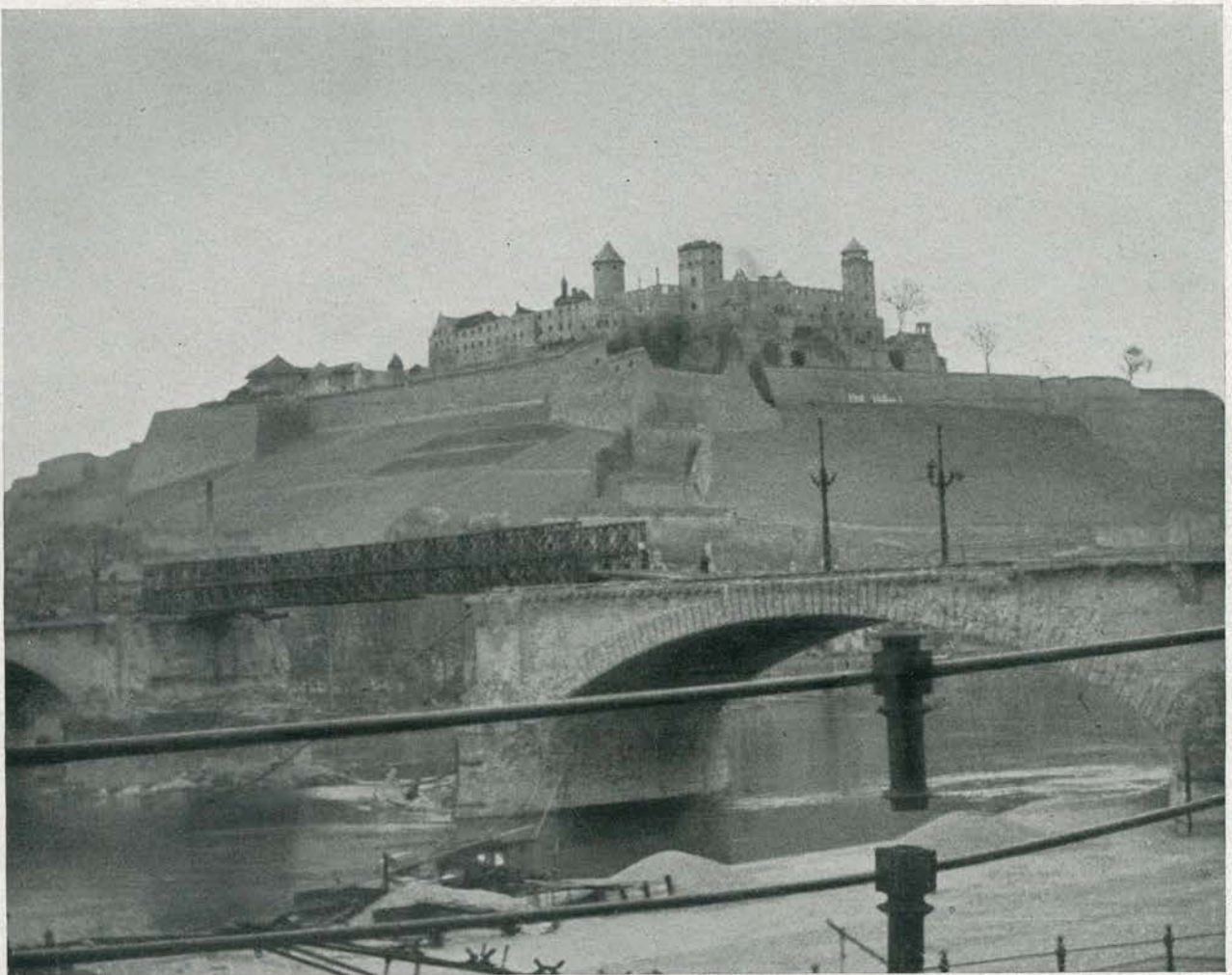
After an artillery concentration: Doughboys bring four Heinies out of the rubble that was Nassig.



Nassig burns as a result of M-7 fire. The 45rd tank Bn and 66th AIB hit fanatical resistance at the village of Nassig, Germany, and accordingly called for a heavy artillery preparation as they pushed into the Heinie defensive positions. These consisted of dug in positions behind thick-walled buildings and held by suicide squads of the Hitler Youth who were armed with automatic weapons. Our shells burned down a large part of the town, and enabled our supported units to move in.



P-47 plasters a resistance pocket in Wurzburg while our column waits to move through.



Built under fire, this Bailey Bridge enabled our columns to cross the Main River into Wurzburg.



Wurzburg.

fantry in open with good results. The German air force showed up in strength as 12 ME 109's flew over our area at very low altitude at 1620. The AAA boys opened up and downed one of the planes.

We are now under Div Arty control with mission of DS for CCA. Contact during this last phase of the operation was wholly with miscellaneous units. Personnel of the enemy included many specialists, including as an example one ex-medical officer put into the line as infantry with very little training.

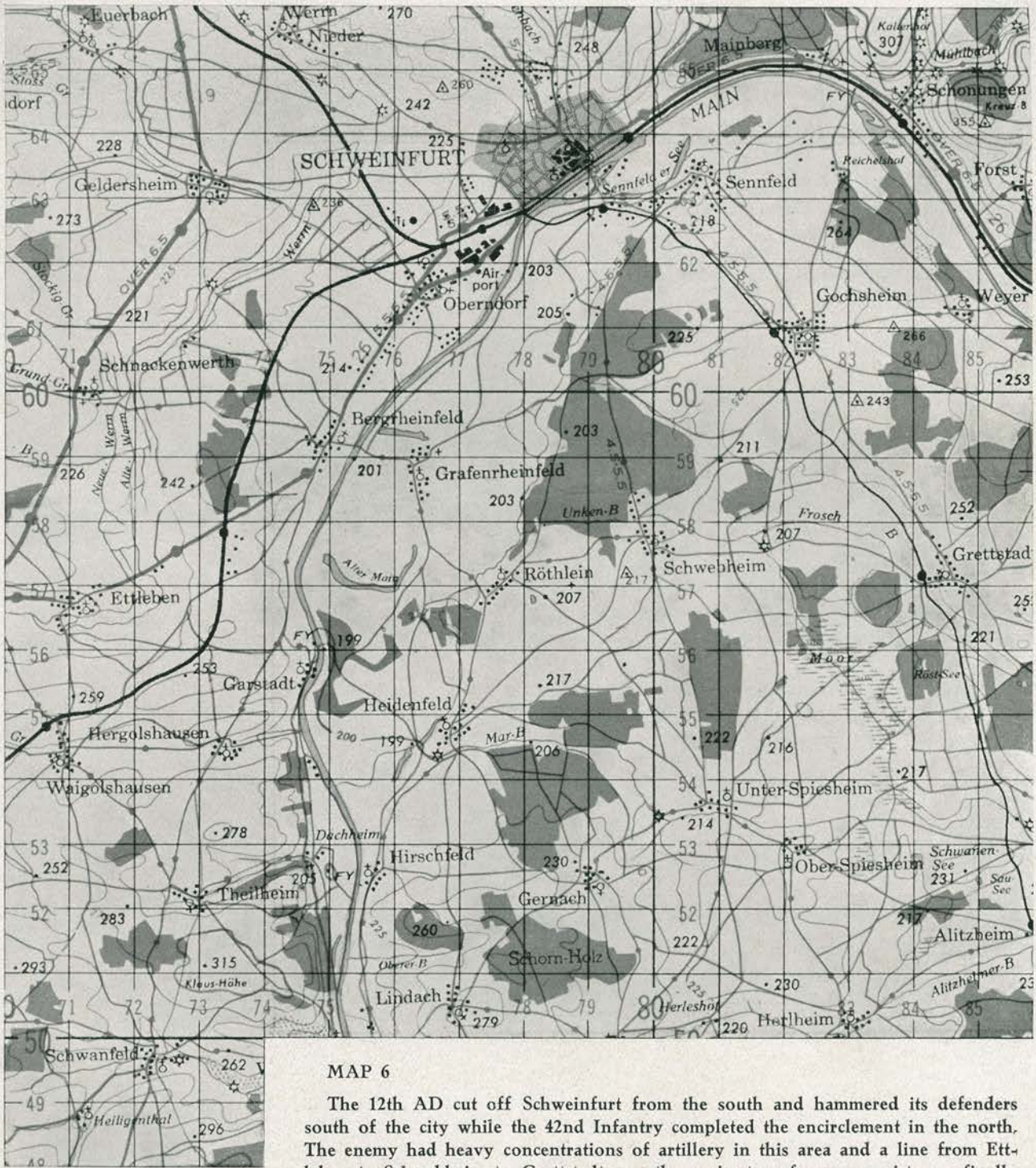
**Tuesday, 3 April, 1945**

The plan of attack today put elements of the 42nd Inf Div (Rainbow Div) leading the drive.

All Tank Forces advanced up to the Main River where they found all bridges blown. However, troops were ferried across the river and by night two bns were across and holding several blocks in the southern and of Wurzburg. The Germans resisted our river crossing with heavy machine gun and small arms fire. Several fire fights developed in Wurzburg. At noon it appeared that the Germans were pulling out of Wurzburg to the east but by midafternoon they were returning to the town. Our engineers are building a bridge across the river and we expect to cross within the next few hours. Progress today was very satisfactory. Capt. Wilson reported 224 PW's taken in Wurzburg.



Near Nurnberg the column is held up by a broken bridge and forced to detour.



MAP 6

The 12th AD cut off Schweinfurt from the south and hammered its defenders south of the city while the 42nd Infantry completed the encirclement in the north. The enemy had heavy concentrations of artillery in this area and a line from Ettlleben to Schwebheim to Grettstadt was the perimeter of savage resistance, finally crushed by coordinated attacks of armor, infantry and strong artillery barrages.

Missions fired by this bn included infantry, 88 MM guns, MG, artillery and river ferries. Good effect was reported on most targets. Bn displaced from Waldbronn to Waldbuttenbrunn.

#### Wednesday, 4 April, 1945

Bn spent restless day, having prepared for march order since 0700. At several times, march order was but a few minutes away but delays in building the bridge crossing the Main River at Wurzburg and stubborn enemy resistance within the city prevented our displacement.

Only two missions were fired today, both by "A" btry on enemy working parties. 450 PW's taken in Wurzburg as a result of today's operations.

#### Thursday, 5 April, 1945

Our plans of the day's operations called for the 43rd Tank Bn to open two roads leading out of Wurzburg. This was to have been accomplished by 0500. Elements of CCA were to proceed with their mission of seizing Schweinfurt, some 40 miles to the NE. The Germans used



Captured German tank missed its train.

600 men plus MG, bazookas and mortars in a counter-attack aimed at our bridge across the Main. This delayed our advance through the city and it was not until late in the afternoon that it was felt safe to move troops through the city. In the meantime rcn elements had gone forward and decided to use the southern outlet from Wurzburg and bypass the main part of town.

Missions fired today were on inf in open, inf in town, and inf and vehicles. Good effect was reported. Bn displaced from Waldbuttelbrunn at 1630 and continued the march until midnight. It

was made under extremely adverse conditions, as it was a pitch back night, raining, the roads were slick and unmarked, being nothing but paths for several miles. Consequently the march was slow and several long delays were necessary.

#### Friday, 6 April, 1945

Bn continued the march until 0630 at which time we stopped for chow. At this point, we had traveled only 13 miles from Waldbuttelbrunn, our position being just SE of Rottendorf. The march was continued with Bn going into positions just south of Seligenstadt, again at



Captured German column heads for the rear.

Prosselsheim, ending up the march in Schwanfeld (723-497, Map 6) at 2000. Distance from Waldbuttelbrunn: 30 miles.

Missions fired included two artillery preparations, inf in open, inf in town and AT guns plus suspected artillery positions. We received heavy artillery fire several times during the day, being shelled at Prosselsheim, and in vicinity of Schwanfeld. Approximately 75 rounds landed in our positions. Task Force 2 had no casualties from shell fire. "A" Btry with TF 1 wasn't so fortunate as two men were killed and four injured as a result of rounds landing in the Btry position. Killed were Sgt. Parker and Cpl. Marble. Injured were T/5 Therrian, Pvt. Harmon, Pfc. Zeglin and Pvt. Silas, Sv. Btry, who was delivering supplies to "A". Besides these, the AA unit attached to "A" Btry lost one man killed and two wounded.

#### Saturday, 7 April, 1945

Bn received the heaviest and most sustained artillery shelling today that it has yet experienced. The CP was moved twice as a result of arty fire. Direct hits put a couple of large holes in the first house used as a CP and also the second house. Flat tires, holes in radiators and gas tanks were reported in all batteries today. Fortunately all damage is repairable and all vehicles will be in action again in a day or so. The shelling seemed to be from a six gun battery of 75 MM and coming from the east. One shell was definitely 150 mm or larger.

#### Sunday, 8 April, 1945

Action started today with patrols clearing Zeusleben and TF 2 taking Hergolshausen (735-545). Plans were then changed and CCA's mission was to hold the line then formed and send patrols out to the north. As a result Bn did not

displace as planned. Late in the afternoon the attack was resumed and the town of Werneck was taken and Etleben attacked by TF 1. The enemy continued his stubborn resistance.

Missions fired included the town of Etleben which was a particularly strong point, inf in open and registrations by all batteries. The CP was shelled again but not as heavy as yesterday. One 6x6 was hit.

#### Monday, 9 April, 1945

Plans for today's operations were called off at 0200, perhaps in anticipation of a change in CCA's assignment. Bn remained in position and FO's remained with their units however. Lt. Czeiner requested aerial observation of Etleben as a smoke screen, presumably enemy, was obscuring the town. Aerial observation revealed it to be several buildings afire rather than a smoke screen.

Bn displaced from Schwanfeld at 1545. Column halted just south of Volkach to serve chow. The march was continued at 2015 at a slow pace as we had to travel cross country and at one point a mud-hole delayed the entire column. Bn closed in firing positions at Zeilitzheim at 2245.

#### Tuesday, 10 April, 1945

CCA continued to advance despite determined enemy resistance. TF 2 advancing from Herlheim, captured Alitzheim (860-516) and carried on 500 meters to the east. TF 1 advanced from Herlheim but was held up outside Ober-Spiesheim for several hours. After heavy artillery fire we moved in and occupied the town. TF 1 advanced 4000 meters north of the town and stopped just short of Schwebheim. Our flank guard occupied Unter-Spiesheim early in the morning. Our troops were receiving a lot of artillery fire supposedly from 88's.



A halt to organize pays off in sleep.

Missions fired included armored vehicles, inf in open, inf dug in, the towns of Alitzheim and Ober-Spiesheim, flak wagons and 88's. One observer from the tankers KO'd five 88's. Bn displaced from Zeilitzheim at 1500. Closed in new position at Herlheim at 1800.

#### Wednesday, 11 April, 1945

The plan of attack for today had TF 2 jumping off at 0545 to seize the high ground SE of Weyer (847-613). To protect the infantry, harassing artillery was put on Grettstadt at 0600 and Gochsheim at 0630. The inf was to pass between those two towns and the artillery was to pin down any enemy opposition. The plan worked out perfectly as the inf was on its objective at 0800. Tanks of TF 2 bogged down in

The 42nd Inf Div entered Schweinfurt today and were meeting heavy resistance in the NE corner of the city. The main highway to the east out of Schweinfurt was cut late in the afternoon thus completing the encirclement of the city.

Bn received 25 reinforcements. Six were assigned each firing battery, 3 to Hq Btry and 4 to Sv Btry.

#### Thursday, 12 April, 1945

Our harassing fires of last night proved very effective as we jumped off at 0600 and had our objective of Grettstadt by 0700. The town was taken without opposition. TF 1 continued the attack and had reached the half way point between Grettstadt and Gochsheim when they were ordered to move at once to Dambach to contact



Almost too many to handle. Our column passes mobs of subdued PW's on our race to the Rhine.

a marsh SE of Grettstadt and were not able to follow up the inf. Late this afternoon these tanks came into Unter-Spiesheim to act as a reserve force. Task Force 1 held their line of last night, consolidating their gains and digging in.

Missions fired included enemy inf in open, ammo dump, 88 MM guns, AA guns, mortars, and suspected gun positions. Harassing fires for tonight include corps artillery placing all possible fire on the towns of Gochsheim, Grettstadt and Schwesheim. The Bn will put fire on the north and west edges of the woods in 80-55. Bn displaced to Unter-Spiesheim.

elements of the 3rd Inf Div. This order reached our Bn CP at 1100 and plans for immediate displacement were made. March order was given at 1420. We closed in firing positions at Pusselsheim at 1650. Then our mission was changed again and we were ordered back to a Div assembly area. Displacement followed at 1910. After moving a short distance our orders were again changed. By 2000, the situation became even more confused as to our status. We were finally ordered to billet for the night and await further orders. Accordingly, Bn marched to Ober-Spiesheim where men were billeted. Arrived there at

Survivors of a heavy artillery barrage and an armored blow show smiles of relief to be out of it as they head for the rear. Many were as young as fifteen.



midnight. Lt. Evans, FO with "A" of the 66th, was wounded and had to be evacuated. Lt. Rosgen replaced him.

#### Friday, 13 April, 1945

Bn spent the morning performing maintenance as it awaited orders to move out. LnO to CCA informed us that we would attack to the SE toward Nurnberg. Shortly thereafter Bn displaced. The column was halted on the road west of Richsenstadt at 1705 and chow was served during the halt. At 1930 column again started to move and by 2030 CP was set up in Wiesentheid. The Task Forces moved abreast with TF 1 on the south and TF 2 on the north.

#### Saturday, 14 April, 1945

Notice was received at 0545 that Bn was to return to assembly area of 13 April and await orders. At 0800 another change in mission was received, as we were ordered to a Div assembly area. Later information revealed that we are now working with Div, with the three combat commands attacking to the SE and bypassing Nurnberg. CCR is taking the southern route while CCB is taking the northern. CCA (our column) is in reserve and following CCB.

Bn displaced from Wiesentheid at noon. Column was halted at Herbersdorf and supper was served. Column started again at 1845 and we

Our swift advance south from Nurnberg produced enemy booty of which this plane is an example. Parked along the long, straight autobahn, many were shot up, others undamaged.





Members of the 66th, one with a walkie-talkie, peer around a corner in Dillingen. In the gutter lies a dead German.

moved into Scheinfeld, closing at 1910. No firing was done by this Bn today.

**Sunday, 15 April, 1945**

Bn remained in position and no firing was done as CCB was held up by blown bridges and a combination of artillery and small arms fire. Reports of strong enemy positions continue to come in. The Germans are using mines in great quantity and tanks are being used as artillery because of the shortage in artillery ammunition. It is estimated that they have 150 tanks which can be used in this sector. Civilians report that practically all bridges between Scheinfeld and

Nurnberg have been blown. Strong defenses are reported around Nurnberg.

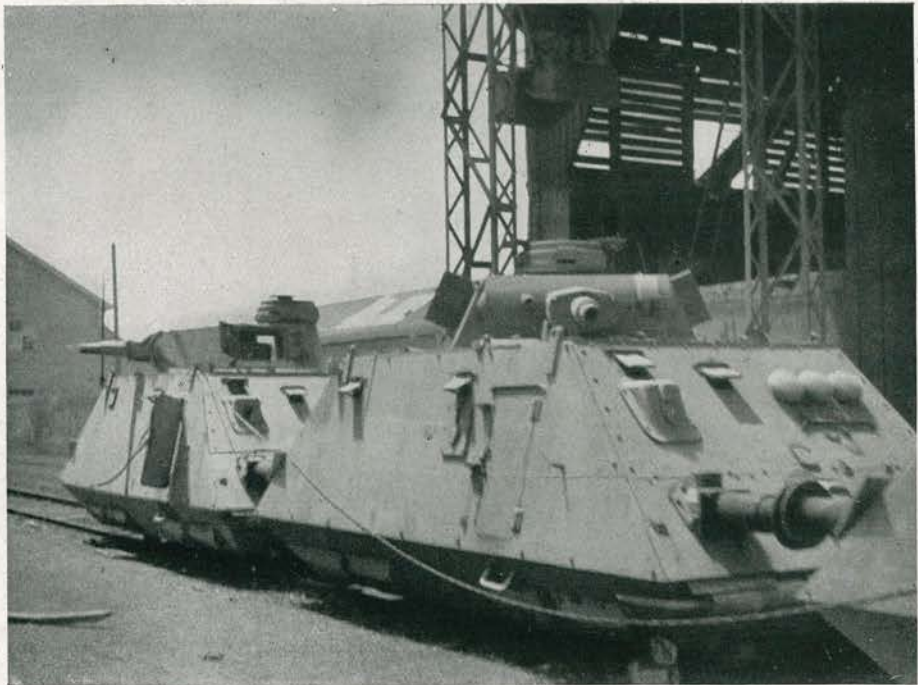
**Monday, 16 April, 1945**

Bn expected march order since early morning but it was not until 1600 that we displaced from Scheinfeld. We closed in firing positions at 2200 vicinity of Brauersdorf where "A" and "D" Btrys were already in position. "A" Btry fired two missions, one against an armored vehicle and one at suspected gun positions. The vehicle was destroyed. "A" Btry received some artillery shelling but no casualties were reported.



Engineers clearing planted demolitions from blockaded bridge in path of our column.





CCA overtook this "Heinie Express" south of Nurnberg.

The Div as a unit moved forward today. Good advances were reported although enemy armor, mines, and mortar, artillery and small arms fire was encountered. CCA took 319 PW's today.

#### **Tuesday, 17 April, 1945**

Bn prepared to displace at 0600 but march order was delayed and Bn finally displaced from Brauersdorf at 1150, closing in firing positions SE of Langenzenn at 1330.

CCA started attacking early this morning and they were immediately confronted by blown bridges, covered by small arms fire. Reconnaissance efforts to find roads bypassing the blown bridges and road obstacles were not successful. Consequently our progress was slow.

TF 1 occupied and held Cadolzburg. They were held up at Ammerndorf by 290 Krauts. At 0150 TF 2 will send a patrol into the town demanding its surrender by daylight. Missions fired include personnel in building, enemy gun position, suspected OP, 2 SP guns (Lt. Dupont adjusted and definitely destroyed one while the Germans destroyed the second) and the town of Cadolzburg. Good results were reported on all targets.

#### **Wednesday, 18 April, 1945**

Today witnessed, perhaps, one of the most confused situations we have yet experienced.

Bn started the day supporting the attack to bypass Nurnberg to the south. At 0900 official word was received that the Third Army was taking over the Nurnberg sector as our mission was changed enabling us to attack to the SE, later information revealing that our new objective was Nurnberg. Then, just before midnight, we received a new mission, being to block the enemy's retreat from Nurnberg. Consequently a good part of the day was spent on the road. We

pulled into an assembly area vicinity Heilsbronn at 1550 where we received 170 MM artillery fire. Bn displaced and closed in new area for the night at 2030 at the airfield, near Ketterbach.

#### **Thursday, 19 April, 1945**

In order to carry out our mission of blocking the enemy retreat from Nurnberg, we displaced at 0130 from the airfield. Bad roads held up our column, but by 1400 we had reached Weissenbronn. Lt. Boren, with the 66th inf, informed us at 1500 that his column had turned around and was coming back towards Heilbronn. This was followed by a message from Capt. Burtchell which stated that our mission was changed. We are now to establish road blocks at specified points. Our column turned around and at 1400 we proceeded on to our present firing positions, closing at 1615.

Lt. Miller started an adjustment on 12 enemy personnel but cease fire was given after the first round landed as the enemy disappeared. That was the only firing done except those used in registering "B" and "C" from their present positions.

Some idea as to the importance attached to the Nurnberg sector can be attained by the fact that the 12th and 14th Armored Div, the 3rd, 4th, 42nd and 45th Inf Div plus the 101st and 116th Cav Groups are assigned to this area.

#### **Friday, 20 April, 1945**

The day began quietly. Arrangements were made for hot showers and having clothes washed. Even a retreat parade was planned. However at 1100 all our hopes for rest were set aside as notice was received that TF 2 would move at once to Ansbach. Bn displaced from Muncherlbach at 1315. The mission of CCA was to move



MAP 7

The Twelfth's famed Dillingen bridgehead. Task Force 2 of CCA captured the bridge intact and TF 1 pushed up from Lauingen to reinforce and secure the area.

south generally along the 67 grid line with Wort the first objective.

#### Saturday, 21 April, 1945

Lt. Boren reported TF 2 receiving small arms fire and two btry volleys were fired, silencing the resistance.

Bn closed into final positions for the day near Kirkingen at 1730. Missions fired include two enemy convoys, mortars, small arms positions and preparations on the town of Dinkelsbuhl. Results unknown due to limited observation.

Good progress was made today as the enemy seemed to be withdrawing in wild disorder. We were held up a few times but the resistance was weak and quickly overcome. The most resistance encountered was in the city of Dinkelsbuhl where several missions were fired, Lt. Wolcott doing the adjusting. Reports of enemy planes in our sector are quite numerous and service btry was bombed by JU 88's this morning. No one was injured, the bombs landing in a nearby field. Lt. Lee captured an enemy motorcyclist who was unaware of the presence of American troops in this area.

#### Sunday, 22 April, 1945

This was a history making day for the 12th Armored Division. Troops of the 66th AIB were the first American troops to reach the Danube River. TF 1 and 2 of CCA reached the Danube at Lauingen and Dillingen respectively and TF 2 secured a bridgehead at Dillingen. The bridge had been prepared for demolition but our advance was so rapid it came as a complete surprise to the enemy and the bridge was not blown. This remarkable advance was made under adverse weather conditions as it was a cold rainy day with a little snow and sleet mixed in.

Task Force 1, in whose face the bridge at Lauingen was blown, turned north and passed over the Danube by way of the Dillingen bridge. Fighting fiercely against heavy enemy resistance the TF passed through and secured the town of Fristingen (Map 7) by dark. "A" and "D" btrys crossed into the bridgehead encountering heavy artillery fire and continued the march to firing positions at Fristingen.

Bn displaced from Kirkingen at 0700 and closed in firing positions at Dillingen at 1600.



Sign at Dillingen.



An M-7 takes the railroad bridge across the Lech River near Landsberg, Germany, as did the rest of the Bn that day.

Two Enemy planes were overhead tonight apparently intent on destroying our bridge across the river. The AAA boys destroyed one of the two. The bridge was also under artillery fire tonight. Lt. Boren, FO with 66th Inf captured 60 PW's in Dillingen. The Krauts were coming down a city street riding in trucks. Lt. Boren

opened up on them with his carbine, after which they all surrendered.

Monday, 23 April, 1945

Bn remained in position as we secured the bridgehead and awaited the arrival of infantry



Our Engineers' bridge and the remains of an autobahn span over the Danube. (But there was one they didn't blow.)

to mop up. Several fire fights developed to our rear in areas that had been bypassed.

The Task Forces were assigned patrol duties. TF 1 moved into position at Kicklingen. "A" Btry received artillery fire, was bombed and strafed so they displaced to Fristingen.

Missions fired today include inf in open, dug in, and in buildings, mortars and a horse drawn wagon convoy were also fired upon.

#### Tuesday, 24 April, 1945

Action today centered around a change in mission whereby troops of the 3rd Inf Div took over, relieving our troops for future operations, the nature of which has not yet been disclosed.

Bn had a reasonably quiet day except for enemy aircraft which were overhead on several occasions. "B" Btry claims credit for shooting down a plane early this morning. "C" Btry also downed one plane, the pilot of which baled out. Tonight "A" Btry was attacked three times, the planes coming over in groups of eight. "A" definitely destroyed two planes and claim two more probables. One group of planes attacked one of our cubs and to make it worse friendly troops shot at our cub too. Fortunately no casualties resulted.

"A" Btry had an unusual experience on Monday, 23 April. The tankers sent in a fire mission and "A", in position at Fristingen, finding the target out of range, immediately displaced forward to Kicklingen. Capt. Wilson was in the Bn CP at the time and looking at the map inquired, "Are those the front lines?" We replied that they were, to which he answered, "Well, if those are the front lines we are ahead of them!" About that time Lt. Gosser reported over the radio that "A" was displacing to their alternate position at Fristingen due to incoming artillery fire.

This amazing incident was the result of an error in reporting coordinates. The tankers gave

it 10,000 meters farther to the east than it really was. That is the story back of "A" Btry spear-heading CCA's attack from well in front of the front lines and firing to their rear into a bunch of confused Krauts. "A" took 64 PW's in this operation.

#### Wednesday, 25 April, 1945

Bn had a very quiet day as only three missions were fired, all by "A" Btry on enemy inf. Results were good.

The inactivity on the front in no way reduced the activity within Bn. Maintenance was continued on vehicles and on personal equipment. Hot showers were available at Service Battery and the men busied themselves cleaning up and washing clothes.

Reports credit Hitler with ordering the destruction of the Dillingen Bridge. In anticipation of such an attack TF 1 moved to Holzheim to protect the bridge from any possible ground attack. The 910th, 572nd and 441st AAA Bns are guarding the bridge.

#### Thursday, 26 April, 1945

Bn started the day expecting to remain in position for 24 to 48 hours. At 1100 an alert for CCA movement to an assembly area was received and Bn displaced from Dillingen at 1300. A message stated that enemy artillery was falling in the vicinity of Scheppach. It was still falling when our column reached that point. The roads were zeroed in and many casualties resulted. Fortunately no one from our Bn was injured although there were several close calls. Capt. Stahr, LnO from the 937th FA to the 493rd was wounded as was his Sgt. and driver. The medics were doing a magnificent job in caring for the wounded. The first aid station was hit and four of the medics injured but they carried on despite these handicaps.



The road near Thannhausen and an ex-Wehrmacht motor column.

We overran this heavy German machine gun which is dug in along the autobahn.



Firing positions were taken at Oberstall at 1700. Bn displaced from there at 2045 closing in new firing positions at Ziemetshausen at 2220. No firing was done from these positions.

#### Friday, 27 April, 1945

Bn displaced from Ziemetshausen at 0130 closing into firing positions vicinity Fortshafen at 0510. "A" and "D" Btrys rejoined the Bn, taking up firing positions in the same area. At 0935 Lt. Dupont spotted a column of "thousands of Krauts" to our rear, so the guns reversed their direction of fire and started adjusting on the Kraut columns. Lt. Miller took to the air and he started adjusting on the columns also. The Air Corps was notified and soon the P-47's were in action against the Germans. Lt. Dupont and Lt. Miller were adjusting two batteries each, at the same time, and, while no estimate is made as to the casualties inflicted, they will, no doubt, run high into the hundreds. Two PW's who were caught in this fire stated that it was very effective. Half of their company was wiped out as a result. The Bn spent the morning firing at these columns to our rear.

Displaced from Fortshafen at 1335, taking up firing positions vicinity Unter-Igling at 1620. Missions fired from these positions include AA guns, suspected mortar positions, artillery pieces and infantry. Results were excellent.

Capt. Wilson and Lt. Gosser captured 16 Krauts this morning. They were on a bridge blowing detail and had maps which showed the bridges to be blown. Capt. Wilson put their truck into his column and brought them on in.

Our columns overran a German PW camp today. 2700 allied soldiers had been held at that camp. Within the past 24 hours frantic efforts had been made to get the prisoners deeper into Germany. Cpl. McNaughton, "B" Btry, missing

in action since January 17, was one of those liberated. Cpl. McNaughton stated that Lt. Carlson, Lt. Bales, Cox and Kurtz, were all in that camp, but that they had been removed to Munich a few hours before the camp was liberated.

#### Saturday, 28 April, 1945

Bn started the day in hopes of an early crossing of the Lech River. Displacement, however, wasn't effected until 1342 and the Bn moved only two miles until column was halted. We didn't cross the river today.

Only one mission was fired. Lt. Czeiner adjusted on an artillery piece with results very good. He started another adjustment but before any rounds were fired he ordered cease fire as they displayed a white flag.

Midnight found the Bn still on the road waiting for an opportunity to cross the river.

#### Sunday, 29 April, 1945

Bn finally crossed bridge over the Lech River at 0320 and after that obstacle we rocked and rolled the rest of the day, covering 51 miles. We fired no missions and received no enemy shelling, except at one point just west of Wessobrunn. 7200 Polish officers and men were liberated today from a prison camp just north of Murnau. This city was a beehive of activity as the junction point of the 10th and 12th Armored Div's. The mission of the 12th AD was to continue on to Innsbruck but the 10th AD got to Murnau first and set sail for Innsbruck so our mission was canceled. Bn is awaiting further orders.

T/5 Herrman, Hq Btry, will act as one of our aerial observers, on the transfer of Lt. Miller to Flight officer's training.



German hopes and ammo dump blow up near Landsberg.



Roadside chow on a ratrace.



A 493rd FO kneels beside the road to adjust the Battalion on an enemy town.



Head of our column rolls past liberated Serbs.



Another Danube bridge by 12th Armored Engineers. New structure is superimposed in the supports of the old bridge — south of Gundelfingen, Germany.

#### Monday, 30 April, 1945

Bn was alerted to be prepared to move at 0700 with the objective, Innsbruck. This order was canceled at 1400 and we were informed that we would remain in present position for tonight. CCV of the French 2nd Arm'd Div was attached to the 12th.

#### Tuesday, 1 May, 1945

Bn displaced from Oberau at 0950 with the mission of blocking the Brenner Pass. Shortly thereafter, plans were changed and we pulled into an assembly area at Etting and waited for further

orders. We displaced from Etting at 1420 and closed into a new assembly area at Peissenberg at 1525. After getting all set up we displaced again, destination unknown, mission unknown. Column halted vicinity Feldkirchen.

#### Wednesday, 2 May, 1945

Bn displaced from Feldkirchen at 0830 after having stopped there on the road for ten hours. At this time we did not know our mission. At 1000, while traveling cross-country, Capt. Burchaell caught and informed us that our mission had reverted to the original one, of blocking the Brenner Pass. We closed in assembly area vicinity Bergham at 1145. At 1400 our mission was changed and CCA was to remain in present position and guard the prisoners of CCR.

#### Thursday, 3 May, 1945

Maintenance and rehabilitation was the mission of the Div today. In addition, prisoners by the thousands were returned to rear areas. All available trucking facilities were extended to the limit in taking care of these prisoners. Yesterday's estimate of PW's was 8000. It is expected that this figure will be bettered today.

"A" and "D" are billeted in Holzkirchen.

At 2330 Bn received notice to have billeting parties alerted. Elements of this div may contact the Russians. Their ground troops will identify themselves by a white rocket signal, and their armored vehicles will have a white triangle painted on the left, right and top of the turret.

#### Friday, 4 May, 1945

Bn spent the day in anticipation of a move to other areas. Apparently the Div is out of action and will return to rear areas for refitting and reorganization. It is unknown at this time what our future assignment might be or where it will take us.



The spearhead of the column at the gates of Landsberg. The column set speed records starting here.





G. I. "sidewalk superintendants" lend moral support to the extrication of an M-7.

Lt. Col. Hartman, Bn CO, spoke to each battery in turn today. He commended the men for their splendid cooperation and gave them full

credit for their part in bringing the European war to such a complete and victorious ending.



## WE'VE SEEN — WE'LL REMEMBER . . .

Among our most important and lasting recollections are those of the people of Europe, principally the men and women who were in Germany as slaves and those upon whom were inflicted the terrible methods of elimination by the Nazis. These pictures are examples of the scenes we witnessed and evidence of the base processes which have so lowered the German nation in the eyes of other people of the world and so greatly in the estimation of Americans. These are the atrocities which American statesmen and English Parliament members flew to Europe to confirm.

We saw them — and nothing can refute that memory.

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“Approximately 1200 sick and wounded Russian, Polish and Italian PW’s were released from the German POW hospital today as our advance apparently made the Germans feel insecure of their positions. The tragedy of the Nazi oppression against these peoples cannot be given in words. So inhuman was their treatment by the Nazis and so strong was their desire to reach American lines that somehow, some way, the sick gained the strength to walk, the crippled had the courage to limp, hobble, even crawl to reach our line.

“In this pathetic procession were tuberculars, men with pneumonia, men with legs amputated less than a week, men diseased, men undernourished. Yet, with bodies so tortured, with every possible effort to break their spirit, the desire for freedom still burned bright. ‘Let us rest and build up strength, then we’ll fight the Nazis again.’ That is their spirit, unconquerable, after four years of the worst treatment the heinous Nazi mind could think of.”

— M/Sgt. Parker H. Wineman  
S-2 Report, 5 March, 1945

“How many of you saw the Jewish concentration camp? After viewing the sad plight of these people is it any wonder that the civilized world is up in arms against such a barbaric, brutal race of people that will allow diseased, insane Nazi minds to bring such disgraceful conditions into this world?”

— M/Sgt. Parker H. Wineman  
S-2 Report, 27 April, 1945









# Headquarters

The view from a private fox hole . . .

A member of each battery in turn records what he remembers, and the collected fragments of activity from the personal side of war crystalize into a biography of life in an armored artillery battery. Deadly monotony, exhausting tension and all in-between have deeply seared the memory of every soldier who was there. The fear wont be forgotten but neither will the relaxations, the Mauldin jokes and the drinks and passes . . .



CAPTAIN JOHN A. DEVINE



Lt. Dean A. Boren



Lt. William Rosgen



Lt. Howard J. Clinch



Lt. Robert W. Mullin Jr.



Lt. Richard K. Potter

# HISTORY OF HEADQUARTERS

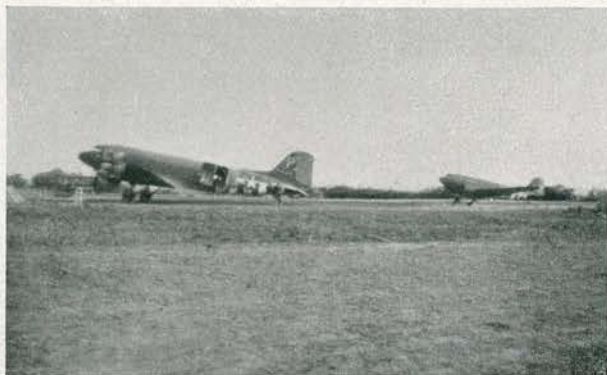
A couple of dock workers casually glanced our way, shrugged, and went on with their work. A few girls lined up to catch cigarettes and oranges thrown from the boat as it eased up to the pier at Bristol's bustling port, Avonmouth, England. A battered group of over-laden "soldiers" struggled and staggered out of 1-A and 2-D; slipped and fell down the gang plank of the USS Tasker H. Bliss. The day was Sunday, October 1, 1944. Headquarters Battery, 493rd Field Artillery Battalion had arrived in the ETO. That's the start of this tale of woe which began for most of us back in Camp Campbell, where we fought the battles of Bumpus Mills and Jordan Springs, and continued through ten weeks of maneuvers, and reached it's zenith during numerous assaults on the high ground south of Camp Barkeley's Elm Creek. For some of us, this was anticlimaxed by one night in New York, and for all, rounded off by eleven beautiful days on the North Atlantic.

Late in the afternoon of the first, we arrived at Camp "W" a troop carrier base, and gazing at the C-47's and gliders, we all wondered if we were to be Airborne Armored Artillery. That first night in England was a pretty cold one for all of us in the pyramidal tents, but more blan-

kets soon arrived and with the exception of the almost constant presence of rain and mud, we managed to be fairly comfortable. It was at this locale that we had our first introduction to that great English institution "The Honey Bucket".

After a 3 day stay at Camp "W", we were well canned into busses for Windmill Hill. Once again it was pyramidal tents but this time, there were wooden floors, stoves, and six men to a tent. Bicycles were the rage here, and Ed Huam, John Sewell, "Fat Boy" Weller, Ed Moore, Al Bramble and "Red" Davis all possessed one at various times. Coming back from Andover one night, Moore received a couple of bruises when he ran into an iron rail fence. Ray Larson and Hub Haney each had a good racket at Tidworth, the former working at the camp switchboard and the latter at the PX, where we received our first ETO rations. Obie Arthur and Cary Smith were kept pretty busy as the battery barbers. It was here that "Dutch" Talstein was taken from our ranks and sent to Division Trains on D/S. The first vehicles were drawn which included the peeps, three quarter tons, and two of our three FO tanks.

We all had passes to London besides numerous visits to nearby Salisbury, Andover, and Tidworth. McCarthy and Haney spent most of time abusing the "Limeys" around an Andover pub. The weather was rotten the whole time and



"... Airborne Armored Artillery ..."



"... pyramidal tents ..."



"The weather was rotten ..."

we were plenty thankful for our stoves. Willie Wilmeth let his get a little too hot one night and when the honorable Browder, Lewis H. came off his relief of guard there was nothing in the tent but a hole in the floor where the stove had been. Of course the hole was burning merrily and with a maximum of excitement the fire was finally extinguished with the help of fourteen buckets of water and a little sand.

On the 6th of November, the advance party, consisting mainly of drivers and radio operators left for Cherbourg to pick up and ready the combat vehicles. Sailing from Southampton or

being camp commander and Milton Hopper Camp Sgt. Major. Parker Wineman took the job of battery first sergeant and did a swell job, while Eddie Moore had a soft racket as permanent CQ. Once again mud reigned supreme and few will forget wading through it to get to "A" battery's kitchen. The last night at Cherbourg was the most miserable as we had ripped apart our dog-houses and the wind and rain knocked a few of the tents down. However, there was a beautiful bonfire raging in the battery area all that night.



"... at Camp Ennis ..."

a former Dutch destroyer, the Channel crossing took over three days which included a full night in the battered Cherbourg harbor. This party took over for the original advance party from the States at Camp Ennis located at Montagne, northeast of Valognes on the peninsula. We were well represented on the party, Colonel Hartman



"... the kids at Auffay ..."



"... our dog houses ..."

In the meantime, the remainder of the battery had sailed from England on LST's complete with hot showers and coffee. The crossing again was a long one, this time the boats landing on the beach at Le Havre. From there they proceeded to Auffay, France, north of Rouen. The first night, was spent by the side of the road with



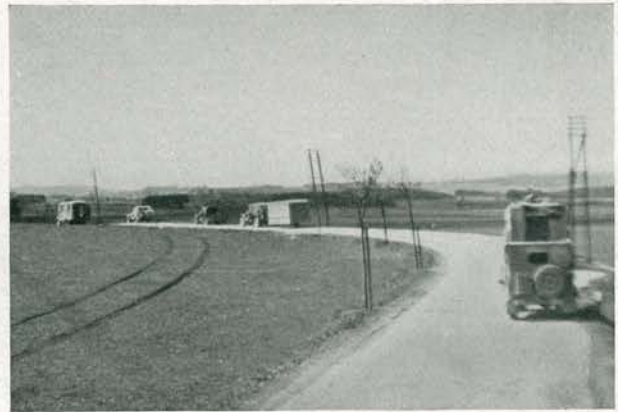
"Guthead" Oatts made the mistake of leaving his underwear around one day while taking a bath. Glenn Kirby needed a rag to clean his gun and when "Gut" got out of the tub all he could find was an oily cloth.





“... moved into town ...”

imaginary mines all about. After a day in the field, a schoolhouse and an adjacent building were occupied by the battery, with Battalion Headquarters setting up in the local Chateau. Probably our greatest friends on the continent will always be the kids at Auffay. Cries of “to the school!” would bring them streaming out of the kitchen where they spent all of their spare time, and back to the little school house. Then there was the Thanksgiving Dinner at which there were over thirty of the kids stuffing themselves to the hilt. Yes the teachers were there to, and naturally they got some of the attention. Did I say some? It was while this dinner was progressing that the advance party, moving up



“... the long march ...”



from Cherbourg to Auffay, ate canned chicken for dinner.

Next came the long march to Luneville, including a night in Soissons. In Luneville, the battery moved into a spacious chateau on the edge of town and prepared the last details for combat. Col. Hartman, Major Meier, Capt. Devine, Carline Spears, and Bob Seaton made a trip to the front to get some idea of what action

When the airfield was strafed during the Herrlisheim incident, Abe Siegel sought cover under a truck. His face was a little red, when he was told, after things quieted down, that he had been lying directly under the gas tank. They were shooting tracers too!



"... a temporary casualty ..."

was to be like. After three days, at Luneville we moved into the line to give general support to the 44th Infantry Division. We saw our first dead Krauts around the corner from the CP and suffered a temporary casualty when "The Greek" was missing in action for 4 days after having been left behind as a road marker. At 1635 on December 5, we fired our first round into the town of Volksburg, at a range of 4500 yards and a compass of 800. Major Meier gave the S-3 commands, "Red" Davis the HCO data, and "Junior" McCarthy computed.



My vote for the bravest man in the battery goes to Pfc. Charles Magee, who took it upon himself to leave the shelter of a half-track and venture forth into one of the most miserable nights man has ever known. It was below zero, wind blowing 80 m.p.h. and snowing like blazes. He showed absolutely no fear or regard to his own safety in going to see a man about a dog.



"Rounds fell intermittently ..."

Two days of combat seasoning and we joined the Division at Rahling, France. The S-3, Survey, and Message Center sections moved into town during the evening while the rest of the battery remained on the road for the night. It was during that night, to the accompanying cries of "Counterbattery" from Rufe Romans and a mad scramble for the cellar, that the first incoming rounds were received. Rounds fell intermittently for two days but there were no casualties in the battery. During this time Capt. Wilson was on detached service with the battery as Battalion S-2 and on December 7, while out on an FO mission, Lt. Bales received a hand injury and was evacuated. Our next move was to Singling, France and it was here that a round hit above the door to the FO house while a crowd was gathered around the kitchen and inflicted our first serious casualties. Everette Carter, one of the best liked fellows in the battery, died of wounds after having been evacuated. Also evacuated was Lt. Potter with a shrapnel wound in the hand. Otto Nelson and Johnny Pavolich both received slight wounds and were treated at the aid station. Celestine Stabb received the Bronze Star for the prompt medical aid given these men while under fire. It was here that our good friend "Mike" joined us to remain with the battery all during combat.

After a one day rest in Wolfskirchen, during which time the men encountered Schnapps for the first time and our first reinforcements "Speedy" Verstraete and George Blanchard arrived, we again moved into the line at Bettwiller. Milton Hopper, Don Walsh, and Jeff Herrman, out of the S-3 section, were sent to the firing batteries to gain experience while a man from each battery came up to fire direction for a short period for the same reason. Of these 3, Hoyle McBane of "C" battery stayed on detached service with us for a long time. While in Bettwiller, Lt. Wright, Kirk Lewis, and Garth Bybee of the survey section attempted to establish an OP but spent most of the time diving into foxholes while the Kraut threw mortar shells at them.

We crossed the German frontier for the first time December 24, when we went into Ludweiler, Germany. "The Chiefs" Christmas dinner wasn't



"... one day rest ..."

until the 26th of December, but it tasted just as good, and Bud Wright came through with our first real bundle of Christmas packages on Christmas day and helped the celebration along. Major Morgan left us for Division Artillery, and Capt. Devine took over as Battery Commander. New Year's Eve proved to be just as wild in Germany as back home. Fire direction had a huge midnight salute ready for the Nazis but they jumped the gun on us by counter attacking and things were popping all night as 2180 rounds were fired. All three FO tanks raced forward to support the cavalry and the liaison planes were forced to make a night flight to an unknown field to get out of the way of the Kraut. On New Year's night, March Order was given three times and bed rolls were being rolled and unrolled like mad all night. Lt. Steffenauer joined the battalion at Lauterbach where the battalion had made a strategic withdrawal.

At Witttring France, the next position, Parker Wineman, our able S-2 Sgt., stumbled off a cliff in the dark and sprained this ankle pretty badly. He stayed with the battery, however.

After a miserable cold night march, we arrived in the most memorable position of all, Bischwiller, France. Here we undoubtedly took the worst beating, a fact on which the whole division agrees. On January 16, two FO tanks were lost.



"... the survey section ..."



"... Germany ..."

The following day, Lt. Carlson had his second tank knocked out, and then he and Lt. Bales boarded tanks of the 43rd Tank Battalion and disappeared into thin air with most of the battalion. It was in this position that our Headquarters battery and Headquarters battery, Division Artillery had their little gun duel, and a slug passed through the leg of Lt. Boren's pants. Ed Moore, was awarded the Bronze Star at this position for meritorius service.

On the 23rd of January we moved into a "rest" area at Vendenheim, France, but this again failed to last one day as half the battery was awakened around midnight and moved into Reichstett with the remainder coming up the next morning. The first night in Reichstett the



The time was two o'clock in the morning. The place Bischwiller, France. Sgt. Schanes and Cpl. Arena were typing and proof reading like mad. The current SOI had been compromised and it was up to the Message Center to get new copies out to the various sections. After several hours of strenuous work the boys finally relaxed, satisfied that each and every section had a copy of the correct SOI. As they were preparing to get some much needed sleep the telephone rang loudly. Sgt. Schanes slowly put the receiver back on the table after a few short words with Div. Arty. This newest SOI had just been captured by the Jerry.



“... the Kraut.”

CP shared a room with some belligerent and drunken French medics. However, the CP was moved the following day. Here, while reinforcing the French, we had our first of a long series of contact with them. Aldo Cassin, because of his ability to speak fluent French, had to be transferred to the wire section in order to operate the switchboard with the French who were in the next room. Telephones rang with the cry "Terminee" and radios with "Reponee" and all was in a state of general confusion. Capt. Murray began his long stretch as Liaison Officer with the French, a job which required a great deal of patience, understanding and tact. "Red" Davis



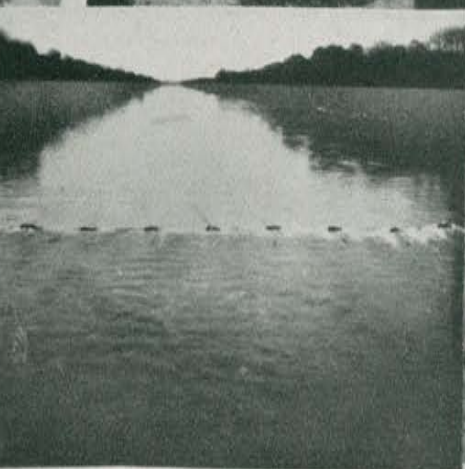
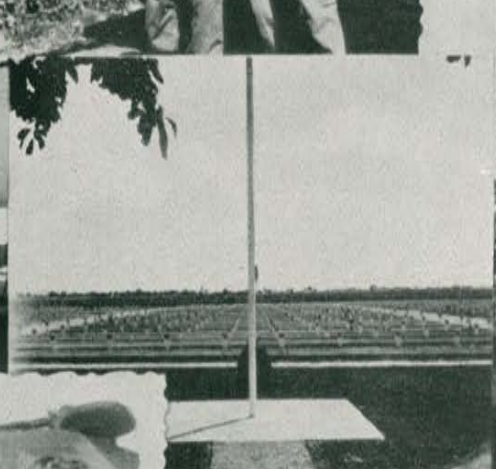
Money Bags



A triple threat



Bullets and shells weren't the only danger at Bischwiller; ask Alex, the Greek, Lewris and Charlie Crook. They were operating the radio one bitterly cold night and had closed the half-track in an effort to get some degree of warmth. Running the motor to charge the battery, it didn't take long for monoxide to go to work. Gathering their senses, they realized something was wrong and managed to help each other out of the track, but the gas had already done its work. After a feeble yell for help they collapsed in the snow. "Hub" Haney heard the yell for help, and he and Lou Browder came running to the rescue. They put two and two together, figuring out what had happened, and immediately started artificial respiration — result only two headaches. After hearing "The Greek" and Charlie sing one of their alleged duets we wonder why, oh why, did Haney and Browder have to know how to give artificial respiration.



accompanied him to Strasbourg and returned after a few days after which Ed Haum took over, both having a very enjoyable time. The first quota of Paris passes arrived and the names of Archie Palmer and Charlie Bogardus, out of the FO sections, were drawn out of the hat. Web Spencer received his promotion to FO Sgt., and Lt. Weldon arrived as an FO reinforcement. There was a quota of 10 men to Strasbourg for eight hours each day, and practically all had a chance to go. Spencer and Bill Dale received the first to Brussels, and it was here that Fernando Padilla sweated out the looming possibilities of having to pay for his peep that was "Borrowed" by the French. Reichstett proved an interesting stop.



One we didn't take



"... the most memorable position ..."

Next came Colmar, the first action for which we received any real credit. At Colmar, Major Carstens and "Doc" Gordon stumbled over a cellar of good wine, but the word soon leaked out and the raids began. Major Meier had a narrow escape when a 30 cal. machine gun was accidentally fired and two rounds grazed his forehead. As we moved south to close this pocket our next stop was the second Herrlisheim. Here,

a dead civilian had to be cleared from the CP before it could be set up. Farther down in Neiderentzen, Major Carstens had a scare when he stepped outside the CP and saw the guns pointing to the rear. This had been ordered as there were still Kraut in the Voges Mountains in that direction. Lt. DuPont started a registration on that sector but had to stop when a friendly vehicle came tearing down the road. Captain Murray and George MacLean were involved in an accident with a French half track and were both seriously injured. The journey from the "wine pocket" was a glorious one. Headquarters battery was split amongst the 3 firing batteries and the long march to another front started once again.

During our drive to meet the French and eliminating the Colmar pocket, and on or about the 7th of February, the battery was in position at Neiderentzen. It was along about this time that the officers had received a liquor ration and had divided it among the men of fire direction. The drinks were plentiful and it didn't take long for the boys to get their share. Now with thirst comes hunger, so Clem Crick, then a computer, brought out a can of that delicious "C" ration, namely, meat and beans. He set the can on the stove in the radio room to heat, and then took off for parts unknown. That was the last time the members of the radio room saw Clem that night. They remembered him though, along about 2 AM. Alex Miller was on shift, and the rest of the crew were soundly sleeping. All at once there was a blast like a 105 of the best kind had landed in the room. Willie Long was the first to gingerly lift his head out of his sack, and he saw Alex getting up out of a corner, wiping beans off his neck with one hand and sweat off his brow with the other. Doc Dougherty sleeping next to Long, had one of Willie's hands engulfed in both of his and saying over and over, "What was it, what was it?" The air was heavy with the pungent odor of burned meat and beans and the walls were splattered with the stuff at about shoulder level. The walls of the can were found flat as a pancake and clean as a whistle, but neither one of the two ends were ever found. Now the question in mind, is, will the boys of the radio room be given another battle star, or have a bronze star awarded to Sgt. Miller because of "meritorious performance of duty with strict disregard for the safety of his own life".





**Bogged down**

Back in Singling again, we occupied the same buildings we had occupied exactly two months before. Bob Mullins and his crew returned from the lines with a tank load of German guns and "Schemer" Vogel driving a Ford V-8 truck. Vic Guadiano took the truck and turned it into a first class radio workshop. Lt. Wright went to



"... out of the FO sections ..."



"... an interesting stop ..."

It was one of those days when the Battalion was racing madly cross-country in hot pursuit of the fleeing Kraut and Bob Seaton with Lt. Lee were sent ahead to keep track of the fast moving column. Relaxing at a corner where they had stopped to mark for the battalion, talking was interrupted by the sound of a vehicle coming their way. As they turned to see what was coming, a Jerry on a motorcycle rode nonchalantly by, waving and smiling. Lt. Lee and Seaton were so surprised that for a moment they just sat and stared. Finally coming to their senses, they leveled their guns and shouted in their most fierce voice "Halt", which the Kraut promptly did. After searching him completely — and to their disgust, because he had no pistol — they sent him to the rear and went back to resting and waiting for the battalion. Some say it is combat fatigue! Who are we to say?

Paris to attend the I and E school and Glenn Kirby was the lucky man who drove him. Bernie Kaufman returned to the battery voluntarily from the hospital where he was confined from injuries received in an accident in Auffay.

The next stop, Wolferding, was another stop that will be remembered pleasantly by many men in the battery. The populas was exceptionally friendly here. Joe Gosda assumed du'ies as Mess Sgt. and the mess was set up indoors for the first time.

Up in Etzlingen many went up to the quarry to glimpse some of the 1200 sick and wounded Russians released from a POW hospital. The sight of these men mangled by the most tortuous Nazi brutality was not one to be forgotten.

In St. Nikolaus, back in Germany again, they finally got Parker Wineman to take a pass and





"... still Kraut ..."



"... to another front ..."

he, Hopper and Kaufman went to Dijon. The red cross girls paid their first visit to the battery, and Paul MacManus let one of them drive his tank.

The last stop before the rat-race was Klein-Rossel, another place of many personal memories. "Yamo" Kemick and Jeff Herrman started for Paris but after a days ride to Division Trains they found all passes had been cancelled.

Then it came. The famous mystery division's dash to the Rhine. It was all pretty uneventful as far as the Artillery was concerned with looting abandoned German military vehicles the







Liaison

main pastime. Near Ludwigshafen, Clem Crick and Ed Haum took their famous midnight stroll. At Schifferstadt fire direction center was broken up and the computers were sent to the batteries, MacBane returning to his native "C", Walsh to "B", and Haum to "A".

After a short stay at the non-fraternization town of Hafloch, we proceeded to cross the Rhine at battered Worms. There was very little trouble, and the excitement of the rat race seemed to die down until we neared our primary objective, Wurzburg.

At Waldbrunn the battery took a position on a hillside in a field, and on the following day four Tiger tanks poked around the corner of the adjacent woods in plain view and fired direct fire into the position. About the only casualty was Larson's truck which suffered numerous and assorted holes and flats. One piece of shrapnel found a stack of air mail envelopes, cancelling all of the stamps. "Cookie" and Weller conducted fire from an OP and forced a withdrawal of the tanks. Kirk Lewis and Rufe had a narrow escape when the ack-ack fired a round of 37 MM 6" above a window out of which they were observing. Johnny Bishop, Ray Adamczyk, Jack



"... Wolferding . . . remembered pleasantly . . ."



"... dash to the Rhine."



That reception the Kraut gave us in Schwanfeld is one that will not be forgotten and card players Larson, Lewandowski, Hainrich, Miller, Masi, Bramble, and Johnson and kibitzers Weller and Moore are no exceptions. The game had scarcely begun when the rounds started to arrive. For safety's sake the game was moved to the far side of the house, but suddenly a shell hit the house next door, knocking out all the windows and covering the table with plaster. This failed to faze the boys, however, so, picking themselves up from the floor and wiping off the table, they continued to deal the cards. Something was wrong, though. There was one hand too many; Alex Miller was still under the table. Everyone stood fast, even the kibitzers, until the next round hit, a direct hit on the house. It was a good thing everyone made a dive for the cellar, because a post mortem showed several nice shrapnel holes in the door next to the table. That was the last game Weller and Moore ever kibitzed.



"... very little trouble ..."

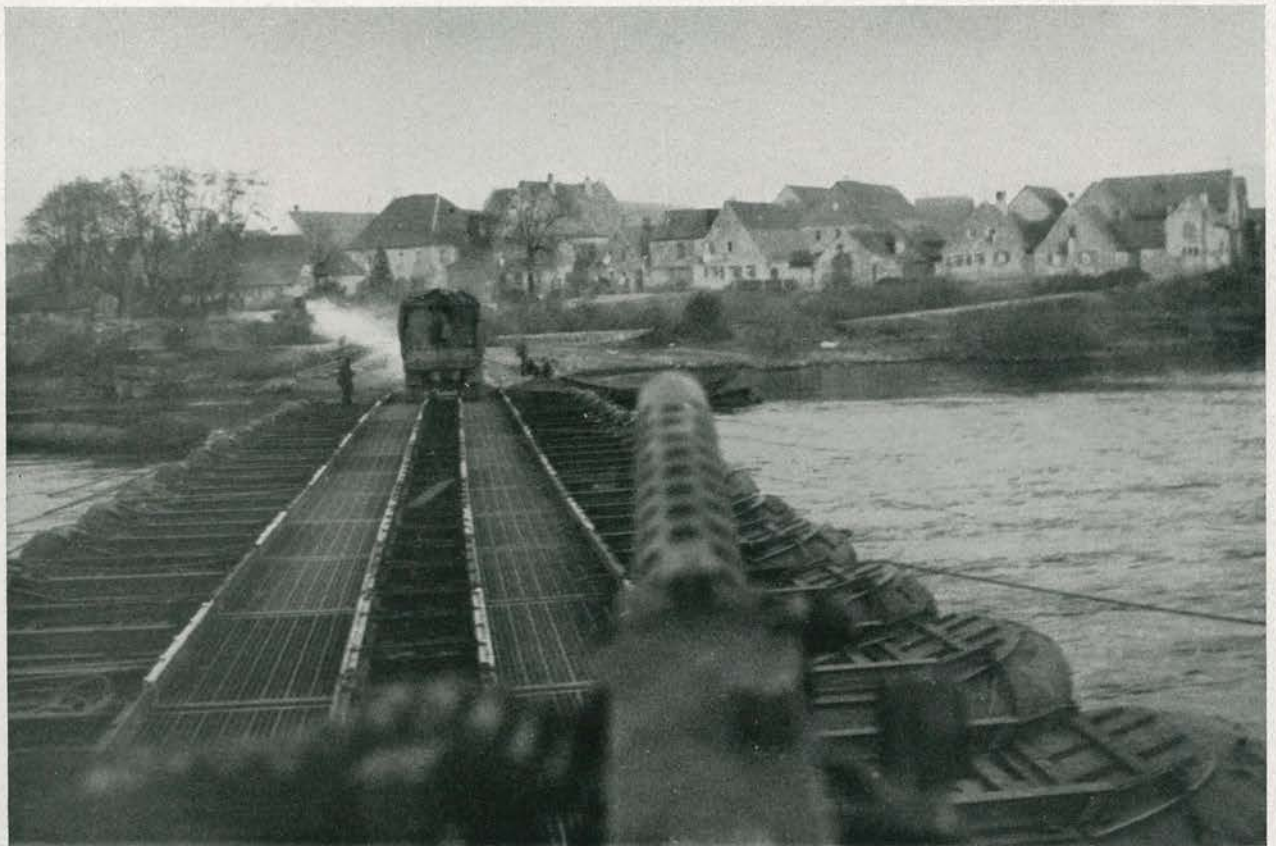
Pfeifer, Shorty Rollins and Grechen returned from Luneville after spending a week trying to locate the battery.

After crossing the Main river, we started the unforgettable advance towards Schweinfurt. Jerry Lyden joined us at Zeilitsheim and at Herrlisheim a shell landed in a house occupied by Ancil Carithers and Milo Hagan, killing a young boy in the next room. Three more reinforcements, Lloyd Edland, Bob Cordero, and Charlie Barnett joined us at Unter-Speisheim. While moving into Schwanfeld the battery received both air bursts and direct fire. Lt. Clinch & Cookie were more frightened when Phil took off cross country in the Peep than they were by the bursts.



"... crossing the Main ..."

Capt. Devine rode into town under the windshield armor of Floyd Peirson's half track. The following day over 100 rounds came in and the CP was forced to move twice by direct hits. Hagan, Arthur, and Cary Smith were kept pretty busy coming out of cellars to perform maintenance and heading back in when the shells fell too close. After again crossing the Main, outside of Heilbronn, south of Nurnberg, we were again



"... at Volkach."



"... the unforgettable advance ..."

shelled. Very little of this fazed the kitchen crew and our chow was always there. Joe Gosda was setting out water cans here while the rest of the battery was deep in foxholes. It did look as though Alfred Ming was trying to dig his way



Phil

Norm Vogel pulled a good one on Lt. Woolcott one day early in April. Deciding they could not take a certain town before dark they backed off to the woods, Vogel firing all his ready ammo on the way. As he was going down for more, one of our colored infantrymen jumped into his hatch and asked permission to fire the gun. Norm tossed him up a fresh belt and the dough started to blaze away. All the commotion startled Lt. Woolcott, who was observing out of the other hatch, and he turned around to see what the hell was happening. First he took just a glance; then his eyes flew open. He hadn't seen the dough climb in and called out, "I knew you were dirty, but not that black!" He was somewhat relieved when Vogel poked his head out of the hatch.



"... a pretty hot time ..."

home a few times. Seme, Dale, Ahola and Turco were not doing so bad either.

Vogel, McCarthy, MacManus and Paul Smith had a pretty hot time of it in the Danube Bridgehead. During constant shelling they had a hard time getting any sleep. Once during the night McCarthy and Smith had to answer calls of help from a wounded infantry Lt. MacManus spent the remainder of the night in the tank.

Shorty "G-2" Rollins had a bad break when he accidentally shot himself with a pistol while in Johnny Bishop's supply truck. He was evacuated and is doing OK now.

There was only one big incident after Dillingen. Once again we were shelled on the road and a few landed uncomfortable close to the Exec, S-3 and Survey halftrack. Willie Wilmeth and Eddy Yudin performed first echelon medical maintenance on a couple of infantry boys who had been hit by an incoming round until real medics could get there. After it was all over, Willie and Eddy were worse off than the boys that had been helped. Duds chased Clem Crick all over one house, and Hank Beltram also helped carry some wounded men into the medics.



And then there was the time that Sgt. Wilmeth and Pfc. Smith, S.S., got lost and wound up 500 yards ahead of an Infantry division CP at an as yet untaken road block.





“... The Danube ...”

After that, there wasn't much more, – the concentration camp at Landsberg, and finally the Alps. Also there was the Polish PW camp at Murnau where Kappie was kissed by a Polish General.

There was a premature celebration the day before V-E day but we knew that was coming.



“... at Landsberg.”

The 493rd had just pulled into position across the Main from Wurzburg when four red-hot lads, Cpl. Wilmer Cain, Pfc.'s Benny Arechiga, Bill Hare and Kirk Lewis, with a peep, rode over the crest of the hill in front of the battery to investigate a reportedly abandoned Wehrmacht motorcycle and sidecar. When about 200 yards from the accursed thing their hearts sunk, for the figures of three other GI's were seen around the bike. 50 yards farther the peep jerked to a sudden stop, for the three figures resolved into three Germans – two with burp guns one with the easily recognized panzerfaust. With Cain and Arechiga holding the fort (if you can call our “heavily” armored peeps “forts”) Bill and Kirk hit the ditches on either side of the road. Fifteen seconds later, as Phil would say, “Dem bees wuz buzzin”. The Krauts, not especially dense, had likewise “taken to the sod”; and over their heads and in the dirt before them carbine slugs bounced and whizzed. Two made a dash across the road, and Cain swears one changed step when he fired. A delicate bit of grey-green clad posterier hove itself into Lewis's sights and the kid vows



“... and finally the Alps.”



“... kissed by a Polish General.”

he made it distinctly quiver with a little .30 caliber agony.

Finally, after about a clip-length of time, a white handkerchief on a stick was raised from a foxhole, only to disappear, when Arechiga, who hadn't seen it, fired another shot. After another eternity of hollering, the flag reappeared, and Kirk, with a stupid grin on his face, stood up and started to walk towards them – too loot-happy to appreciate Bill's frantic shouts about “Another one behind the motorcycle!”

Sho'nuf, there was one there – complete with panzerfaust and bewildered look – for after all, it's not often the Krauts had opportunities like these to see four wild artillerymen on the rampage! So the three Krauts turned out to be four, greed-crazed Lewis grabbed the officer's pistol, and Bill spotted two more Heinies creeping up the hill. A few hasty shots were taken in that direction, and four Americans with four prisoners took off in the opposite direction. The battalion medics scored the targets that day. Six holes in one sergeant (all minor) and two in the Officer (not fatal). Not bad for amateur infantrymen.



"... near Dillingen."



Another incident in the life of FO 2 was the time when they were racing into Dillingen attempting to help save the bridge across the Danube, which, by the way, in Archie Palmer's exact words, "we done". The tank was parked near a nice two story house and Chet Pierson with Charlie Bogardus were half out of their hatches as was Cpl. Nelson, Sgt. Palmer and Lt. Potter. Everything seemed to be well under control when seemingly from nowhere came a shower of cement, and flying brick. Everyone was conspicuous by his absence for a matter of minutes and when finally heads began once more to poke out of hatches, there was observed one more hole in the house by which the tank was parked and it was obviously a new one. Once again, that now familiar theme rang out, "This is no place for me" and the tank took off in a cloud of dust. No one was hurt, however, and it was just one more experience in the life of FO 2.



"... ME 109 ..."



The "Phoney" is famous for a great number of tales, but this is one of the best. Some GI stopped Grechen on the road asking where he could find an Artillery Mechanic. With a familiar Yeh, Yeh, Grechen directed him to one of the firing batteries.



Moustache

Because they were never with the Battery but rather with the Div Arty Air Section, a separate history of our air section should be written. The two planes, C-3 with Lt. Schumann and Lt. DuPont, and D-4 with Lt. Crenshaw and Lt. Miller, probably contributed more to the effectiveness of the battalion than any other single factor. They also have a few tales to tell.

Lt. Schumann and DuPont had one of their worst experiences on their initial combat flights. Being a little green at the game they flew well out over the Maginot Line, and had everything thrown at them.

During the big attack New Year's morning the planes were forced to change fields in the middle

of the night. Lt. Crenshaw and Miller flew to a previously selected field and then proceeded to guide C-3 in by flashlight and radio. D-4 returned to the old field during the day and damaged a landing gear in landing. Ed Kerr and Chuck Larmore went up and worked well into the night by flashlight to make the necessary repairs.

Again in this section the toughest stretch was Herrlisheim. On the 16th and 17th of Jan, because of lack of obs. and due to bad weather the planes were up constantly for the purpose of relaying radio messages. On the afternoon of the 19th, D-4 spotted 50 Kraut tanks counterattacking and both planes spent the rest of the day and into the evening directing fire. There was beaucoup 20 MM ack-ack around too, just to keep things exciting.

It was on the rat race that the planes really proved their worth. They were the eyes of the entire column, without which it would have been impossible to see what was ahead.

Wurzburg and Schweinfurt were the two hot spots, for ack-ack. At Wurzburg 28 rounds of 88 MM were thrown at C-3 and how they ever got out with only "the loss of a coat of paint" is a question that will remain unanswered. Two of the guns doing the firing were spotted by D-4



"... our air section ..."



"... Charlie 3 ..."

and Lt. Miller directed fire, knocking them out. After returning to the field they were strafed by two Jets and Lt. DuPont received the Purple heart for a wound under the chin.

On the 24 of April, 7 ME 109's jumped C-3 but the worst scare of that incident was the friendly ack-ack shooting at C-3 as he dove for the ground to get away from the Heinies.

From 3500 to 5000 Krauts were spotted retreating on the 27 of April and both planes directed ed fire on them and them turned the job over to P-47's.

Shortly before the end Lts. Miller and DuPont took exams for Ln pilot training. Lt. Miller was accepted and made plans to leave on the 15th of May while Jeff Herrman acted as substitute.

Rufe Romans and Glenn Kirby went on a prowling expedition down the alleys of Dillingen before the arrival of the battalion. For safety's sake Glenn gave Rufe his Luger and kept his carbine for himself. Rounding a corner, they spotted a Boche at port arms looking the other way. "Kammen-zie hier!" cried Rufe with a Texas accent, leveling his pistol at which the Boche wheeled and fled. Kirby, who hails from the wild plains of the West, where men knock each others eyes out at 97 feet, fired three shots at point-blank range. Sensing — "lost" on all three. Around the house after him went the brave two. Into a house and up the stairs went the fleeing one, still closely followed. He ducked down a hall, and was glimpsed disappearing into a room. Again a shot was fired at his vanishing posterior and again a miss. A head stuck out and almost got a powder burn. Then there was a repeat take three times with two different heads. Finally, ammo running low, the white flag was run out, closely followed by Kraut. "Bringen-zie dien comrade", commanded the stern Rufus, expecting to see the owner of the other head that had been popping out appear. Thirty Hitler-men sheepishly filed into the corridor, arms extended and joined, and lined up outside in ranks of three, an impressive sight. Two U.S. infantrymen came up, disappeared into the cellar and brought out six officers, avec pistols. Rufe and Glenn searched thoroughly, only to be left holding the bag.



"Rufe" Romans, our chief survey halftrack driver will never forget the day he stepped into the outhouse in St. Nickolus, Germany, and the floor gave way with him. Gad! What a mess!



FO 1: Palmer, Nelson, Bogardus, Pierson



Communications Section: Top: Weller, Blanchard, Grechen; Bottom: Hunsinger, Guadiano



CO Section: Lewandowski, Wright, Johnson, Gowett, Schanes, Miller





Supply Section: Bishop, Adamczyk



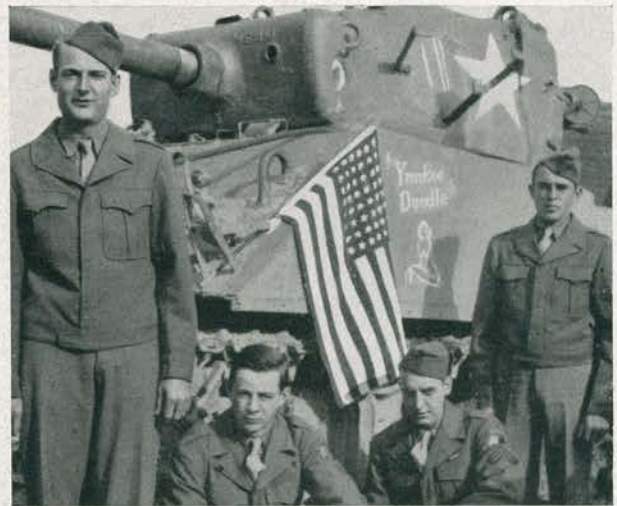
Messengers: R. Smith, Seaton, Cassin, Spears



Maintenance Section: Hagan, C. Smith, Lt. Clinch, Carithers, Arthur



Wire Section: Sitting: Moore, Larson; Standing: Bramble, Masi; Kneeling: Barnett, Magee



FO 3: MacManus, McCarthy, Vogel, P. Smith



S-2 Section: Top: Hopper, Long, Jones, Yudin;  
Bottom: Riel, Daugherty



Btry. Administration Section: Cook, Kaufman, Phillips



FO 2: Spencer, Huetig, Pavolich, Hope



Executive Section: Gardner, Arena, Lyden, Wineman,  
Beltram



Medics: Babcock, Staab, E. Nelson, Kemick, Frazier



Liaison Section: Browder, Crook, Lewis, Edland



Survey Section: Top: Kirby, Pfeifer, Romanus;  
Bottom: Hare, Lewis, Bybee, Oatts



S-3 Section: Hainrich, Verstraete, Thomas, Davis,  
Kapucinski, Haum, Pearson, Walsh, Herrman

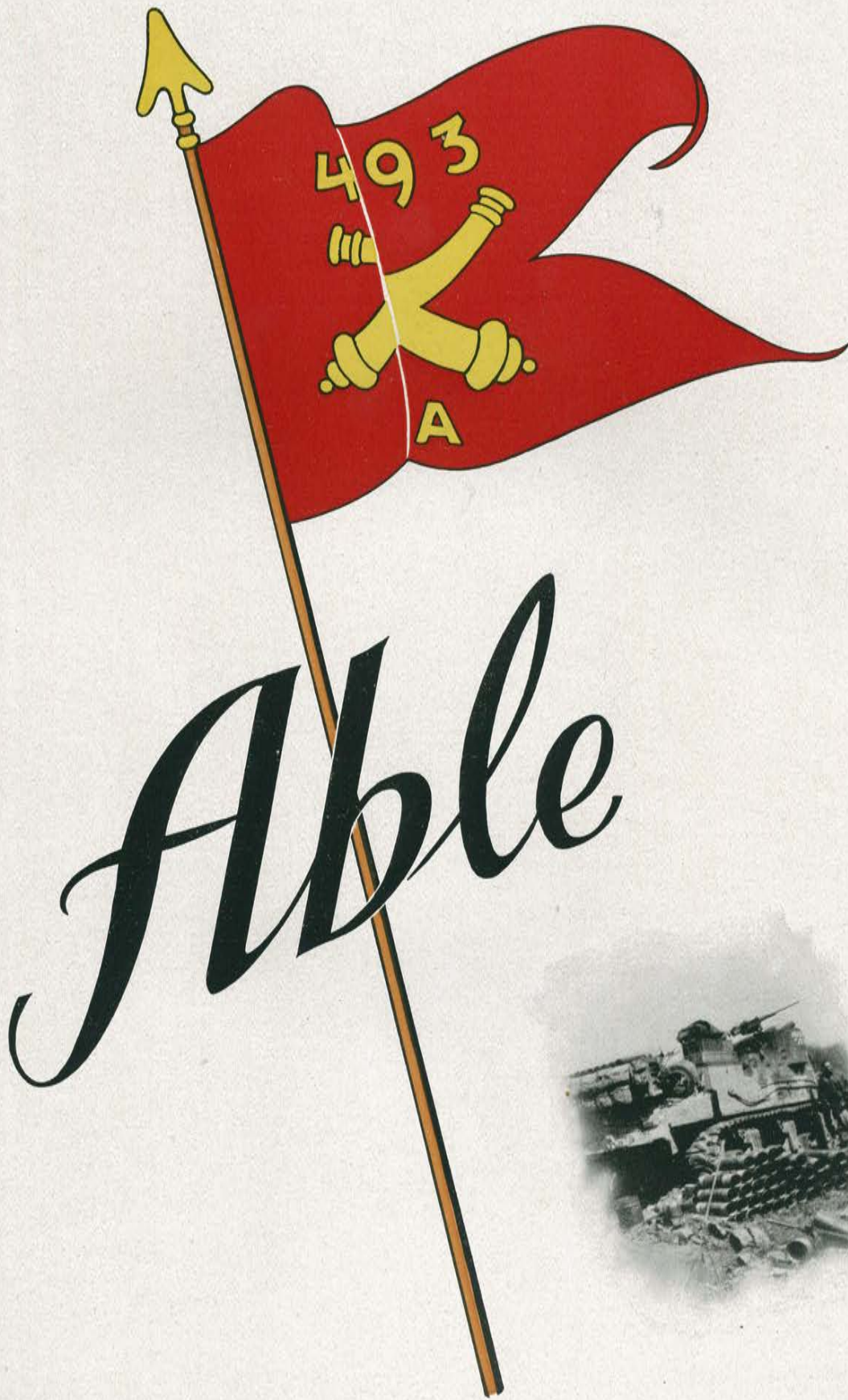


Air Section: Slitkin, Lt. DuPont, Siegel, Lt. Schumann,  
Kerr, Levison, Larmore, Lt. Miller, Van Hueklon,  
Lt. Crenshaw



Mess Section: Top: Mike, Levack, Gosda, Ming, Nick;  
Bottom: Seme, Dale, Ahola







MAJOR WILLIAM P. WILSON

Entered military service as a private February, 1941. Graduated OCS, Field Artillery School Fort Sill, Okla., August 4, 1942. Assumed command of Bty. A, 493rd AFA in February, 1943. Graduated Officers Advanced Course, Fort Sill, August, 1944. Awarded the Certificate of Merit for heroic achievement while performing duties of Bn. S-2 during Battle of France. Awarded the Bronze Star Medal for meritorious service while commanding A Btry. and D Btry. of 43rd Tk. Bn. during Battle of Germany. Promoted to major for outstanding performance in combat, May 31, 1945. Home: Mayville, Tenn.



Lt. Paul H. Gossler



Lt. Vernon R. Wolcott



Lt. Warren H. Weisz

# MEMORIES OF ABLE BATTERY

We, of Battery A, have played our part in the making of History since activation at Camp Campbell, Ky. The following is a resume of some of the serious and humorous incidents that the Battery and the men of the Battery have encountered since activation, through to the end of combat operations. Although many of the men that formed the original Battery are no longer with us, there are still some that remember Camp Campbell, Ky. with all its mud, rain, sleet, dust and rare sunshine. The memory of the obstacle courses, A. G. F. tests, Hellcat Camp, and the many field problems will always remain with those that were there.

Tennessee maneuvers with weekends in Nashville, and movement from Tennessee to Camp Barkeley, Texas, also leaves its impressions. At Barkeley we received our final training and the long awaited furloughs. It was here that the second section with Massey in command, Heckman as gunner and Borgen, A. Johnson, Narowski, Bernheisel and Galenski as cannoneers tied with the Sixth Section, composed of Shea, Kocik, Stein, DeMartino, Marlow, Hamer, Hall and Waldron in a six week contest in gunnery and soldiering, both sections receiving a three day pass to Dallas.



Barkeley: Standing: Kennedy, Cox, Kennely, Putney;  
Kneeling: Kurtz.

Leaving Camp Barkeley on Sept. 10, 1945 we arrived at Camp Shanks, N.Y., our P.O.E., after a three day train ride. During processing many of us managed to get a short pass into New York City. A few days later, looking like pack mules, with everything but our vehicles hanging around our necks, we boarded the Navy Flagship Tasker H. Bliss. If anyone had any trouble getting down the two foot ladder with three feet of equipment on, the sailors were very helpful and gave them a shove which sent them sailing to the bottom without any trouble. Dick Duccini solved the problem by throwing his equipment down and falling down after it. Gregory Goodman didn't

enjoy the trip, as he spent most of the trip on his bunk, seasick. After debarking at Bristol, England, we loaded up into the smallest train that we had ever seen. The Battery spent a few days at Camp W, near Newbury, then moved to Camp Windmill Hill. After taking roll call and finding Duccini missing, someone found him lying in the mud, covered by his duffle bag. Marlow carried his bag, after promis-



Like everybody else, the RO crew drops everything for mail call.

ing him that if his ankle really wasn't sprained he would beat the devil out of him. During our stay at Windmill Hill, everyone in the Battery had passes to London, Salisbury and Andover. The English beer may have been queer tasting at first, but Schmalfeld learned to like it so well he drank it out of his helmet.

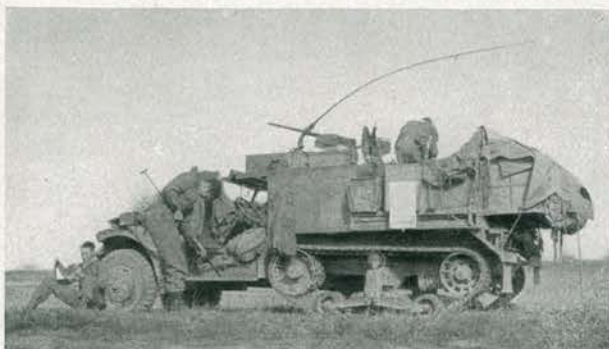
Upon leaving England half of the Battery landed at Cherbourg to pick up our vehicles and the remainder of the Battery landed at Le Havre, moving into camp at Beaunay. It was here that the wire, Exec., and Ammo. sections had to kill rats for self protection. The hay barn they lived in was also occupied by rats that were reported as big as dogs. Doc Therrien, Ed. Massey, Doc DeHaan and Joe Arsenault "struck a home" in France, due to the fact that they speak French fluently. Leaving Beaunay, we moved to Luneville where we prepared for combat. It was on this trip that Zeb Schmaltz and Mate Campbell lost their carbines and had to practically sign their life away to get new ones.

On Dec. 5, 1944, at Weisslingen, France, our second section, Massey, Heckman, Borgen, A. Johnson, R. Johnson, Bernheisel and Narowski, fired the initial round against the enemy, physically activating our Battery and the 12th Armored Division into combat. On Dec. 7, near Rahlhing, John Ward, Therrien, Kuras, Guckin, Arenz and Wright were standing around a fire talking when a very distinctive whistle was heard. A



Fourth section, "before"

few moments later we picked ourselves out of the fire and got back on our feet. It was the first counter battery fire that we had experienced. No one was hurt but everyone was plenty scared as the shells dropped occasionally during the night. It was at Singling on Dec. 14, that A Battery had their first casualty. Pete Varrone was hit by shrapnel, and died the following day. From here we pulled back to Wolfskirchen, supposedly for a few days rest, but everyone work-



"Home" to the RO crew

... and the time is set to go so we all fall in and our Gosser takes over. We only had a small mountain to go up with this truck load of stuff on our back; every man was about ready to drop dead and then we'd get the command cadence, so cadence it was. This kept up the entire ten mile hike to the train. But thank Critz we made it. We load up on the train according to our numbers, with bed rolls around your neck, overcoat in your arm and that dam gas mask in a hangman's loop around your neck. This didn't last long before we were getting off the train again, dropping mess kits, overcoats, guns, helmets and barrels of sweat. Here we go all the dry landers and what not on a old garbage boat to cross the Hudson. Our well known farmers in the Btry were just sure that was the boat we were going to cross the ocean on and others thought it was the Queen Mary. With all hands aboard we reached the pier and now for the death march up the gang plank...

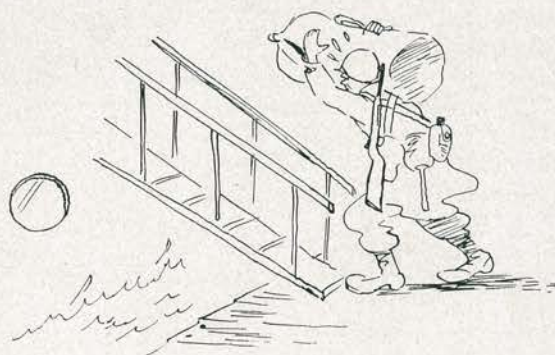
- This paragraph and those following are extracts from George Carr's classic saga of the fate of "A" Btry, LEAST WE FORGET.

ed harder than they did in combat. Leaving here we made our first trip into Germany, going into position near Ludweiler on Dec. 24. The next day Able moved into position on the edge of Lauterbach. It was there that we received our first big scare, in the form of a counter-attack on New Year's eve. It was on the trip to Herbitsheim, France that Tommy Moorhead ran into the third section's trailer, ruining it and scattering ammo all over. Able moved into Bischwiller on Jan. 8, never thinking that it was to be one of the biggest battles we were to encounter. Able will never forget this position as it cost us several fine soldiers. Steve Foster, Fuzzy Cox, and Joe Kennely were FO ing with the infantry and



German tank and Maginot pill-box near position at Singling

were cut off when the infantry company retreated a few hundred yards. A platoon of infantry and four tanks were sent out to try and get them back to the company, but a couple of tanks were knocked out and the infantry were stopped, so they had to return to their own lines, leaving our men still cut off. A smoke screen and protective barrage were laid down but they were still unable to get out. Soon after this we lost communication with them. Foster was killed and Cox and Kennely were taken prisoner. Lt. Hill, Dorrell Moore and Jack Kurtz were out with another infantry company, with Allison as their driver. Allison stayed back with the infantry vehicles while Lt. Hill, Moore and Kurtz went with the infantry on foot. Lt. Hill was wounded in the leg by enemy small arms fire and evacuated. Instead of returning to the Bat-





tery to organize a new party, Moore left Kurtz at the Infantry CP and taking a doughboy for a radio operator and an officer to point out our front lines, he returned to the front to adjust fire. He was adjusting on an 88 when it spott-



French Billets

ed them and let go with several rounds of direct fire. The officer and radio operator were killed and Moore was hit in the leg, making amputation necessary. Moore received the Silver Star and a promotion to S/Sgt. Able is proud of Moore and the job he did. Kurtz moved up to Herrlisheim with the Infantry CP and was captured when the CP was overrun by the enemy. Allison narrowly escaped capture, when he moved up to Herrlisheim with the Infantry vehicles, by hiding with his peep in a barn and escaping when the opportunity arose. Massey went with Lt. Wolcott on a liaison detail and ended up in the hospital with a severe case of

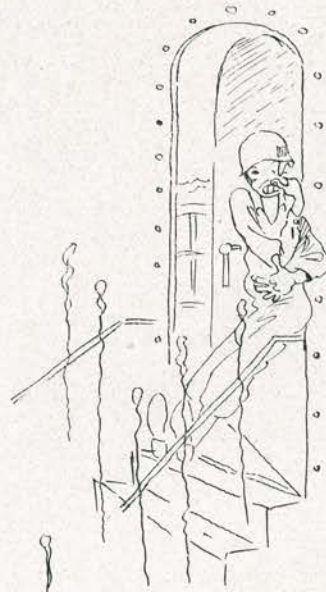
... It was a strange sight to see but it was true the entire Btry stayed sober all the way over. That is, there was nothing to drink on the ship ...

... We reach England and was threw off the ship and chased into a limey train. What a joke that was. It looked more like a string of stage coaches than a train but it moved and got us to another place where we were loaded into busses and this English girl was there drunk as a hog and showing every body her silk pants she had from America ...



Wright up a pole. "... and out would go the phones."

... lets not forget the honey buckets and the starve to death look we all wore during our stay there. Also, if you remember it was here that Gen. Allen took over the Hellcats. Brave man this Allen two Generals had tried it but both got busted and left the division ...



... we sailed on a English ship and the food was the worst I've ever saw. The coffee was like water socks and underwear were washed in. No beds at all and inspection every night but we soon out stunk the officer and he wouldn't come any farther than the top of the stairs ...

lobar pneumonia and pleuresy. It seems that he wasn't quite up to crawling in the snow, dressed in wet clothes and carrying a 510 radio on his back.

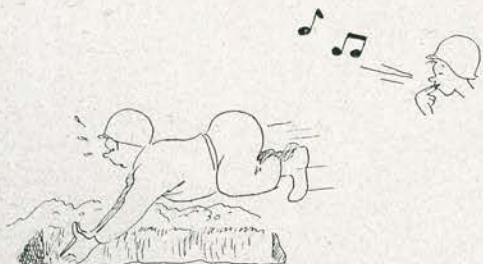
The fellows back in the battery position did not have a quiet time either, as the enemy dropp-



Carr, Guckin, perform maintenance on the "Who Ask Ya?"

ed shells in occasionally during the time that we were there. Zincon, Ward, Coker and Wright had a busy time trying to keep wire communications in. Bickling, Carr, McMonagle, Fox, Goodman, Jones, Schmalfeld, Putney, Guckin, Bunch, Campbell, Sewell, Damron and McDonald were

... were getting shelled. People started to dive under everything, match boxes, pieces of paper, and you'd of died if you could have seen our cooks digging. The fat pollock who couldn't dig a sump hole in the states had a hole ten foot deep in two minutes and every time some one would whistle he'd jump in ...



living in box cars until a shell landed in a car a short distance away. Exit box cars and enter basements.

We moved to Brumuth, staying there a few days, then going to Reichstett where we started getting passes to Strasbourg. Here we got Lt. Weisz, transferred from the 495th AFA Bn. The Exec. section lost 3000 francs by unknowingly burning a box that contained the money. After a few days at Kilstett, we pulled out for the Colmar area. The kitchen truck with Rundberg, Rufener, Degliomini, Stedham, Kremer and Poydence, got lost going through Colmar and were within a few hundred yards of the front line when the RO peep caught them. Casey Courter was heading for the Battery position from Colmar when he hit a shell hole, turning the peep over and wrecking it completely. Al Trainham was a little peeved when he and Gangi returned from Paris and found that he no longer had a peep. Lt. Weisz, Capehart, Homer Morris, Arenz and Allison went FO ing with the infantry but failed to see a single resisting Kraut. Meanwhile the boys in the Battery position captured about 60 "Heinies" and a large number of Lugers and P 38's. Shepard took a walk in the woods after deer and returned with two "Heinie" Officers, one of which was an "SS". We made another trip through the Vosges, this time heading north to the Forbach and Saarbrucken area. While in position at Etzling we received some mortar fire and heard our first Nebelwerfers.

We moved back into Germany again, this time at St. Nikolaus, where Shep and Therrien again went hunting, and returned with a deer. Here we picked up Robert Wiatrowski, better known to the men as Bob. At that time he could not speak English, but under the guidance of the Battery he has become a true GI, vocabulary and all. Moving to Klein-Rossel put us back into

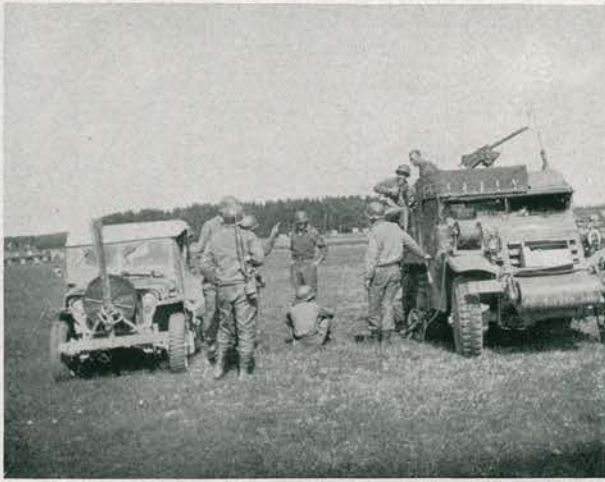


Wire crew and peep, "The Great J.R." take a break.

... Our Booth made a pot of coffee or at least he got blamed for it being the lowest ranking man in the section and nobody could drink it so what happened Pfc. Booth got a dishonorable discharge out of the so called kitchen and went bag and baggage to Chief Davenplaces Cannon section. God what a pot of coffee ...







Hot Poop at the Exec.

France again where the men could talk to the civilians. Schmaltz and Therrien went for a hike in the woods and returned with six "Heinies" but no pistols. Rundberg went hunting and brought back two nice deer.

It was the middle of March when the 12th Armored Division was borrowed by Patton's Third Army to lead the drive to the Rhine. Then we saw our first action in the true roll of Armored Artillery. During the week of March 18 to 25, we assisted in taking dozens of towns, moving day and night we "ratraced" across Germany. On March 22 the Battery moved into position on the bank of the Rhine River near Ludwigshafen, Germany. Here the cannoneers stood on their M-7s and watched the effects of their fire, as they destroyed one enemy AT gun after another and leveled the buildings of Ludwigshafen. Leaving Ludwigshafen to be mopped up by friendly infantry units we turned south and raced to meet the Seventh Army. Contact was



Battery column along the autobahn and a "jet"

made on March 24 by elements of the 92nd Cavalry. The Division was withdrawn to prepare for the crossing of the Rhine.

Back with the Seventh Army again, we crossed the Rhine at Worms, on the night of March 27th. From here on Able got a work out. CCA was split into two Task Forces, with Able and Dog Batteries, Capt. Wilson in command, composing the Artillery support for Task Force 1.

... Old Fox The Apple Knocker from Virginia was at the controls of the old grease wagon down the hill we came around a turn half way and ended up out in a mine field. After a bit of sliding around we came to a stop and pulled the good ship Screwloose back on the road just in time to see that dope from "B" Btry do the same thing only he didn't do it right and slid into a bank and sat there and the lever snacher behind him in a M7 hit it broad side . . .



Tense moment on Easter morning. Enemy tanks were just over this hill. The P-47 was shot down in our position.



Bath for Schmaltz

Dog Battery was made up of the six assault guns from the 43rd Tank Bn. The Able Exec. section had a busy time plotting, computing and running fire direction for both Batteries.

Near the town of Erbach, Germany, we met our first heavy resistance. Lt. Wolcott operating as FO, adjusted High Explosive and White Phosphorous preparations on the town and surrounding area. The Task Force then moved in and cleaned up the town, permitting us to continue the attack.

Leaving Erbach we moved forward meeting only slight resistance until the Task Force reached the Town of Armorsbach. Here we were held up by enemy MG and small arms fire from



Tiger and Otto the rag man.

... Good old service btry come in with a new story. They sent us word that half the german army had jumped out of air planes and were just about a mile from us and already they had shot up a peep and a six by four. Then they packed up and tookout for St. of Auld. A short time after this B and C Btry come back down the road and we were left to spend the night. We fired quite a bit that night in fact they shot up all the ammo and had to send the Ammo rustlers out for some. Things quieted down after the germans got shot and the rest of our stay there was pretty peaceful except for the train we never got ...

the town. Lt. Wolcott called for another preparation to soften the town, and the Battery occupied a firing position in a valley a thousand yards east of Armorsbach. It was soon discovered that the hills surrounding the position were full of enemy infantry. The first section with Davenport in command, Mixell as gunner, and Booth, Hamrick, Baker, Luther, Fritz and Turrell as cannoneers moved to the edge of the position and brought direct fire on the enemy surrounding the position, while the other guns leveled the town of Armorsbach. Enemy Infantry were observed moving in the town of Weilbach, on our left flank, and reports were received of an enemy counter-attack forming in that area. Lt. Gosser adjusted artillery fire on the town and the enemy Infantry from the Executive half-track. Soon white flags began to appear from the windows of the houses in the town, but a blown bridge prevented our forces from entering.

The third section, with Owen in command, Arsenault as gunner, and Gross, Knight, Gault, Constante and J. Morris as cannoneers, and taking Becker along to yell at the Krauts, moved out of position to help the first section with the direct fire. After a few rounds of White Phos-



Rat Race home life

phorous had been fired into the enemy foxholes, the M-7 moved out to round up the Krauts, but march order was received before the round up was well under way. Thirty prisoners were taken and many enemy were killed as a result of the direct fire of the First and Third Sections.

The Task Force moved through Armorsbach and made a break through of twenty miles during the afternoon. Just after dark heavy resistance was met in the town of Nassig. The Battery was ordered into position to fire a preparation for the assault by the Tanks and Infantry early the next morning. During the night fire requested on the town of Wertheim, 9000 yards to our north. Using a 1/100,000 map to obtain data, 36 rounds of H. E. and W. P. were fired, causing several large fires to break

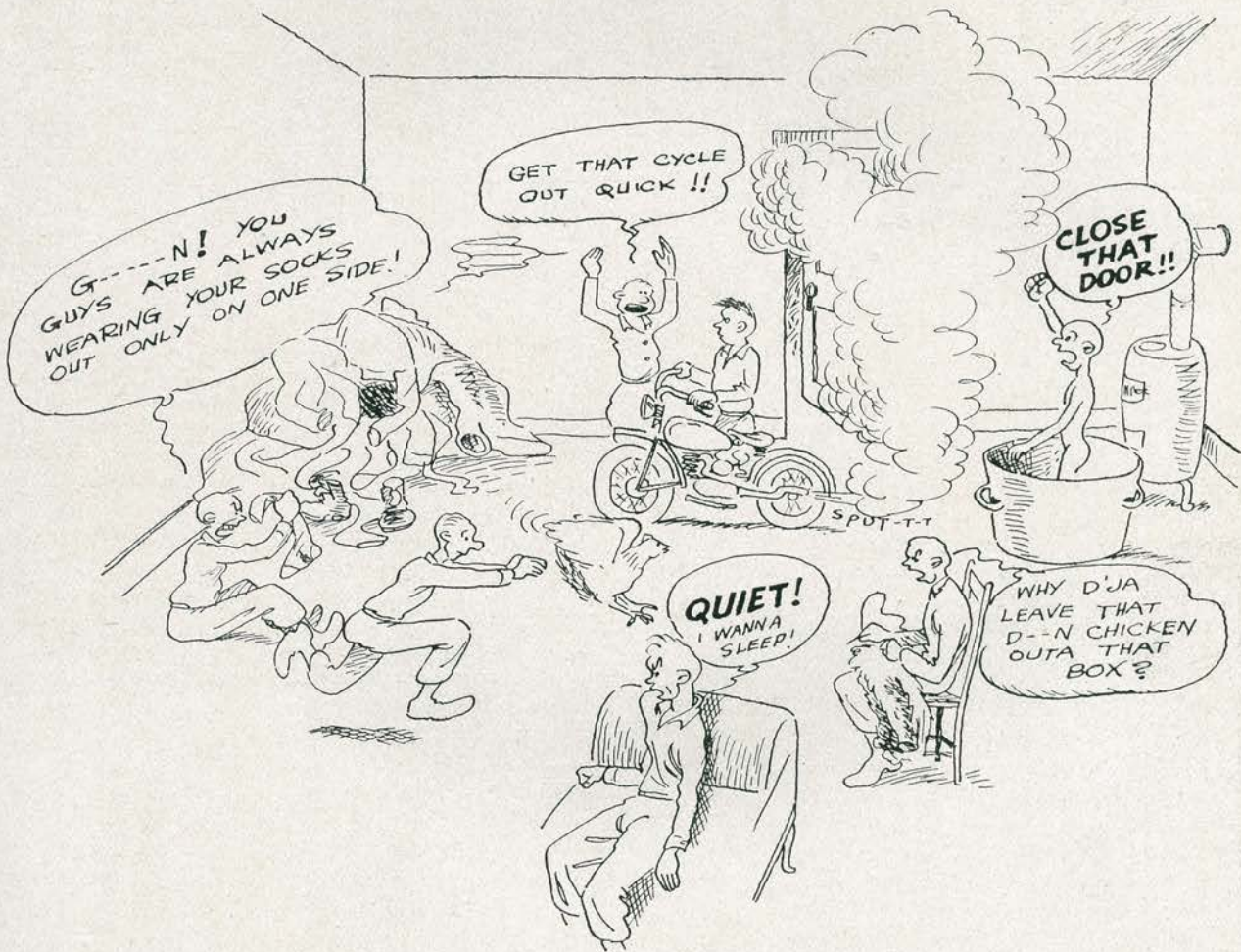
... This is what got me all the years we spent training on pitch the shelter half to the left HOO! We didn't pitch it we lived in houses like human beings ...

out in the town. Next morning over 600 rounds of 105 mm were dumped on Nassig, killing 150 Germans, resulting in the capture of 164 more and practically burning the town to the ground.

Moving on to the southwest we occupied position with the remainder of the Bn near Waldbrunn late in the afternoon. Early the next morning, Easter Sunday, two P47's were shot down in flames to the front of our position and a third crash-landed in the forward edge of our position. Four enemy tanks broke out of the woods several hundred yards ahead and began to fire. One direct hit was made on an AA trailer in the center of the position. The Battery began firing concentrations in the area of the

tanks and Owen and Parkers' tanks were moved on the hill near the position to try direct fire. With the help of the P47's two of the tanks were destroyed and the other two retreated into the woods. Another was destroyed later in the day.

After moving through Wurzburg we had to spend the afternoon sitting, as the road ahead of us was receiving artillery fire. When the fire ceased we pulled into position on the edge of Unter-Pleichfeld. We had just laid the battery and the fifth section, Miller, Ellses, Clark, Stephens, Hartman, Hensley, Mead and Nicola, were adjusting on our first fire mission when we received counter-battery fire.



... Living in a house is quite a ordeal after spending a few months living in pup tents and cow barns and what not. This is what happened to the greasy four at Lauterbach. The first thing was Otto the rag man moved in with us and we already had Sgt. Joe Turrel with us, playing nurse maid to him till his toe got better so he could walk.

One afternoon this room we were in looked like a bar room after a big night. Otto called in all the salvage in the Btry. Old shoes, socks, rain coats, underwear, and no one knows what else. This only took up half the room and left the rest open for others. John Fox the apple knocker and George Carr were working on a motor cycle out side and it got so cold so that was brought in the room. Sgt. Bickling was sewing up his old fur jacket he found in some house and Sgt. McMonagle was standing in a wash tub

taking a bath. This required two big tubs, one to hold the ice which was melted on the stove and the other to catch the water he splashed around the room. With everything so messed up as it was in comes Allison with a live chicken in a box and turns it loose to go flying around the room. The motor cycle started and that filled the room with smoke. Otto was screaming at the guys for only wearing their socks out on one side. Bickling was cussing Allison for turning the chicken lose. Fox was yelling to get the cycle out side quick before it stoped so he could ride it. McMonagle was yelling to close the door to keep out the cold, and Joe Turrel was crying to keep quiet so he could sleep. A ask you is it any wonder a soldier gets battle fatigue ...



Kitchen pulls into battery area during the "Battle of Nassig". Stew even there.

The first round landed beside one of the Anti-Aircraft halftracks, killing one man and wounding three others. The second round landed beside the fourth section's tank, killing Parker and Marble and wounding Zeglin and Therrian. We march ordered, leaving wire, aiming stakes and trailers there in the field. Silas, a service battery driver who was delivering rations at the time, was wounded by one of the several shells that landed before we could get out of the position. Tommy Moorhead did a good job of getting the remainder of the fourth section out of



The castle of the King of Bavaria overlooks our column near the Main River at Wurzburg



The "7 Sad Sacks" in repose.

... Our stay at Bischwiller was not dull as the days we spent trying to take Elm Creek from Hankers cowboys. To start with we did not pitch shelter halves to the left mark. Part of the battery was put in a old factory with a glass roof, of course the glass was shell proof, at least some of the guys thought so because when the shells would come they'd run in ...

... had been out to the cannons pulling the tubes as far back as he could and putting in some kind of recoil oil. When he got back as far as the ole box car, what happened, a purple heart hit right in front of the half track. The blind one upon hearing the noise (he couldn't see the smoke) jumped out of the iron coffin and ran for the nearest thing in his field of sight followed like a scared rabbit by the local rag man Otto Schmalfeld. The two made the trip safely ...







the area. We pulled back a few hundred yards, laid the battery and continued our fire mission. Lt. Gosser stayed back and gave DeHaan a hand evacuating the wounded men. Doc DeHaan did a really gallant job, staying back and patching up the casualties, with shells still dropping all around him.

In position at Opferbaum we had trouble with enemy planes coming in at less than 25 feet altitude, too low to fire on without possible harm to friendly troops in the area. We pulled back to Nordheim and crossed the Main, to attack Schweinfurt from the other side. It was here that we picked up 450 bottles of champagne, much to the delight of everyone in the battery. Friesma, Bradford and Weimer came to the battery at Herlheim, and Russell, Bruce, Christian, Doyle, Gebhard, Lynch and Woods joined us at Unter-Speisheim. It was while in position at Unter-Speisheim that the Btry fired its record



"J. R." and "The Indian" creating communications.

number of rounds in one day, all being dropped into a German camp a few miles NE of the town. Around the camp the Krauts had over a dozen 88's and many infantry dug in with mortar protection. This enemy concentration held up the task force for over 36 hours.

Driving on toward Nurnberg, Able succeeded in taking several towns. Wetzlar, while on the way back to the position area, captured the town



Five of our M-7's dived into this "peat bog"

... Them germans were no dam good. Also was Fuzzie Cox another good kid that we all thought for sure had got it, but he didn't Thank God. And Old Joe Kennely Dam Irish man. We all said prayers for him. Dont forget Jack Kurtz, he was along, we prayed him back to the states to. And I know everyone remembers our Jefferson P. Hill, he got shot in the leg and went back to the states. Wonder where the hell he's at now. Oh yes on this party was Edgar Massey. He wanted to go to see what happened up front. So he went along to find out for himself. I hear he had two or three radios on his back. Something like a pack mule I think he looked like and just about as smart because he didn't know when he had enough. Kept going until he passed out and was carried back by the medics ...

... we had a small fire going and the wind blew the can of gas over and we had plenty of fire. I know every one remembers how hard the ground was frozen but frozen ground dont stop a scared cold G.I. from diging a hole, he goes right through it like it was sand ...

... another purple heart nobody collected. The rest of the night was the rough part for the gun sections and the private line crew we carried with us, better known as the wire section. That night the germans would shoot them purple hearts in and out would go the phones. Right away The Ex. Officer would call for the Old Goat, the old Goat would call his stooges, John Ward and Willie. It's no use to call the Indian after dark because he's to tired to wake up. Our John would go out and fix a wire and come running back to the house with a glass roof shaking like a fan dancer. And Sgt. Radio Witty asked him "are you hit?" The guard on the factory couldn't sleep because the first Sgt. stayed awake that night to see if he was going to live till morning. And Tiger Kennedy being the Sgts. Aid stayed up with him to tell all the new comers on guard what had happened on the relief before ...





End of the race — Near Murnau

of Neustadt with only one peep. Returning from an FO detail with his party, he decided to come through the town. The party captured six prisoners and met friendly tanks coming in to take the town. Moving into Schwabach we remained for 24 hours, then moved out to the south.

Task Force 1 and Task Force 2 raced south on two parallel roads with the mission of securing a bridge across the Danube. TF 1 moved into Lauingen, capturing several hundred Krauts, but the bridge was blown by the Germans while their troops were still retreating across it. Many of their own men were blown to pieces in the explosion. When TF 2 captured the bridge at Dillingen TF 1 moved east to cross the bridge and enlarge the bridgehead. Able moved across the Dillingen bridge and onto the Danube bridgehead a few hundred yards behind the leading elements of TF 1. We remained, as the only artillery on the bridgehead, under intermittent enemy fire and helped hold the left flank of the bridgehead against heavy resistance.

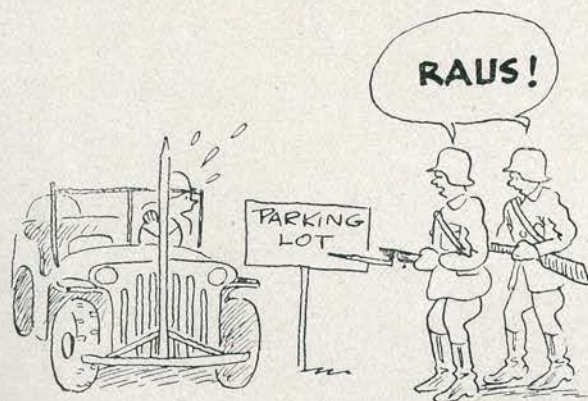
While in position on the bridgehead near Frisingen, a fire mission was received which plotted out of range of our position. The battery immediately displaced forward, taking up new positions near the town of Kicklingen. Here we found ourselves surrounded with Krauts and when we started to adjust we discovered that the FO had made a mistake of 10,000 meters and that the targets were actually to our rear. In the fight that followed, we succeeded in destroying



On the autobahn near Augsburg



Wash line at Petite Rosselle



... Our Useless Bunch was on guard and that was one of the duties of the guard beside staying awake, was to make this line check. Did Bunch make it that night hell know. He gets out of his hole and goes to the phone, in comes another shell. He picks up the receiver and then in a half wild voice "the hell with this dam line check". ...

... And our Allison remember he was up there some where to. He had his peep up there and the germans took over his parking lot. That's what he says and I for one took his word for it rather than go up there and find out for myself. Any way when he came back to the coal bin we were living in at the time he sure was scared. But any way we were all glad to see the lying devil ...



Into a German town at close interval

three enemy mortars and two anti-tank guns and killing many enemy. By this time the error had been discovered and orders were given to displace to our original position, which we did, taking with us 64 prisoners.

The tankers and infantry cleared Kicklingen and we moved into position near the town again the next day. During our stay there we were attacked five times by formations of enemy planes. We scored two knock-downs and two more were sent away smoking. The 109's forced Lt's. Cranshaw and DuPont down in our position area during one of these raids.



The "No Seconds" gang hosts a buffet lunch

Heading south, we moved on toward the Lech River and overran the concentration camp near Landsberg. None of us shall ever forget the horror of the starved, burning bodies that we



"Cease Fire" was official at Holzkirchen.

HEADQUARTERS  
43D TANK BATTALION  
APO 262, U.S. ARMY

14 May 1945.

SUBJECT: Commendation.

TO : Officers and Men of A/493.

1. I wish to commend you for the very excellent artillery support you gave my unit during the period 18 March to 29 April 1945.

2. The ever present speed and accuracy you used in delivering fires and the efficient work of the Forward Observer contributed much to the many successes we had. Feel proud of your work always.

By order of Lieutenant Colonel HALL:

*Stanley N. Pittenger*  
STANLEY N. PITTENGER,  
1st Lt, Inf,  
Acting Adj.

saw by the hundreds that day. Crossing the river over the railroad bridge at Landsberg, we moved on south, meeting limited resistance and taking prisoners by the hundreds until that long awaited day. While in Holzkirchen we received the word that the fighting on the front of the Seventh Army had ceased.

We all felt proud of the record of A Battery during our last few weeks of combat. We had captured over 400 prisoners, killed over a thousand Krauts, destroyed 32 enemy anti-tank guns and provided the artillery support of which we thought we might all be proud.

... We left here to go across the Main River again and it was here a boat of champagne was found. What hang overs that gave our Useless Bunch, Sgt. Radio and some others. It was here that Otto and Jones became the local bar room. From then on I think Otto rode on the roof in order to make room for all the bottles of morale he was hauling ...

... guns trying to shoot the bridge out and us sitting on the road taking all missis and there were no hits. It was here I got in a ditch with two germans and they never said a word. They didn't have any head ...

... I think it started when the blind Goodman went in the woods on a secret mission, no gun no helmet, no nothing but a roll of paper. He came tearing out the woods screaming for some one to tell him which way to run, and all it was after him was twenty five germans. When they were sighted guns started firing every direction, those that didn't know what else to do started screaming what time is chow. Some of the others ran with a dead dogs grin on their face straight at the germans to get their pistols while others layed in their sacks and ate C ration crackers ...

... The range of fire was so close the loaders had to put chewing gum on the shells to make them fall close enough. While some fired 105's at the germans others fired machine guns and others threw rocks ...

... Our next position was in a peat bog. Everything got stuck and Hog head Waldrun got pulled out of one hole and turned right around and drove back in it ...

... Our next stop stoped the war and ended all free rations, dirty faces, sleeping in the day time and drinking on germans. So we go back to garrison, chicken, guard, inspections, KP, and passes, and sweat out the day we'll return to the states and have the same old things all over to do to the Japs ...



6th Section: Woods, Bradfort, Kocik, Stein, Hamer, DeMartino, Duccini, Waldron



3rd Section: Gault, Bruce, Morris, Owen, Gross, Constante, Arsenault, Knight



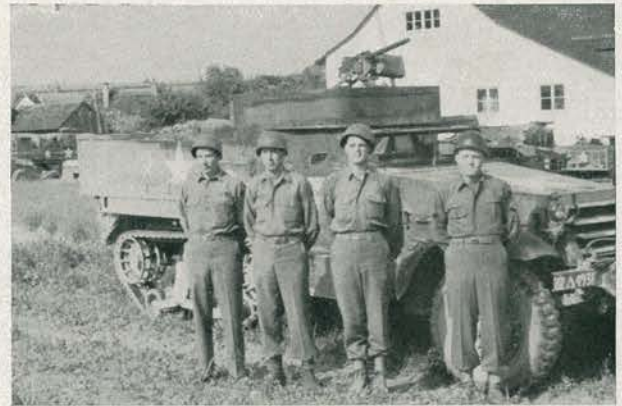
2nd Section: Borgen, W. Johnson, A. Johnson, Gebhard, Heckman, Narowski, Bernheisel



4th Section: Damron, Blatt, Friesema, Sosa, Mosher, Moorhead, Guy, McDonald



Wire Section: Coker, Wright, Ward, Zincon



BC Section: Cain, Schultz, Brewer, McDowell



Ammunition Section: Top: Campbell, Titler, Lynch, Doyle, Bunch, Quinn, Hunt; Bottom: Jones, Guckin, Kuras, Pearson



5th. Section: Miller, Nicola, Clark, Hensley, Stephens, Hartmann, Mead



Kitchen: Kramer, Rundberg, Christian, Rufener, Stidham, Degliomini, Poydence



Assist. Exec.: Herr, Putney, DeHaan, Kennedy, Johnson, Boer



Maintenance Section: Bickling, Carr, Goodman, McMonagle, Fox



Exec. Section: Arenz, Shepard, Becker, Schmaltz, Massey



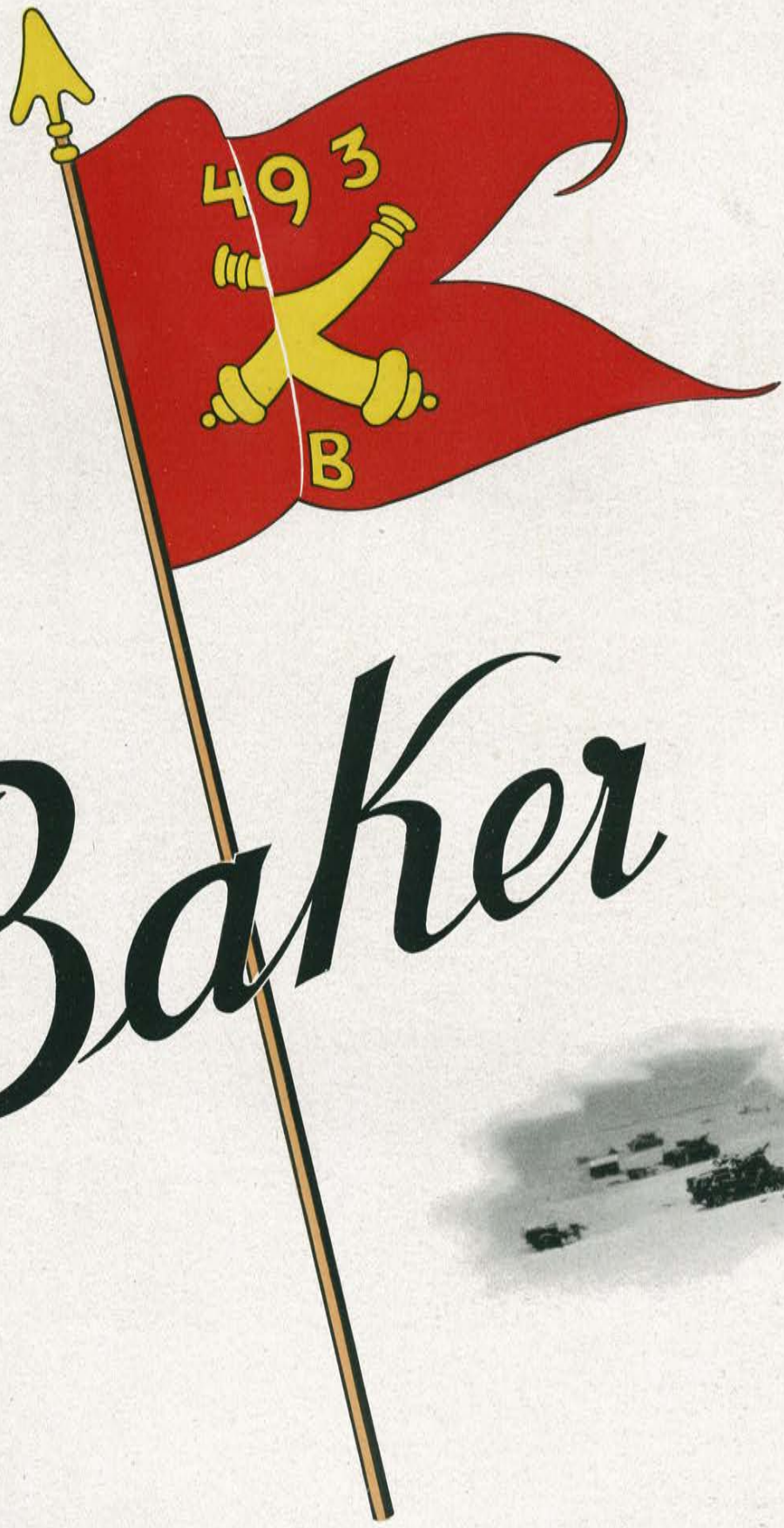
RO: Courtier, Capehart, Morris, Templeton, Gangi, Wetzel



1st Section: Baker, Davenport, Mixell, Booth, Luther, Fritz







# Baker





CAPTAIN LEON E. MAUCK



Lt. William P. Ford



Lt. William F. Evans



Lt. Mel Roy B. Farrand

# BAKER HISTORY

In presenting the following history of our "Baker" battery, we have tried to convey to the reader the more memorable incidents of our life, as well as a running account of our operations. We claim no glory; we feel only that we did our part to help the Battalion accomplish each assigned mission.

Looking back, most of us recall the day we arrived as rookies at Camp Campbell, Kentucky. We recall "Activation Day", and the mud, rain, and cold of "Hellcat Combat Camp" where we prepared for the AGF tests. Then after Camp Campbell, the battles of Tennessee maneuvers with long days, long nights, and more mud, rain and cold. On weekends we would don class A's and turn our attack toward Nashville to celebrate our victories. Who can forget those days? Then Texas and our first training at Camp Barkeley. Barkeley was famous for its wind and dust, and some of their all out combined opera-



Kittner busy with an axe.

tions were so bad that we could hardly see even our many gayly painted rocks. But it was easy to forget both the weather and the rocks when the news broke that we would soon be overseas bound. We were busy packing and crating and otherwise becoming POM ready.

Finally the day came. We left Abilene on 10 Sept. '44-destination: Camp Shanks, New York POE. Shanks afforded us a chance to check up on some of the tales the Big city boys, Jim Marmion and Joe Duffy, had been telling all these years, and from the looks of the battery the morning after pass night, most of us worked late into the night on it. That was the day of McNaughton's exhibition on how to sleep standing in ranks. Even the 1st/Sgt. admitted it was quite a fete but "Arky" Pyle was not the sort to let sentiment keep him from straightening out his soldiers.



Rapid occupation. On the road are more PW's on the way to the rear.

Then came orders to move on. The Btry was formed and B. C. Capt. Mauck took over and started us trainward. It was quite a hike under full gear to the train and by the time we got there some of the old timers, like "Humphey" Bogard and Emil Meyer, had plenty of company in the slightly worn class. But everyone got on the train all right, and, with a little more than the usual griping, and confusion, onto the ferry, across the river and off onto the dock. This was well equipped for the occasion with bright lights, a brass band, and Red Cross girls with coffee and donuts. We wondered whether all this farewell was to make us feel patriotic or show us how patriotic others were. It must have been an impressive sight, but we were not in shape at this stop to be much impressed. However, big men like Lapiniski and Bitner are always interested in food and others, namely Horton, and Gugliuzza, are likewise about girls, so the Red Cross efforts certainly were appreciated.

A little more red tape and we boarded our ship to be hustled below to "Dog" compartment and stacked 4 deep, with our equipment, into



Our barn near Auffay.



We pass the main building of the camp from which 6000 Poles were liberated.



Peterson, Casey and Delgado with the Russian refugees, Pete, Vick and Nick.

row upon row of bunks. To put it mildly, our quarters were quite crowded. Nearly everytime top men, Hershey and Grabowski, moved out of their bunks, feet went into somebody's face. Some, Tomlinson and Early, for example, didn't bother to move out. They seemed to follow the ships motion better in the prone position. Most of us, being poor sailors, were inclined at first to agree with Bill Casey's statement: "This is the worst goddam boat I was ever on". But after a few days thing's looked better. It was really quite a ship, the Tasker H. Bliss - Queen of the convoy.

"Where are we going?" "England?" "Hell no! Who wants to go to England when the war is in France?" "Poopdeck," the ships sheet, gave us the answer and England it was.

motor park at the end of the line, but Betz was willing to wager that if it meant working or not working, somebody would find a place before the Sarge could say "Motor Call!"

Our first stop in the U. K. was at Camp "W" near a large transport field. What a cold, miserable place that was! Most of us would have been up nights doing voluntary calisthenics to keep warm if someone hadn't produced extra blankets. It was our first taste of English weather. Rain and more rain. By the time we were ready to leave, the ground was as slick as axle grease. Lt. Evans slipped and was nearly trampled by the men behind him. Another time Ely Mashburn skidded down a little hill beside the road and if he hadn't yelled for help he might still be there.



Done with this war and glad of it.



The result of heavy shelling plus air bombing.

We anchored in Avenmouth on our eleventh day, debarked and climbed aboard a toy-like British train. A sound like a peanut vendors whistle and again we move out for an unknown destination, and again speculation, for which Hansen had an answer: "Who cares where we're going? We're in England, and England's something to see." Indeed it was something to see and we enjoyed it. Sgt. Tuttle was a bit worried about whether there'll be a good spot for a

The next move took us to Windmill Hill, near Tidworth. The place was rightly named too, for the wind blew continually.

R. P. Baker and Chubby Forsberg swore that the Quartermaster was stocking its shelves with items that blew from our area into their's, south of the hill. In fact, R. P. claimed to have been



Second section and their Christmas tree.



Peffer braves the elements to take a bath.

issued a pair of drawers that bore his own laundry mark. Windmill Hill was nice, tho, in that it was close enough to allow every man an opportunity to visit London. Jim Marmion and Charley Gugliuzza still talk of the wonderful London females, and they find Hugo Sunell always an interested listener. He claims to have spent his 48 hours watching for V-bombs.

We bade "Cheerio" to the Limeys and set out of Southampton in time to hit France on Armistice day, '44. Our LST's nosed up onto the beaches at Le Havre and we got our first glimpse of a really war-wrecked city. It made us feel a little more powerful to think we were part of an organization capable of such destruction. We marched through the rubble to meet Ken Sundberg, long lost on the advance detail from the States. Ken was waiting with a convoy of trucks and stories of billeting us in hotels with hot and cold running water, etc. Schumacher was so enthused about the set up that he was talking of room service when the trucks stopped beside a lonely field and a sign pointing to Aufay. Our supply Sgt. wasn't around to explain why we were pitching tents that afternoon. We had running water for sure, but it was only cold and not delivered so it could be shut off.

Here we tasted calvados, cognac and other forms of French hospitality. The advance party came up from Cherbourg with brand new equipment and we had to make that combat service-

able. There were some long and busy days, but everyone pitched in and we were soon ready to go.

We moved southeast across France to Luneville, arriving there on the first of December with a maintenance section well experienced at changing bogies. At Luneville we got our first inkling of what a hindrance "Old General Mud" could be as we made final preparations for our direct entry into the war.

"D" day came on the fifth of December at Weisslingen, France. "H" hour was 1736 when the second section, Farrand, Kasupski, Hill, Werznack, Pulczinski, Sidote, and Peffer, fired our first round at the enemy. We fired few missions at Weisslingen before moving over to Rahling to support our own division, the 12th Armored "Hellcats" in their initial action.

At Rahling we received our first shelling. Jerry threw in an occasional round and some landed close enough to Wiseman and Degroot to make them faithful disciples of the underground. Here for the first time Sgt. Pyle found it unnecessary to make the rounds checking the dimensions of fox holes. It was a good thing, too, for it was rather a late hour when he stopped digging his own.

From Rahling we moved to Singling and there we saw more evidence that Jerry, too, was taking this war seriously. Knocked out Sherman



Digging in.



At Ludweiler our castle was built of ammo boxes and a tarp.

tanks with punctured armor and burned up crews told the story. Bunkers and pillboxes of the Maginot line, which had failed to stop the Kraut, vouched for his strength. And those shells that interrupted our evening chow that day, giving Tuttle and Higuera minor wounds, brought the matter up to date.

Our next mission took us to Ludweiler, where we closed in position in time to celebrate Christmas on German soil. Our holiday may have been mild compared to some, the town had been under the Nazi regime, but, under the circumstances, it seemed pretty nice. There was a fine dinner prepared under Charley Ross's supervision. And there were packages from home which the "haves" willingly shared with the "have nots".

News Years rolled around, too, while we were at Ludweiler. Many of us were resigned to spending a quiet night and were musing over the contrast with previous turns of the year back home. But our reveries were interrupted. The enemy wanted to celebrate so we took him up on it, and it turned out to be quite a night. In the first hour of 1945, we pooped out almost as many rounds as we had during the entire week before. Ask Charley West or Frank Bowman or any other No. 2 cannoneer who shoved those shells in the chambers; or Sgt. Eichtons ammo. section, whose job it was to resupply us. They remember. But then we all remember that night for it was the occasion of our first and only withdrawal. We didn't pull back far though - about 8 kilometers to a new position and more firing.

From the Ludweiler area we moved to French Wittring where we stayed only a few days before there came a heavy snowstorm. Griffin was right when he remarked: "When the weather gets this bad, we move out", and move we did.



German officer leads a column of PW's to the rear.



There was plenty of snow at Lauterbach.

It was a long and hazardous march. The roads were a glaze of ice and the route had many hills and turns. Our mighty M-7's lost a little dignity on that trip. When they would start sliding helplessly down those long slopes, their 30 tons of armor and fire power were little consolation



The bay where the Bn vehicles moored, near Cherbourg.



Many a weary GI has bathed in his helmet, as does Fred Sidote.

to a crew that could see a curve awaiting them at the bottom. There was a feeling that the tank might go over on anyone of those curves. And it was not an idle fear, for one did. Chief Molski and Banaszak saw it coming, but Julson, Feola, Heavy Wates, Big Foot Oliva, and Andy Wass were asleep and didn't know of any trouble until they were spilled out into a show bank. Everyone felt it very lucky that nobody was hurt.

Bischwiller, in the Herrlisheim area, was our toughest combat assignment. The position took a counter-battery pounding and we saw our first hostile planes overhead. But the Reconnaissance section suffered most. The men of the FO teams were not as fortunate as usual. Three of their number failed to return from a mission. Radio operator Harold Horton was reported evacuated

with a leg wound but nothing was heard of S/Sgt. Joe Boland or his Corporal, Bill McNaughton. They could be only listed as "missing in action". Their loss was deeply felt by "Baker" Btry and it was great news for all when we learned they were both PW's. Months later, near Landsberg, we got a real chance to show our feelings when good old "Mac", free again, came ambling into the battery.

From Bischwiller we moved down near Strasbourg to work with the French. Strasbourg is famous for its cathedral, you know, and it wasn't long before the artistic side (they said) of Ben Tobin and George Goosman got the best of



Ammo 2 draws rations for a 105.



The mess crew and the mud at Singling.



Civilians at Petite Rossel were always gaid to get any left-over chow.



On the road again.

them and they had to have a pass. The reports they brought back didn't mention architecture at all, but they were sufficient to make many others feel they, too, should see the cathedral. As the reports got better, even Exec. Lt. Ford developed a sudden interest in ecclesiastical art.

Next Colmar and adventure of a different sort. Here the rout of the Wehrmacht was so complete that after one fast move we found ourselves directly in front of a woods full of Kraut. So, meeting the situation and showing our versatility, we turned infantrymen for several hours. The prize was great; beaucoup pistols. — Colmar was a pretty popular place. Perhaps much of the reason for this was found in bottles in its cellars. To quote Paul Miller, for instance, one single

store contained "7210 gallons". Some who stopped to visualize such a supply found this a staggering figure. But Delgado and Jim Bailey were more interested in the supply on hand and soon found themselves staggering.

The middle of Feb. had us back at Singling. It was the same old Singling as we had seen in our first days of fighting, but twice as dark. Rivest went out one night to repair a gun phone and grabbed a wire to guide him to the center of the position. He ended up at FDC, a good mile from our nearest howitzer. That's right — wrong wire. And it was here that we received our first order to police a front line area. We didn't mind too much at first, for we figured the war must certainly be over, but to be told that



Any halt was a chance to warm up at a fire.





Hundreds of white flags announced the surrender of a town.

this was in addition to our combat duties made it a pretty tough job.

Next Etzlingen, a red hot spot. Jerry had us located this time and he must have taken a recess on other fronts to be able to dump all that stuff on us. Over in Jim Suggits corner "Lyn" Waldo Johnston dived in beside Red Bass and Chief Gann, who were inspecting the underside of their M-7. "Whats the matter with those guys? I ain't really mad at 'em." Bass agreed: "Me either, Waldo, but I could say a few words about my draft board right now."

Our final position in France was in Petite Rossel. After four years of German occupation the people were tickled pink to see us. We gave some of the smaller children their first taste of chocolate and white bread. The older folks gave us our last taste of French hospitality. Almost every man in the Btry was adopted by one of the families, but a happy home can't last in wartime and soon we were warming up our engines for another long march.

Up north to Trier and Patton's Third Army, and then east to the Rhine. This was more than even Sarles, usually the man with the hottest oil, had expected. There started considerable debate among us as to whether it was wise strategy, but when we found ourselves shooting across the river just a few days later, leading exponents of the negative agreed. "Alles kaput."

We crossed the Rhine at Worms and set out on another dash - this time for the Main. Short of Wurzburg we found a little trouble. Four Heinie tanks had a direct bead on us, but the

most hurt of us was Sgt. Pepper, and only his feelings because the targets were out of sight before he could get his howitzer pointed to return the fire.

Beyond the Main we headed northward for Schweinfurt and real trouble. At Schwanfeld we drew our heaviest shelling. Fifth section Chief Liskow was hit when a time shell burst directly above his tank. Our medic, Junior Bryson, fixed him up in short order and had him on the way to the hospital while shells still peppered the position. Up front, on FO duty, Mike Gancas and Tommy Williams also caught some shrapnel. All of which made us damned happy to hear we were moving on. We weren't rid of our bad luck though. A few days later Emmett "Ace" Elliott was accidentally killed at Herlheim, and at Ober-Speitzheim Lt. Evans was hit while on an FO mission.

After Herlheim came Dillingen on the Danube and a few days rest. McDaniels, Grunwald, and White went off on a little scouting expedition and returned with enough wine to keep everybody happy. With the end of the wine we were on the road again for our last run.

This time the objective was Innsbruck, in Austria. We had thing's pretty much our own way, Jerry showing no disposition to put up a scrap. We halted short of Innsbruck, taking another rest at Oberau in the Bavarian Alps, and then pulling back to Langenau. Here, on 8 May 45, we received news of the war's end in the ETO.

We leaned back, opened another bottle of Champagne, and started counting our points.



Front: White, Gugliuzza, Marmion, Grunwald; Rear: Bryson, Sundberg, DeGroot



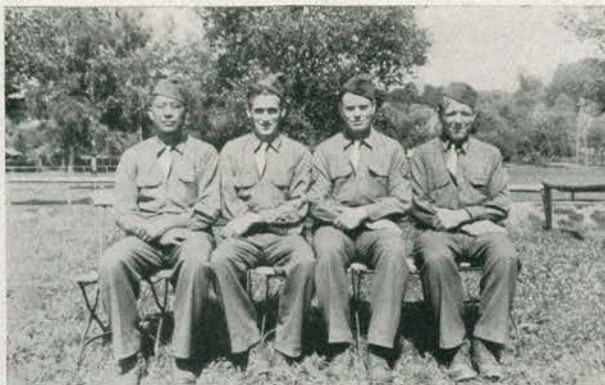
4th Section: Front: Kasupski, Hill, Goosman, Werznack, Sidote; Rear: Pulczynski, Smith



6th Section: Marchesini, Jones, Todd, Aldridge



Asst. Exec., Wire, Maintenance: Front: Betz, Wetzler, Hershey, Grabowski, MacDaniel; Rear: Jacobs, Sunell, Briggs



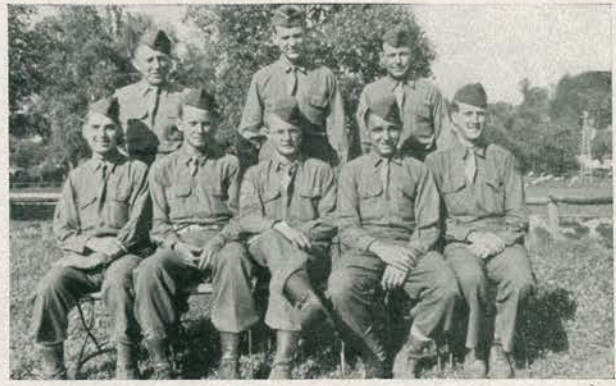
Mess: Gann, Dobbins, Hunter, Baker



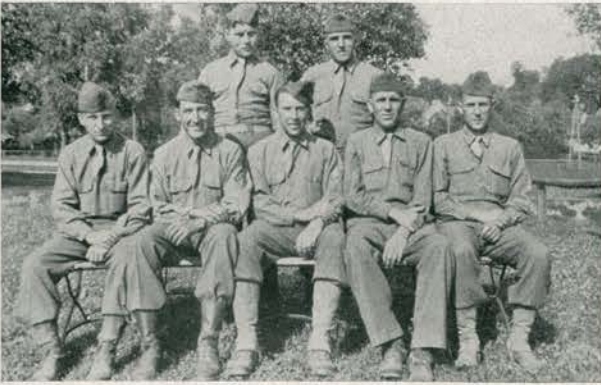
2nd Section: Front: Wass, Oliva, Hansen, Wates, Mouw; Rear: Huysman, Compton



RO Section: Wiseman, Higuera, Cashdollar, Williams, Ward



5th Section: Front: Hoffman, Griffin, Pepper, Banaszak, Hundley; Rear: Kettner, Williams, Hardesty



Ammunition Section: Front: Pisarski, Flores, Eichten, Massengale, Tomlinson; Rear: Foresberg, Wojtewicz



Executive Section: Front: Schops, Fore, Moleski, Tobin, Haum; Rear: Callahan, Rivest, Sarles



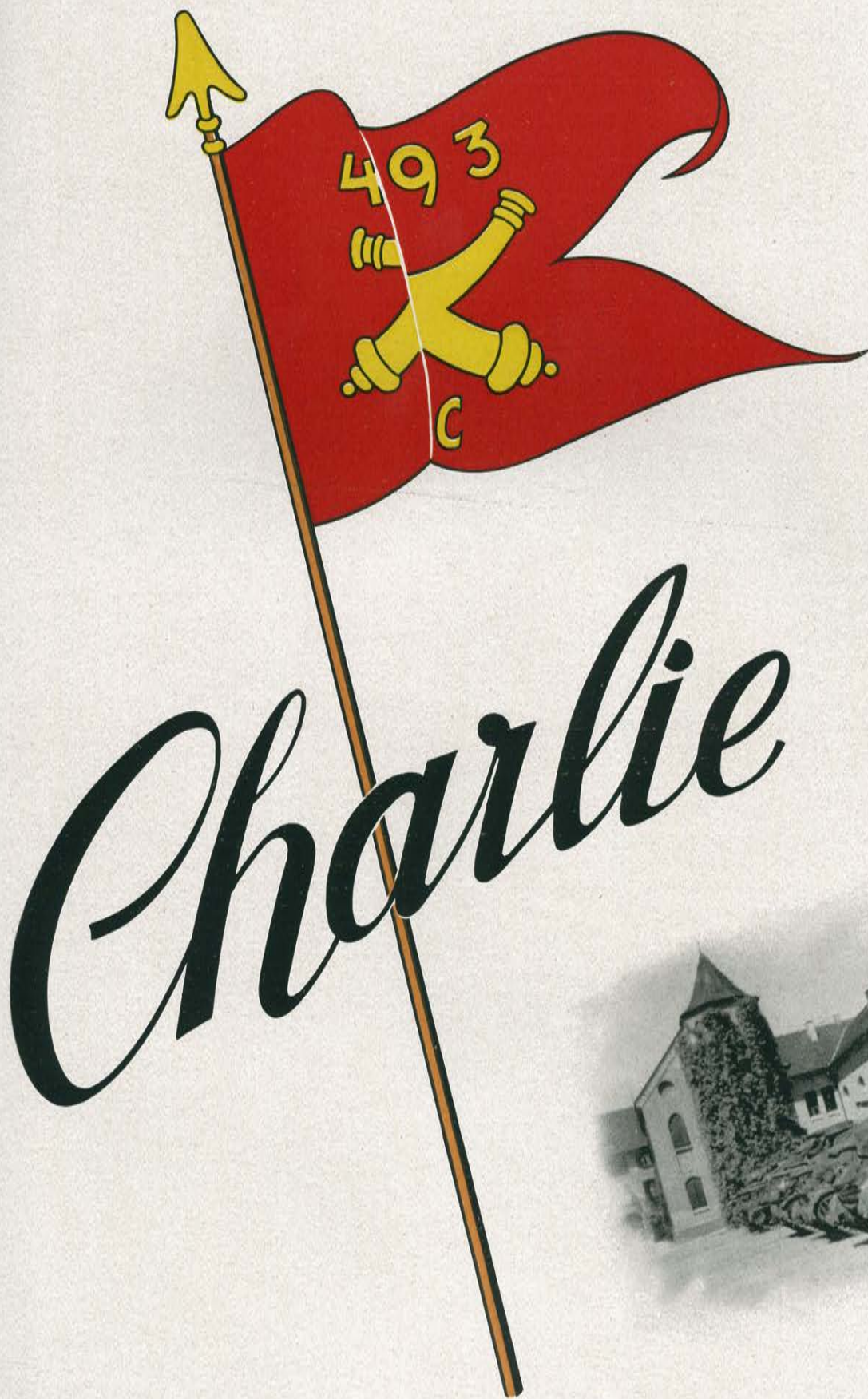
1st Section: Front: Everly, Bowman, Johnson, Lapinski Bitner; Rear: Tenenbaum, Delgado, King



Ammunition 2: Front: Duffy, Bailey, Middleton, Baker; Rear: Osterhout, Early

3rd Section: not shown, Feola, Suggitt, Denney, Zdiarski; West, Miller







To the Men of "C" Battery-

All of You have my sincere appreciation for the splendid manner in which You conducted yourselves as soldiers during our successful campaigns.

While in training, You expressed an earnest desire to learn everything possible which would make our efforts successful. During Combat, sometimes under the most trying conditions, the fruits of your sincerity in accomplishing difficult tasks were shown time and time again.

I take this opportunity to thank you for your excellent work while under my command, and may you continue your fine record in the future.

*Rudolph W. Meuser*  
 RUDOLPH W. MEUSER

CAPTAIN RUDOLPH W. MEUSER

Entered the service February 18, 1941 at Camp Devens. Attended OCS class 24 and received commission August 4, 1942. Was member of Btry. A, 60th FA, 9th Inf. Division before being assigned to Btry. A, 493rd AFA. Assumed command of C Btry. May 15, 1943.



Lt. Willard S. Gerling



Lt's. Arbuckle, Gerling, Capt. Meuser and Lt. Hill



Lt. Frank J. Czeiner

# CHARLIE RECORD

Once our unit is disbanded, and its members scattered from Wolfeboro, New Hampshire, to Hanford, California, and to the many places in between, (even to Texas, although the Lord knows those Texans should have learned something in thirty-one months) nothing of it would remain to us except our memories and that intangible effect which our varied experiences have worked on our minds and hearts. As time goes by, even our souvenirs will gradually disappear and will no longer serve to stimulate our thoughts and refresh our recollections. Down will come the Polish Military Swords of 1920, no longer to masquerade as weapons of the SS. Our wives will have won the argument that there is a better place, not here to be mentioned, for an 8 x 10 Nazi flag than the entire surface of the living room wall. Therefore, there is here set down certain incidents, statistics and comments about ourselves so that, by turning back the pages in after years, we will have something upon which to muse and by which, even where the incidents are poorly chosen or trivial or perhaps even not wholly accurate, we can more completely track down in our minds, than otherwise would be the case, some of the days when we were in "Charlie Battery".

The time spent at Camp Campbell was the hardest, physically, that we had. Those were the days of the doubletime between buildings, the AGF Physical Fitness Tests, and the "6-2, 6-2". If we didn't make the latter on the first attempt, which was in the afternoon, we were required to try again that very night and each succeeding night, until finally everyone, including John Boyle who in those days had a girth like a pregnant sow, had made the grade. There was that inflexible rule that made us check and clean every vehicle before washing or eating or sleeping, although on many occasions we arrived back at the motor park late at night, and it was obvious that all mud carefully removed from each vehicle would, within a few hours, be replaced in a like amount.

And who can forget that session of three days and two nights in the field when some of the M-7's sank up to their lower ladders in the mud? Those Saturdays and Sundays of sod laying and the cutting of grass with the hands or a piece of stick, and the other "improvising" jobs?

Here was a time when to be caught in the orderly room meant the task of obtaining cokes for the "Ram" when there were no cokes in the machine and the Post Exchange had long since closed; of making up progress cards, charts, picture books on current events and other subjects, tanks and airplane models and the like until midnight or later and without the counterbalancing advantage of freedom from any disagreeable outside duty or classes.



Charlie Mess Hall at Berkeley.

Those were the days when we first used the phrase "Charlie Battery is the best battery", and went after first place in every competition with the greatest zest whether the event was a full field inspection, a stage show, individual high score for the battalion with the Colt .45, which



Spring, 1944, and the fifth section before the jump off for Elm Creek.



Chow in the sticks — of Texas.

our man (Lynn) won, or even the contest for a name for the 12th Division in which Frank Beckman's "Hell-Cat Division" was selected, and when we had with us Eddie Brennan whose



Home — on English soil.

singing in the shower room was but one of his many talents, Sgt. Currier, Presswood and the other "fireman", Tex Hayes, Roy Styers, Lt. Jennings and others equally known and liked.

With the "rat races" at Campbell (nine occupations of widely separated positions on the reservation in one short day was an example) and the problems at "Hell-Cat Camp" being us, our time at maneuvers and Camp Barkeley went by without too great effort. Of course for diversion it was San Angelo or Breckenridge instead of Madisonville or Nashville, and for the cooler operators, Lubbock or Waco instead of Fort Wayne or Cincinnati.

We went through the "Got any gum, chum?" country without any outstanding incident other than our Non-coms' tour of Newbury at a time when there was not only some silly old rule about staying in camp, but also at a time when higher authorities, with hardly any notice, moved all the rest of us to Tidworth.

We were the only battery from any of the Division's artillery battalions to see service on the Normandy Coast (under the 9th Army) near Port Bail opposite the Channel Islands and we had a definite satisfaction in being so selected. Twenty-four hours a day during the time we

were there, some of us were constantly observing up and down the shore and over the expanse of water stretching out toward the front of the school which we used as a billet. The islands sometimes stood out clearly on the horizon and at other times were invisible, depending on the weather and time of day. Several of us, namely Czeiner, Beckman, Cotter, Sells, Winder, McBane, Bertelson and Held, lived in an adjacent building from the third floor attic of which projected a gable especially constructed by the Germans for an observation post. Here one would stand as though in a crow's nest at night, thinking at times that a black shadow out on the water was



... And the gliders in our back yard.



Remember Windmill Hill's Tent-city?



Watch on the islands — from here.





Near Weisslingen, France . . . Our first "Hitler, count your men!"



Second vehicular blood for the Krauts — the mess truck.



We did some shootin' back too.

a boat with a landing party of the Germans against whom we stood guard, only to find it, after a minute or two, to be a piece of floating debris or a reef disclosed by the fall of the tide.

However, nothing exciting ever happened here, and the machine guns dug in as well as placed on balconies were never used except for target and test firing, as was also the case with all our other weapons including the M-7's. It was here that the Ammunition Section (Shaw, Ellington, McLaughlin, Kotlarz, Eiferman, Olsen, La Flame, Feit, Reeve, Abernathy) made its longest run, 85 miles away, to a dump from which, incidentally, one vehicle was able to secure but three rounds.

Charlie Battery fired its first rounds against the enemy in this war on December 6th at Weisslingen, France, with "battery two rounds" and with all guns firing as a unit. The next day, December 7th, commencing about eleven o'clock in the evening, the Recon. half-track (named the Ridge Runner in honor of Lt. Arbuckle) earned the distinction of being the first vehicle to receive any shelling from enemy fire. It had proceeded in advance of the battery to a town called Rahling, carrying Harrison, Penny, Held, Shoemaker and Bertelson, and had just parked in front of a building which, on the following day, was to be the battalion CP. Several shells came in, with the nearest landing about 30 yards away. This resulted in a dent or two in the armor plate, and a few more rounds fell later during the night.



King, La Vack, Chick preparing chow

However, the Recon. and FO parties moved on forward in the morning and it was the remainder of the battery which stayed behind to experience one of our worst shellings, and because it was our baptism of fire, one of our most memorable. It commenced the morning of December 9th and continued steadily with one or two guns firing for 24 hours. Before the first round landed, very few fox-holes had been dug, but once that whistle and explosion of the first shell was heard, there was a frenzy of digging activity on the part of all. Many of us remained in our fox-holes for several hours at a time, water to the depth of several feet not withstanding. Once when "Jake" Elliott was in his hole, a shell landed within ten feet of him without causing injury, but one landed directly in another hole nearby and killed its occupant, one of the "ack-ack" men attached to us. The only



Our shell-shelter at Singling — A typical Maginot pill-box.

vehicles to be hit during this shelling were a half-track and our mess truck, "Charlies Cafe Exceptionale". As the recipient on the chin of a small piece of shrapnel, which did no serious damage to him, Joe McLaughlin here became the first member of our battery to give his blood for his country. King's Certificate of Merit for what

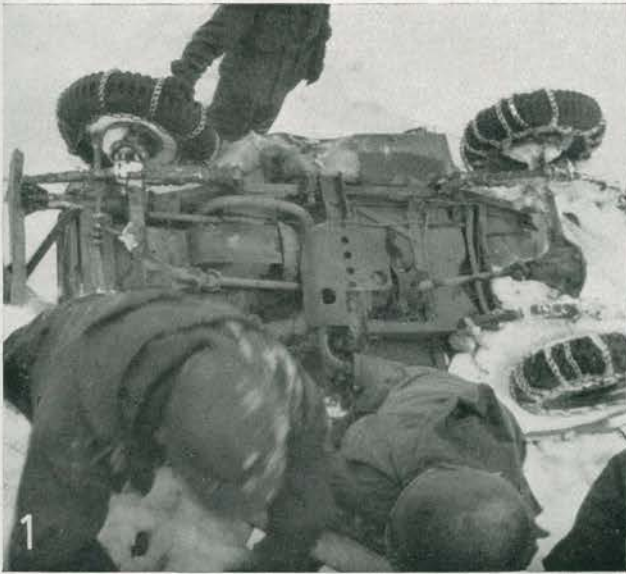
he did at this position appears elsewhere in this book. It omits one important fact, namely, that he was in the mess section at the time and in removing the trailer, he was undertaking a task for which he was in no way responsible.

For the first time, we received fire missions from Lt. Arbuckle and S/Sgt. Frank (Nose) Czeiner (later to be known as Lt. Czeiner). We were up against Maginot Line fortifications and one of the missions was a most powerful pill box. Our fire eliminated or drove away Infantry and a tank near it, but our hits on the pill box itself could not crack it. It was then that Lt. Arbuckle, while waiting for fire from some 155s, made an attempt to place our shells right through the door—and almost succeeded.



Cpl. Ottenberg and Marty Miller.

We enjoyed a beautiful white Christmas at Ludweiler, featured by an appropriately decorated tree and a turkey dinner with such fixings as mince meat, candy, cake and nuts, shared by all but the forward observers, Sgt. Czeiner, "Cliff" Sells and Joe Harrison who ate their K rations up forward at the OP. The holiday peace was marred only by Cpl. Bud Ottenberg's injury. There had been a few very highbursts over and near our position and we were giving the "Krauts" fire in return at various points. Suddenly there was a loud report from in front of the 3rd Gun Section, with all the flash of a bursting HE shell. A deflection shift, made in the blackness of night, had brought the line of



### HOW TO RESCUE A PEEP

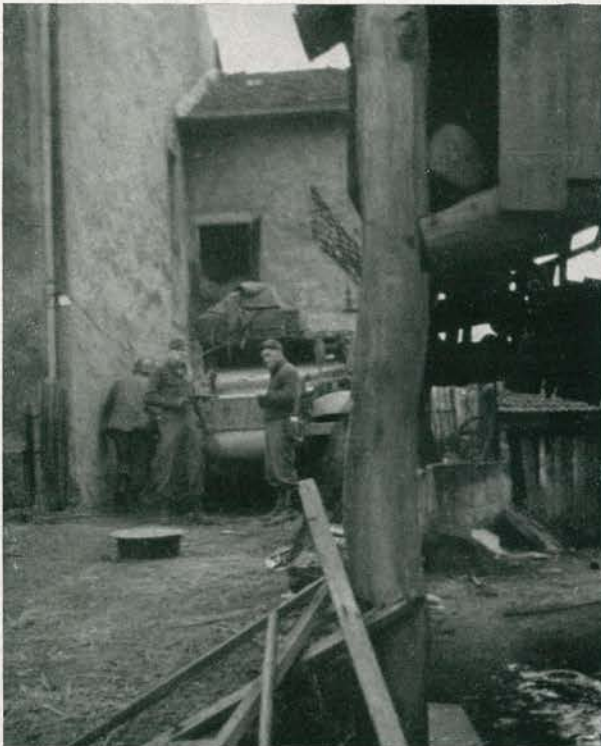
When Charlie's wire peep plunged off the icy street and into the snow-filled ditch at Reichstett, France, all hands concerned turned out in the zero weather to rescue the vehicle. In the following five steps the "Mutt and Jeff" was retrieved and pulled back on the road: 1. Down but not out, the "Mutt and Jeff" rests on its back; 2. Winch cable is attached; 3. The peep is righted as maintenance track winch grinds away; 4. Salvage is almost complete as peep starts out of the ditch; 5. Halftrack backs up, and the rescue is effected.



Bischwiller. Ament's 4th section, with Gilliam, Jones, Rose, Bergeson and cases of shells expended against the Kraut.



Lovie's half-track, "Lovie" which got "Beat all to hell" from a hit two feet away.



Cleaning the 50 cal. M.G. after shooting down an ME 109.

fire directly into the bank of a hill and one of the pieces of shrapnel from the resulting burst got Bud. The other men had dropped to the floor of the M-7 and were more fortunate as no one else was injured.

During the following several days there were many interesting and varied targets. Czeiner had us walking up one side of the street and down the other in Volkering with WP and fuse delay missions, separating the Jerries from their dog tags. There were, among others, missions each morning around eight o'clock to catch an enemy supply truck (we called it the milk train) which regularly made a dash for it, the "TOT" on the working party busy on the bridge over the Saar River - "No more bridge, no more working party", was the report from the liaison observer after a successful mission.

At this time, McBane was on loan to Headquarters Battery and thus had the good fortune to be computer there for us at the only time during combat that we fired three separate missions from three different observers, two using radios and one a field phone, all at one time. The two other firing batteries were busy on missions when there came a single gun mission for WP, another for HE, as well as the job of marking a target (a certain factory) for some P-47's. This required using red, violet and green smokes, and that precise timing which would place the various colored smokes over the targets at the exact moment when the planes should be at the top of their "egg-laying" dives. All three



What we first thought were Anti-Parachutist Poles at Bischwiller turned out to be poles the natives grew hops on.

missions went off like clock work and were completed in about twenty minutes. Incidentally, at this position until the last night, we used four guns instead of six so as to keep the enemy ignorant of the fact that we, an armored battery were opposing them. Also, it was here, we believe, that a mission or two was fired in which a volley of charge 5 would immediately be followed, after the necessary elevation change, by a volley of charge 6 in order that the two volleys might land on the target at the same time.

On the night we left Ludweiler, with section one ordered to lead the way and fight through expected paratroopers at any cost, we fired steadily from about 11:30 until almost the instant of departure at about 4:00, firing all emergency barrages and gradually dropping down from charge 5 to charge 3. The fourth section established something of a record for the battery in number of rounds fired in the short period of a little over two hours — 151 rounds. PS. — In leaving, we saved the New Years turkeys, which were almost cooked, to enjoy another day.

On one occasion, five Messerschmitts flew over a position we occupied near Kreuzwald, and then circled back for another look. For the first time in combat, our machine guns went into action together with those of the "ack-ack" outfit attached to us. The result was that the "ack-acks" were credited with the destruction of one enemy plane, and in our opinion, the battery should have received credit for another.

Our stay at Bischwiller was productive of a large amount of effective fire on our part, and



House that was hit twice at Bischwiller — just across the road from the "Exec".

perhaps right there we did some of our best work of the war. In one twenty-four hour period Charlie Battery used 735 rounds and in one six



Parts of Bischwiller burn as we pull out and doughs go in.

hour period Sgt. "Mickey" Shaw's ammo half-tracks ("Lovie" and "Joe-Moe") hauled 1300 rounds from Bastendorf. It was our barrages which helped elements of the 56th Infantry to withdraw, on the night of Jan. 10-11th, from Herrlisheim where they had been under the severest kind of pressure and were almost cut off. On the night of Jan. 15-16th we poured the sells into this town and gave other prepara-



Chow truck sidles up to an assembly-plant wall while wild AP shells from a distant tank battle enter the area. One went through a wooden fence, the wall of the house in the background, the kitchen range, two inside walls, an officer's bed roll and lodged in the wall at the opposite end of the house.

tory fire for the second planned offensive in this area. In the final offensive operation on Jan. 17th, we did what we could with our "Mac", "Bob" and other barrages to aid some tankers and "B" Company of the 66th AIB in their attempt to take the Stainwald Forest after an attack on it on the previous day had proved a costly failure; and with the rest of the battalion, we provided the smoke concentration which enabled elements of the 17th Infantry to withdraw.

Throughout all this time, Capt. Meuser, working day and night as liaison officer with the 17th AIB, was doing an excellent job. For example, within ten minutes after the facts of the 17th's situation and necessity for withdrawal from Herrlisheim was explained to him, his full and explicit instructions had reached our battalion S-3, the smoke concentration had been given to the batteries, and the smoke barrage was being laid down.

This Bischwiller period was, of course, rugged on our forward observers. For example, on the third planned attack, Lt. Arbuckle, Sgt. Beckman and Pvt. Penney and Cpl. Harrison were with "B" Co. of the 66th, whose job was to take the Stainwald Woods. With the "doughboys", they had jumped off from a position just east of the canal and advanced many hundred yards across the open terrain towards the woods. Then within a few hundred yards, down came enemy mortar fire, working backwards and forwards along the line of advance. To avoid it, they ran south to

the right to reach a shallow ditch, but just then one or two shell fragments hit Penney. Lt. Arbuckle pulled him into the ditch, administered first aid, and he and Beckman, both carrying Penney, started for the original assembly point. On the way back, Lt. Arbuckle and Beckman also received leg wounds, but they managed to cover the mile or two to comparative safety, although, at the start of their journey, the infantry was still getting hit on all sides.

There was a heavy shelling at Bischwiller on the night of January 11th, when a round landed in a house in which the "ack-ack" boys were billeted; another at the base of a wall alongside of which Tec 5 John Ellington's half-track stood, smashing the wall and damaging the track. All this happened within a few yards of certain billets. It was here that Pfc. "Jake" Elliott received the bronze star for his fortitude in leaving shelter during the shelling and repairing the terminal box in the center of our gun position. Incidentally, Sgt. Henry Beausejour and Pvt. Alphonse Burbul assisted in tracing down the



The hit that got the "Lovie".

wires which had been severed from the box by shrapnel.

After Bischwiller one event followed another in succession, as rapid almost as a moving pic-



Reichstett and zero weather.

ture; Reichstett with the Morrocans, and the excellent firing of the first gun-section in which, at 11,500 yards, 5 shots out of 11 went into an enemy CP, and later, after an adjustment, 3 out of 3 were direct hits on some railroad tracks.

Colmar came, with our position on February 4th in the stadium followed by the second Herrlisheim, on which occasion Sgt. "Lou" Haro, S/Sgt. Beckman and Pfc. Bertelson were up with a platoon of infantry in an attempt to enter the town from the west, but were met with enemy "burp-gun" fire, and were pinned behind a wall until dark.



The Frenchies at Reichstett.



Position in the flatlands of Rhine valley near Colmar.

After surviving the rabbit hunting of the Algerians at Oberentzen, we all shared in the pride and satisfaction that our cowboy King, with some sound advice, helped a cow give birth to a calf in a nearby barn.

It was at St. Nickolas that one of the gun sections took its position wholly in a barn, and at Klein-Rossel that we almost took on as a kitchen helper an alleged Frenchman who turned out to be a Nazi spy. On March 17th, we left



The crew in the barn, Litten, Hernandez, Higgins, Boyle, Shea, Sarver and Simmons. (St. Nickolas).

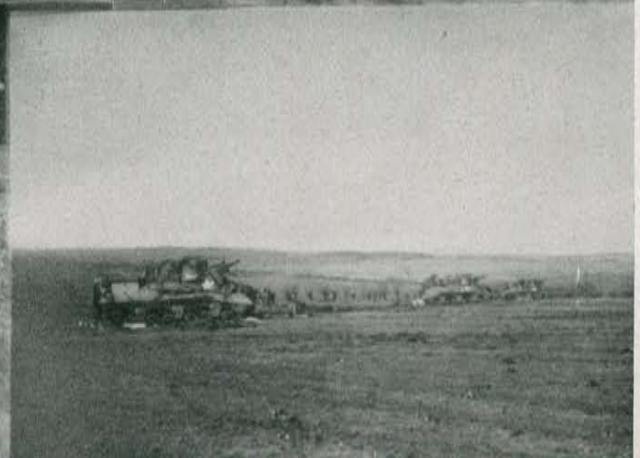
to commence our armored drive past the dead horses, smashed vehicles and the white flags to Studerheim near Ludwigshafen on the Rhine, with Patton's 3rd army as the "Mystery Division".

In this last mentioned place, Allan Rose and "Gene" Thomas and "Horn" Patti missed the casualty list by a hair. It was at a time when for an hour or two there had been no activity on the part of the enemy. Thomas was sitting on the ground to the left rear of trailer, and Patti on left front of trailer belonging to the first section, when all of a sudden an incoming "88" shell hit under the trailer, severing a tire, and shot diagonally across the position to the number four gun. Rose, who was sitting on the back deck of the tank and who claims he saw the shell in flight, ducked and the missile whizzed by, cutting a wire reel completely from the vehicle and finally landing in a field about 500 yards away.

On March 24th at Freisbach, Lt. DuPont sent down a unique one gun mission at a barge floating down the Rhine over 11,000 yards away.



Frontino's peep — four flat tires, holes through the gas tank, (Hell at Schwanfeld).





The number one gun, which alone had sufficient maximum elevation, sunk this barge after firing three rounds; for adjustment, "One short and one over", the final shot being a direct hit on the target.

By April 1st, having crossed the Rhine at exactly 0145 on March 28th, we had reached Waldbrunn, there to engage in a hunt for a suspected sniper who turned out to be a typical Nazi officer when cornered. At this same place, from our billet windows and the tops of vehicles in position, we had a closeup view of the shelling of the "ack-ack" and headquarters battery vehicles, and we could also see the direct fire which was returned to the woods to our front.

Our battery, with its numerous pets, including rabbits, turkeys and "Kaput", the dog, and other impediments, moved on to Waldbuttelbrunn where S/Sgt. Thompson, our maintenance "chief", found several German half-tracks, intact except for a few shell holes, in a nearby woods. After ducking some heavy enemy shelling on the road, we reached Schwanfeld, there to experience our most hazardous night. Most of the men at one time or another during the evening or night were in houses that received direct shell hits when they were present. Five of our vehicles were hit by shell fragments, and the sixth, the ass't executive's half-track received a direct hit at the rear of the vehicle. Once, when the shelling had been heaviest, a ten ton wrecker and its trailer were set on fire. Several men, including S/Sgt. Charles Werner, Sgt. Henry Beausejour, Tec 5 "Dom" Donato and Pfc. Lester Shea, left their shelters to grab fire extinguishers and assist in putting out the blaze.



The "Lovie" got it again.



Motor maintenance worked day and night.



... And "Jellybean's" perforated peep at Schwanfeld.

Later that night, a small ember in the wrecker rekindled the fire and it was finally put out for good by some of these same men who, while fighting the fire, ran the risk of being hit by exploding small arms ammunition which was strewn about in the wreckage.

Despite the damage to vehicles, all were able to move off on their own power the next day due to the fact that motor maintenance, (Thompson, Cone, Johnson and King) in spite of the shelling, worked steadily seeking cover from time to time when the whistle of a shell was too

close. Rose gave what first aid he could to a civilian boy who was fatally hit; men stood guard and otherwise coolly conducted themselves without the necessity of orders or directions.

During the next week, April 7th to April 14th, it was good to drive through the pleasant little villages, enjoying the spring weather and having very little firing to do, although we were frequently as close to forward elements as at any time during combat. We recall a position near Unter-Speisheim where the supported units were ahead of us and enemy pockets were on each flank. Incidentally, it was at this place where we had the novel mission of firing a trail of white phosphorous in order to enable a patrol which was lost to find the way back to its unit.

At Dillingen, the battery position was strafed by several enemy planes early one morning, and Sgt. Ament of the fourth section was able to account for one of them by means of some fast action. He had been checking his .50 cal. machine gun at the time and, as the planes flew over, he released a hail of bullets which peppered one plane, causing it to crash to earth not very far away.

It was near Hurlach that the battery fired its last round of the war, the honor going to the second section in the course of an adjustment. By V-E Day, Charlie Battery had covered 1,650 miles in actual combat. The final tabulation of number of rounds fired by each gun sections shows - "Charlotte" with Sgt. Mullis, T/4 Boland, Cpl. Patti, Pfc. Schuer, Coeburn, Ober, and Pvt. Koon with - 2,179, "LuLu" with Sgt. Vetica, Cpl. Bullwinkle, T/5 Heinrich, Pfc. Elia, Higgins, Davenport, and Holley with - 2,527, "Linda" with Sgt. Beausejour, T/4 Henry, Cpl. Westbrook, T/5 Ambrosio, Pfc. Miller M., Miller J., and Hall with - 2,353, "Fat Boy" with Sgt. Ament, T/4 Bergeson, Cpl. Lynn, Pfc. Rose, Jones, Gilliam, and Pvt. Freitas with - 2,444,



"Kaput"

"Pasquale" with Sgt. Passero, T/5 Weigel, Cpl. Marinelli, Pfc. Mordewski, Babcock, Costo, and Pvt. Munoz with - 2,583, "Nariz Cafe" with Acting chief of section Cpl. Litten, Pfc. Boyle, Hernandez, Shea, Sarver, Gonzalez and T/5 Simmons with - 1,999.

Statistics and incidents have here had their place, but there were certain less factual things about our battery which were as great or of even greater importance to those of us who were its members. We were truly a group of men without any clique or division among us. There was no undue bowing to rank, and the non-coms might have been tagged the "noggin", the "nose", or the "brain" in a spirit of fun, but their commands were promptly obeyed and respected.

To a stranger it might appear that hardly any of us had a serious thought as to the reason for fighting, or at any time had any desire as concerns service than to get a discharge at the earliest moment; actually however, this wasn't so and we know it.



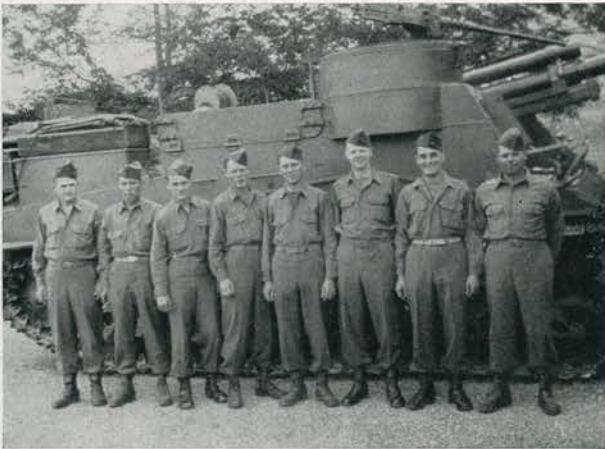
Battery Commander Section: Beckman, McLaughlin, Jack, Haro, Frontino, Sample



RO Section: Kneeling: McCurdy, Petrik, Kjellberg;  
Standing: Winder, Sells, Bertelson, Shoemaker



Exec. Section: Sitting: Panach, Elliott; Standing: Cotter,  
Harrison, Buckley, Huffman



First gun Section: Koon, Coeburn, Ober, Thomas, Schuer,  
Boland, Patti, Mullis



Second gun Section: Holley, Higgens, Davenport,  
Pedziwiatr, Heinrich, Elia, Vetica



Third gun Section: Kneeling: Miller, John, Beausejour,  
Henry; Standing: Hall, Ambrosio, Westbrook



**Fourth gun Section: Kneeling: Gilliam, Freitas;  
Standing: Jones, Rose, Bergeson, Lynn, Ament**



**Fifth gun Section: Kneeling: Munoz, Costo;  
Standing: Weigel, Babcock, Marinelli, Passero**



**Sixth gun Section: Kneeling: Hernandez, Gonzales,  
Zanieski (Btry. Medic), Shea;  
Standing: Sarver, Simmons, Boyle, Litten**



**Assist. Exec. Section: Yearick, Moody, McBane, Flynn**



Ammunition Section: Sitting: Shaw, Ellington, Reeves, LaFlamme, Burns; Standing: McLaughlin, Joe, Hice, Kotlarz, Romo, Kucharski, Eiferman, Feit



Mess Section: Kneeling: Cogdill, Werner, Akers, Flanagan; Standing: Steve, Schneider, Abernathy, Lambert



Motor Maintenance Section: Jennings, Lattig, King, Thompson



Administration and Supply Sections: Heineman, Bill, Milner





# Service





CAPTAIN WOLFE R. NICHOLS

Wolfe R. Nichols was born in Youngstown, Ohio in 1916. He attended Youngstown schools and graduated from high school in 1934. At Fort Knox, Kentucky he was in the 1st, 5th, and 6th Armored Divisions. He graduated from OCS 26 August 1942. While stationed at Camp Barkeley, Texas he married Miss Gay West. His parents reside in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and a brother is with the army in the South Pacific.



Lt. Gambitta, Mr. Sheridan, Lt. Goeman, Captain Reynolds



# THE ODYSSEY OF SERVICE

On the fifteenth of August 1942 a cadre of enlisted men arrived at Camp Campbell to activate the 12th Armored Division. Construction and beautifying the camp, along with classes on army life, took up most of the time. As the camp filled with men the training became crystallized, and across the way Hitler made strategic moves. Maneuvers in Tennessee revealed



Hitler made strategic moves

understanding and knowledge of the past classroom classes. The stay in Camp Barkeley seemed like a brief visit, and the stay in Camp Shanks was one of those "here today, gone tomorrow" affairs. The trip across the North Atlantic, and Tidworth (with that trip to London) brought us closer to combat. After traveling approximately 300 miles to Luneville the idea of living in houses was welcomed. Usual battery duties were performed on vehicles and weapons. Shortly after midnight the water truck pulled out to locate the water point. The fuel and lube section, ration section, and battalion maintenance sections also found Luneville no rest camp. In readiness, we left there one morning and arriv-



Camp Barkeley, Texas



In Tennessee

ed in Bettwiller at dark. Sleeping quarters were somewhat crude - 28 tired men couldn't stretch out and relax on the upper floor of that barn. No sooner had we dropped off to sleep when a terrific muzzle blast rocked the barn. The guard slipped in and said there was a battery of 240's not far behind us. Thru-out the night the shells continued to be fired over our heads - and the floor in the barn continued to rock. That night while on guard our imaginations ran riot. Our chow was a source of wonderment to the civilians. They watched from the time we lined up until we washed mess kits - then in split second time formed their own line, using bowls, pans, kettles and cups. At this point the two tank



Picadilly Circus, London

recovery vehicles and crews had moved forward to Headquarters Battery. While shells were coming there, Hunter made good use of Capt. Reynold's foxhole. Lorentzen, France - ten miles ahead - was reached one afternoon at 1600. A funeral procession was leaving the area and conversation revealed recent shellings had killed three women. We noticed women did as much work, if not more, than men. Women hurried



Our houses in Luneville

about hauling manure from the barns and piled it with the rest – which was usually against the house. Children soon learned we had chocolate and became extremely friendly. A steady rain made the streets resemble that obstacle course back at Camp Campbell.

A billeting party spent the night of 14 December in Rahling. Division Artillery was billeted there, and to get their houses we stayed. A light wind, weird sounds, and vivid imaginations played an active part when we stood guard. A pigeon suddenly took off and swished past us in the doorway. So positive were we that a message was being dispatched that a thorough investigation of all attics in the vicinity took place at daylight. Results – negative. At this stage we took under our wings two refugees who had formerly been "on detached service" with the German army. Contented to stick with the battery and work with the kitchen personnel, these boys were given an issue of GI clothing.

With the battalion we arrived in Wolfskirchen on 16 December and maintenance of vehicles and weapons, putting identification on bumpers, and sewing patches on clothes took up most of the time. A few bad cases of the never-to-be-forgotten "GI's" were evident. We returned to Rahling, had the same sleeping accommodations,

A clumsy green wooden box was carried everywhere in the supply truck. Its use was of no importance as far as the battery was concerned, and it was in the way everytime something was needed from the truck. The correct operating procedure was never fully learned. Its initial appearance came about one afternoon when the battery had moved into St. Avold. The orders, "get out the mine detector and check a level area for the volley ball court", sounded as tho pleading for mercy would have been futile. The idea of unloading it from the truck and setting it up disturbed us more than the thought of mines. With the aid of the instruction book we set to work connecting all the loose parts. Many minutes later when we discovered two extra parts, the instruction book was rechecked. It was then we found we were working from the M6 model. Ours was the M2A7. When a hum was produced by pressing a button and turning a few knobs, we carried our heavy M2A7 down the road. Children playing in the



Lorentzen, France

and in general, the same set-up. Twenty men had the honor of using the "blue room" in a large barn and the odor was almost sufficient to



Rahling, France

chosen spot for our demonstration fled when they saw us. They probably thought we had some new type of secret weapon. Once the instrument was adjusted we set out sweeping a path ahead. Children had slowly come back to us now and watched eagerly. One spoke English and his inquiry as to why we were using a carpet sweeper set us laughing. One broad sweep made the hum become a scream, and the little needle on the dial suddenly jumped from one side of the dial to the other. We hadn't thought to bring wire for probing purposes, so a bayonet was used. Exercising great care, the object was brought to light – a large rusty nail. The next "mine" was a metal box. But the pay-off came when we dug up a hairpin. Being so engrossed in our work we had failed to notice the children were playing all around us, and a herd of sheep had crossed the center of the volley ball court. The last time the M2A7 was seen was the day we left St. Avold.

liquidate the twenty of us. It was one cold night that Beulah, the bovine in the next room, decided to give birth to a daughter. At Lixing our quarters were somewhat better – we didn't have to stand outside in the cold for chow, and guard posts were in the hallway. A sudden march order took us into the vicinity of St. Avold and the heavy frost was a good indication that we were to expect the worst in the way of weather. And it wasn't long until the temperature dropped.

In the morning came word we were going into Germany. Cold as it was, doors came off the trucks, hand grenades were within reach, and when we hit the road all eyes were glued for enemies. The wolf instinct was still evident as we passed thru small towns, because the sight of a woman brought low groans, and then "oh, my – – – back" could be heard in every vehicle. Lauterbach, Germany was our destination. Outgoing mail jumped about 50% because everyone wanted to let the home folks know he was in Germany. (Matsen, Carracino, and Youngquist helped considerably.) During one day seventeen suspicious characters (German civilians) were rounded up and detained in one small room. It was here that Grossman began acting as battery interpreter, and the title of "Von" was his. Christmas Day was just another day, altho our dinner was a super deluxe one. The ration crew – Miller, Nace, Carracino, and Hartzell – always delivered the goods on time. Using the community beer hall, a party was held after dinner and the gang, Bauerle, and the "acquired" piano made with the Christmas Carols. The word that a German ambulance had broken thru our lines and was headed in our direction caused unusual alertness. With all the small arms pointed toward the road it wasn't safe to step outside the door to answer the call of nature.

The "strategic withdrawal" from Lauterbach wasn't in vain. With an ample supply of mattresses, chairs, and that piano, we pulled into the vicinity of St. Avold. That artillery school was a swell set-up, but just as we counted upon staying awhile, the rumor of all rumors caused us

Off in a distance was heard a roar with an occasional report like a gun being fired. The crowd in the little village dispersed quickly when the object came into view. Coming down the hill with flaps up and wings spread, it came and – – – S W O O S H – – – right thru town it went taking trees, bushes and parts of wagons with it. A voice nearby was heard to say (with fear), "that was the ration section of 495rd". The ration section with pilot Frank Nace, navigator Vernon "Red" Miller, turret gunner Marlin Hartzell, and tail gunner "Nicky" Carracino rampaged thru small arms fire, terrific shelling, and day fights, to have the windshield shattered, wings punctured and ripped, and a tire pierced. The girls along the road were always attracted by those daring men as the blare from the multi-toned horns hit their ears. It was a common sight to see these men go into action and deliver their rations with the navigator playing a harm-

to go the next thing to nuts. "TURN OUT THOSE LIGHTS, GET UNDER COVER, GET OUT OF HERE, THE WOODS ARE FULL OF GERMAN PARATROOPERS, TURN OUT THAT GOD DAMNED LIGHT" – all those words coming in one breath caused us to react like a bunch of scared animals. Guard that night seemed endless. Every noise was magnified, our imaginations got the best of us, and a dog braying far off in the distance didn't make the situation better. Early in the morning we took off and spent New Year's Day near Albestroff. Around the corner was a church and many men took advantage of the mass.



... around the corner was a church

Groehler was sent to the rear on detached service. By this time the battery well realized and appreciated the full meaning of the word "schnapps", the liquid refreshment that in time replaced water. Back into Lixing again and we had the same set-up, altho we found some of the conveniences missing and in the hands of nearby civilians. For the first time in months we had movies. It was a cold night when the fuel and lube section took off to gas the battalion when it went into position in Wittering. Finell, Rosenau, Couch, Steward, Rosenberg, and McCasland were in that crew. Leinicke, Major, and Rutter had the night off. About 0200 when the job was completed and they were ready to return to the battery, orders were changed so that they remained with the battalion. Incoming shells resulted in other orders to get out immediately. Rosenau had been deep in a sleep and was the hardest to awaken – his bedroll had become saturated with gasoline and

onica in between sips of "88" tonic. And the pilot would be busy driving and trying to play a squeeze box at the same time. The rear gunners were busy with – (1) a book, (2) a sandwich. This famous plane of 6x6 design has many battle scars upon her, and despite the fact that she has been driven over 11,000 miles the rations have always come thru. At times it was extremely difficult to keep the plane steady in hard rains in order to prevent the eggs scrambling with the spam.



Mail from home



... it struck every fifteen minutes

fumes kept him groggy even after they were returning to the battery. Christmas mail finally broke thru, and twenty-seven full bags of packages from home were distributed.

Taking off with the battalion the slow march over icy roads was halted at midnight – just long enough to eat hot chow. The remainder of the march continued to be a slow and dangerous one, because upset vehicles could be seen along the road – the results of skidding. At daybreak we arrived in Batzendorf. Winter had definitely come. Houses were used again and at this point some of us had trouble with our landlords hiding the coal. Here some men became souvenir conscious. The battery never received a commendation from higher headquarters for building that road block, but that job did furnish more than one good hearty laugh. Metz came back with us to install a radio in one of the vehicles. Rabbit hunting became a popular pastime. It was in Batzendorf that Lt. Hayter and Sowers had the unfortunate accident in the peep. Mittel-Schaeffelsheim had its good points. It was days after moving into that town that the majority of us could pronounce the name itself. The clock in the church steeple was outstanding to us because it struck every fifteen minutes, and we found it a help while on guard. The friendliness of those people made our stay an extremely pleasant one. Wine became popular. The chow line decreased daily and it was no secret that the civilians were wining and dining us. Some of the most delicious home-made soups

were served while in Mittel-Schaeffelsheim. Passes to Strasbourg began and the morale of the battery went upward. One of the best liked men in the organization was accidentally killed on the afternoon of January 23 – Eddie Maile. Eddie will always be remembered because of his outstanding personality. He made friends readily, and was always willing to lend a hand with any work. We lost two old timers by transfer – Bridges and Schneider. Towles was given a welcome when he returned to the battery. This town proved to be a rather good place after all – Lt. Goeman discarded his gold bars for silver ones, and Lelak got his rating of sergeant.

Results of bitter fighting could be seen along the road to Colmar. French Moroccans riding pack mules were a common sight. Civilians were evacuating the towns. We lost Lt. Hayter to Headquarters Battery. Colmar proved to be rich in souvenirs – Bavarian china, needlepoint, swords, canes, swastikas, etc., were being sent home.

Back into St. Avold again, and this time we stayed for quite awhile. Battalion maintenance was busy servicing battalion vehicles. Fischang and Holmes kept busy between watering the battalion and fixing flats. Fletcher and Ponce brought daily loads of supplies and kept the battalion well clothed. Livingston, Rosenthal, Lorenz, and Feigenbaum visited the battery to set us straight with any allotment or financial problems. It was here that the trailer for the supply truck was christened "The Blood Bank".



Civilians evacuated towns

Here in this town the civilians were typical of all the others where we billeted – they even argued among themselves as to whom should get the coffee grounds. 1st sergeant Gambitta received his battlefield commission as a 2nd Lt. Jannaccio stepped into the 1st sergeant's job, and Valerius became battalion supply sergeant. While out for ammunition one night Napolitano, Davis, Healy, Brunette, Finelli, McCasland and O'Brien turned wrong, followed five peeps into a forest, and then later learned that forest hadn't been cleared. Nor did they know that the five peeps consisted of a reconnaissance party. Passes to



... they argued over coffee grounds

Strasbourg and Brussels were still being given. In connection with St. Avold the hot shower set-up can't be forgotten. While in Rosbruck Capt. Nichols left for Paris. Henkel continued his barber business.



The hot shower can't be forgotten



Henkel still continued . . .

Late one evening came the word of march order, and that we were then in the 3rd army. Identifications were removed from bumpers and clothing, and continuous driving brought us thru Luxemburg the next afternoon. The crossing of the Moselle River ended in our bivouacing for the night. Quinn was evacuated to the hospital from that area. Argento and Rhodes busied themselves with welding jobs. The next day our march continued thru the scene of recent combat.

It was one of those perfect spring days when the sun is bright and the sky is blue. To expect trouble on that day was remote from our minds. We had only six vehicles in the column — the rest of the battery had preceded us by two hours. When we rounded the curve on the top of a hill our new area was in view. Racing thru the clear blue sky was heard that familiar whistle — then a terrific crackling burst echoed for miles. We were spotted and the Jerries were playing again. How all vehicles stopped and how everyone managed to hit the ditch so quickly still remains a mystery. Fortunately that ditch was deep and served as an excellent fortification. The next shell caught us on guard — everyone was flat on his belly. The instant the last piece of debris fell we were on our feet and running. That's where, when, and why three helmets bounced off, hit the road, and rolled to the opposite side. After another burst someone started to speak, but those words never came out — a sizeable piece of branch from a tree fell alongside his legs and scared hell out of him. Someone about twenty yards down the road yelled back to us that he had discovered a cave. We waited for another shell and then started the run for that cave. While running it happened again — more helmets fell and rolled. Then a carbine slid down from someone's shoulder and bounced on the road in perfect rhythm to the speed of the runner. The cave had two rooms and to get into the second one (built further in the hill) was first in everyone's mind. There wasn't any doubt as to our still being spotted because the next shell brought a shower of dirt and stones right outside the opening. We could hear them explode on all sides now. No one talked. All that could be heard was the heavy breathing. Everyone was just staring into space. We knew everyone prayed — it was the only natural thing to do. We planned to run to the vehicles and drive them at any speed, and at any cost, into the village. Being parked on that hill and silhouetted against the sky made them excellent targets. When a blast caused vibration inside the cave, and dust and dirt sifted on us, we ran for the vehicles. If any 88's were fired as we tore into that town we don't remember — our heads were full of jumbled thoughts. With a cellar in mind, a few of us ventured down the street and noticed we were the only GI's in view. Another screaming whistle found us crouched behind a wooden fence, and the sight of flying debris sent us running into the nearby woodshed. It seemed silly to depend upon a small wooden structure for safety, but misery loved company, and so there with many of our men we stayed. Without a doubt we had no escape from those shells. The next one had taken the roof off the adjoining building and plaster fell all around us. The shed seemed to have taken wings as everyone pushed himself outside and ran in any direction. It was into the large, white, stone house across the street that two men

Scattered wreckage of material, planes, equipment, and dead horses and Germans was definite proof of the accuracy of our planes and artillery. As we rode thru battered towns there were plenty of buildings still smoking. Kachinski took off for the gas dump and two days elapsed before he put in his appearance again — it was engine trouble. Adolph Hitler Strasse was the name of the main street in most towns and villages. The super highway was a drivers' delight.

had run. One lone male occupant was in the kitchen throwing belongings into a huge suit case. Our inquiry as to the location of the cellar only brought low and mumbled words — and all in German. The thought of his being some sort of a spy was all we could believe. Maybe he had a gun on him, maybe he had thrown some small transmitting set in that suit case, or maybe he was partially responsible for those incoming shells! Acting on impulse, a carbine was pressed into his back and the word "cellar" was screamed into his ears. Thru the back door, and down the alley we were led. A group of civilians carrying boxes were making headway into what appeared to be a garage, but a bit further and we saw it was a cellar. Our victim had understood after all! He pushed his way thru the crowd and we were right behind him. The one oil lamp hanging from the ceiling kept the room from being enveloped in darkness. Crying babies and women had set the crowd in a worse state of confusion. There were many of our own men in there and with the neighborhood's population we had standing room only. The large boxes and valises were personal effects. Some people didn't bother packing their clothes in order to be sure of a space in the shelter. And as a result, their belongings were pushed around and finally dumped on top the potato pile. The odor in that crowded room was rank. Women began praying in unison. The men stared toward the door, as if waiting for something to interrupt the tenseness. It was after seven o'clock but nobody thought of chow because the Germans were still busy. This cellar was good protection. While dirt was sifted in thru the boarded-up window, the only thing we felt was an occasional vibration. Nobody worried about guard that night because nobody dared sleep. But to get into a sitting position was at least important for the sake of comfort, and arranging baggage was accomplished in darkness after a long time. House tops were still being hit and the sounds of falling tile made women stop the prayers and burst into wails. Then children started in again. The one-holer directly outside the door was a curse. Every few minutes one civilian had to make that trip. And every-time it meant everyone had to stand up. The only time words were more than a whisper was when one GI refused to get up to allow a woman to go outside. With all her weight she came down on his right knee cap and yelled a word that sounded like "HOOP-A-LA". Thru out the night the civilian men ventured to the door, probably to check for fires. And thru out the night the women cried and prayed. Morning found these civilians going out, so then we decided it was safe enough for us! No shells had been heard recently and our men were inspecting the area. In a pile of sand near the corner of that cellar was a dud. The sun was out again and things looked promising. Besides, it was time for chow.





Luxemburg



The town crier — Wolfskirchen



Argento and Rhodes



Battered towns

In the vicinity of Geinsheim the view is an artist's dream. The column was strafed while on the move one afternoon, and while diving for the same foxhole Howard and Lilley became entwined like the grape vine system. Previous experience had taught us to get busy and dig in upon stopping in the field, so Brighton, Crouch, Koontz, LaBarre, Beckel, and Sowers went to work with picks and shovels. One incoming shell caused two men to land in the same foxhole. The truck was driven over LaBarre's hole to give added protection, but when another shell came in he forgot to duck and cracked his head against the truck.

Erickson, Mallette, and Griffith joined the battery. Discovering beaucoup wine in Weisenheim was a good excuse for a celebration. Leiberman was hospitalized for severe burns of the arms and face. "Liberated" automobiles had become a necessity, and whenever the column pulled in or out of position the civilians just stared and shook their heads in amazement — or maybe it was in amusement.

Hafslock, Germany was another assembly area with the battalion, and getting set for the big push across the Rhine was well under way. At a last minute battery formation we were given a refresher course in the meaning of fraternization,



That super highway

because sex had reared its ugly head recently. With headlights glaring, morale sky-high, and a good supply of champagne, we hit the trail and by morning had passed thru the wrecked city of Worms. The rat-races weren't exactly to be recommended for body conditioning. Nevertheless everyone kept going with very little sleep



and rest. That Hartz Mountain deal snapped everyone out of his drowsiness. The report that 5,000 SS Troops were somewhere in the mountains didn't make Koehler, Gyselinck, and Welch feel any brighter when the weapons carrier ran down into a shell crater. And when Brighton had pulled them out the convoy had passed and was out of sight.



Thru Wurzburg

Crossing the Main River and going thru Wurzburg was accomplished late one afternoon. The cross-country ride was made thru fields of mud. After going all night the hot chow at breakfast was reward enough. Everytime the battery stopped for chow the cooks were on the ball. Our hats will always be off to Howard, Lelak, Cline, Brady, Smith, and Towle. There were very few times that we had to depend upon C or K rations. On the fourth of April, Ambler was sent out with Brunette, Davis, O'Brien, Crouch, Piper, Romanazzi, Scott, and Sowers to report to the 42nd Infantry and haul personnel to the front. It was around Schweinfurt that all hell broke loose. But when they returned to be battery and learned of Silas being hit with shrapnel they considered their own experience trifle. Part of the battery was pinned down outside of Schwanfeld, and the shelling we got while in the town made us appreciate the value of a cellar. Pretnar, Fornshell, Prewitt, and Juhlke had just gotten out of the vehicle when the shells came in too close for comfort. Juhlke's grim determination to make use of the one-hole architectural

It was on a Saturday about 1300, and to be exact the date was the eighth of April. The events that took place that day are branded in our minds — that's why the date is so definite. The battery had just pulled into a small town called Schwanfeld, Germany. Artillery shells were whistling over our heads and we were undecided whether these were our guns or the enemy's. Pretnar immediately proceeded to find a place to park the 6x6. No sooner had Juhlke been led into a parking place when the sudden change of expression on his face told us he was having some kind of trouble. Prewitt, Fornshell (driver of the



Cross country

structure across the street only resulted in his immediate retreat under his truck.

Sudden appearances of jet propelled planes flying over Dillingen meant excellent target practice for the "ack-ack" boys that were attached to the battery. Even carbines were fired at the planes — not with hopes of bringing them down, but just as an excuse to shoot a load of rust out of the barrels. Being in a fair sized city was a



Snow-capped Alps

ten-ton wrecker), Pretnar and Juhlke stood against the nearest building trying to figure where the shelling was coming from. Juhlke's eyes were wandering around and suddenly the sight of a one-holer across the street started him on his way. Under the impression that all the shelling was out-going, he walked. Suddenly there was another whistle, then a crackling burst. The roof of Juhlke's "temporary quarters" was in mid-air when the door swished open, and the speed he used would have put Jess Owens out of any running. The expression "caught with your pants down" had become a reality!

welcome from the usual rural communities. Apple blossoms, spring flowers, and a gentle hint of spring seemed to give us a new lease on things. The amount of camera fans increased, and at this point most everyone had at least one good camera. While crossing the Danube River bets were being made as to the date of V-E Day. At dawn one day we were surprised to see the snow-capped Alps directly in front of us. We had done plenty of traveling, and still we continued thru the Alps. Snipers fired upon us at one particular time and in the worst of the excitement Jacob's truck refused to move. Still further into the mountains, and it was in a small village called Oberau that we stopped for two days. It was in the burgermeister's house that



We continued thru the Alps



Scattered wreckage

many of us billeted. After sleeping in ordinary farm houses for so long, the interior of this place reminded us of a movie setting. Quinn returned from the hospital looking good, and Tate was added to the battery in battalion maintenance. Germans were coming in from all directions – all heading for the PW Cage. They looked tired, weary, disgusted, and above all, defeated. Activity for our outfit had reached a standstill.

It was while on the move thru Munich that Gross, Phillips, Porciello, Nufer, Boyd, Turner and Dorries became estranged from the battalion as a result of trouble with the second tank recovery vehicle. While Drumheller talked of going home soon, Otten began dreaming of a seven days escapade in London.



Trouble



... from all directions

The maintenance sections sighed a breath of relief because there would be somewhat of a rest for them. In the five months of combat they had performed 160 No. 2 echelon jobs, and 72 No. 3 echelon jobs. Mr. Sheridan, "Pop" Dwinnell, Connell, DeLorenzo, Lee, Munday, and Sipe share honors with the rest of the maintenance gang for the good work done on the battalion vehicles. During combat our trucks were kept on the move, the approximate mileage totals 220,000 miles. This battery is the only Service Battery in the division that remained up in front with their battalion thruout combat.

Service Battery accomplished their mission of supporting the battalion only by a tremendous output of energy, time, and plain old back breaking work and quite a lot of fancy cuss words. In the one hundred and fifty days of combat 10,912,000 pounds of supplies were hauled from division, corps, and Army depots to the batteries.

6 May 1945

Dear Mother and Dad,

It's only a matter of time now until some news concerning our status is released. Nevertheless, there are a few things imperative to our good conduct once we get back into civilian clothes.

When I get out of the car, lead me into the house, otherwise I'll start kicking the tires to check the pressure. Nudge me when friends and neighbors smile, or else I'll abide by our present non-fraternization rule and think in terms of sixty-five dollars. While using the phone be on the alert for my saying "Cabex, Commanche, Roger, or Over". Hide pans — especially pie pans. The resemblance to mess gear might be the cause of my standing outside the neighbor's door at dinner time. It will be a good idea to put all picks and shovels under lock and key — cat-holes

For this to have been made in one trip would have required 2182 trucks. 45,000 rounds of 105 ammunition weighing 1286 tons was hauled. 400,000 rounds of .30 Cal ammunition, twenty tons, was provided and mostly expended against enemy aircraft; 325 tons of rations, breaking down into 130,000 rations, were consumed; 115,000 gallons of water were used, not to mention untold barrels of wine, schnapps, and cognac; 344,000 gallons of gasoline and 6,860 gallons of oil were burned up without the surrender of a single "A" coupon. 1500 tons of Class II, IV, Px and Special Service supplies were provided. Then there were miscellaneous items like tanks, trailers, guns, half-tracks, and trucks were supplied, but no one took time to weigh. Last and most unforgettable were the soldiers who had been killed, that Service Battery, evacuated. There were not many, fortunately, but many more than we ever want to see again.

Battalion maintenance was able to keep battalion vehicles rolling by the very simple expedient of doing 3d and 4th echelon work rather than evacuate the vehicles to ordnance and perhaps receive no replacements for long periods of time. In addition they were always present to pull vehicles out of the mud and ditches, made emergency roadside repairs, and insure that the battalion reached its destination on time with the maximum number of vehicles.

In this period 160 2d echelon jobs and 72 3d echelon jobs were performed, as well as 15 4th echelon jobs under conditions a long distance the steam heated garages of Camp Cambell, Kentucky.

The Service Battery trucks traveled a distance of 220,000 miles, or almost the distance to the moon.

are history now. It would be best to empty all bottles, especially all ones containing amber colored liquids. Likely as not, I'll go on an inspection tour of the cellar in grim determination of quenching my thirst. Destroy that whistling tea kettle. As I remember, a screaming whistle is sent thru-out the house when the water boils, and that would send me diving under the table believing it's another 88. It will be useless to lock drawers or to conceal anything. Our advanced curriculum concerned removing locks and locating the deepest hidden valuables.

Take things easy — I'll be seeing you.

Love,  
Joe

P. S. I'll let you know whenever the good news is passed on to us.



Jannaccio



Gyselink, Welch, Quinn, Koehler



Towle, Brady, Smith, Russian K P, Cline  
Lelak, Howard, Russian K P,



Rutter, Leinicke, Kachinski, Couch, Mallette, Rosenberg,  
Major



Drumbheller, Metz, Fischang, Groehler  
Lilley, Bauerle, Rosenau, Grossman,



Tate, Cone, Porciello, Dorris, Turner



Gross, Boyd, Phillips, Sipe



Fornshell, DeLorenzo



Prewitt, Juhlke, Pretnar, Holmes



Argento, Lee, Rhodes



Youngquist, Beckel, Koontz, Ambler, Napolitano, Jacobs, Finelli, Sowers, Healy, Otten, Matsen



Fletcher, Connell, Scott



Nace, Carracino, Miller, Hartzell



Feigenbaum, Close, Rosenthal, Ducote, Raiolo



Lorenz, Livingston, Milner, Feigenbaum, Krogness, Close, Ducote

The following men were absent when the group pictures were taken: Agranow, Brighton, Brunette, Crouch, Davis, Erickson, LaBarre, McCasland, O'Brien, Piper, Romanazzi, Stewart, Valerius, Livingston, Lorenz, Henkel, Hunter, Munday, Nufer, Ponce.

# AWARDS

## AWARD, POSTHUMOUS, OF THE SILVER STAR

**Sam Foster**, Staff Sergeant, Battery "A", for gallantry in action on 16 January 1945 in the vicinity of Herrlisheim, France. S/Sergeant Foster, acting as forward observer with the 17th Armored Infantry Battalion when the infantry withdrew for a better position, remained at his post forward of the infantry elements for six hours directing artillery fire on the enemy strong points and installations. The heavy enemy attack continued, and when his post was surrounded, S/Sergeant Foster, although endangering his own life by doing so, called for fire around his immediate position until his death. His devotion to duty exemplified the finest traditions of the Army of the United States.

**Henry L. Marble**, Corporal, Battery "A", for gallantry in action on 6 April 1945 in the vicinity of Estenfeld, Germany. Corporal Marble, gunner on an M-7, was left in charge of the howitzer section when the chief of section and a cannoneer left the piece to segregate ammunition in the ammunition trailer and replenish the howitzer supply. During that time heavy counter-battery fire was placed on the battery position. When Corporal Marble saw that the chief of section and cannoneer were hit by fragments, he left his cover and the protection of his position in the M-7 and went to the aid of his two comrades. Reaching the wounded men, Corporal Marble covered his wounded chief of section with his own body and carried him away from the ammunition trailer approximately thirty yards to the defilade provided by the M-7. In performing this action he was mortally wounded by fragments as he reached this cover. By his daring self-sacrifice, Corporal Marble displayed courage and extraordinary heroism that is in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service.

## AWARD OF THE SILVER STAR

**Dorrell W. Moore**, Staff Sergeant, Battery "A", for gallantry in action on 18 January 1945 in the vicinity of Herrlisheim, France. When the officer in command of his crew was wounded, Corporal Moore, a member of a forward observer team supporting the 17th Armored Infantry Battalion, carried the wounded officer over open terrain under heavy enemy fire, to a place of safety. He then returned, took charge of the crew and continued to support the infantry with timely and accurate artillery fires until he was seriously wounded when his position was overrun by the enemy. His courage and devotion to duty was an outstanding example to the officers and enlisted men of both battalions.

**Vernon R. Wolcott**, First Lieutenant, Battery "A", for gallantry in action from 30 March to 2 April 1945 at Wurzburg, Germany. On 30 March when the task force was held up by enemy anti-tank weapons and small arms fire in the vicinity of Neukirchen. First Lieutenant Wolcott assembled 3 men and fought his way on foot to a point of observation on high ground. He directed artillery fire on the enemy under continued small arms fire, destroying two anti-tank weapons and killing several riflemen, enabling the task force to move forward. Again on 2 April 1945 in the vicinity of Wurzburg when the task force was held up by 88's and other anti-tank weapons, First Lieutenant Wolcott proceeded in his tank to a position three hundred yards beyond friendly elements to obtain observation. Under direct fire of enemy anti-tank weapons he adjusted artillery fire and destroyed three enemy anti-tank guns and assisted the task force in moving forward to the objective. Entered military service from Warsaw, New York.

**Daniel A. Hope**, Private First Class, Headquarters Battery, for gallantry in action on 23 April 1945 in the vicinity of Bopfingen, Germany. Private First Class Hope, bow-gunner in a tank, was in a convoy of ordnance and supply vehicles. While passing through a wooded area the column was fired on by a concealed enemy automatic weapon, resulting in the wounding of one officer and halting the column. With complete disregard for his own safety, he left the shelter of his tank and entered the woods alone. Locating the foxhole from which the weapon was being fired, Private First Class Hope killed two German soldiers and captured the automatic weapon. His actions prevented further injury to friendly personnel and permitted the column to proceed. Entered military service from New York, New York.

**Frank J. Czeiner**, 02 006 403, Second Lieutenant, Service Battery, for gallantry in action on 17 February 1945 in the vicinity of Aversmacher, Germany. Second Lieutenant Czeiner was with the forward elements of Company A, 253rd Regiment, 63rd Infantry Division, as an artillery forward observer. The supported infantry company was being held up by intense enemy mortar and small arms fire and a mine field. His own radio having become inoperative, Second Lieutenant Czeiner left the safety of his fox-hole and under heavy and sustained enemy mortar and small arms fire, crawled to one of the infantry radios, succeeded in adjusting it to his own channel and called for artillery fire. His adjustment of artillery fire on the enemy positions forced them to withdraw and enabled the infantry to take its objective. Later the same day when his party was attacked by enemy patrols on two separate occasions, Second Lieutenant Czeiner led his men so successfully that a large number of the enemy were captured or killed. Entered military service from Wildwood, New Jersey.

**Barnett L. Bales**, First Lieutenant, (Missing in action) Headquarters Battery, for gallantry in action on 16 and 17 January 1945 in the vicinity of Herrlisheim, France. First Lieutenant Bales was a forward observer with the 43rd Tank Battalion attacking the Stainwald Woods when his tank was hit and set on fire. Ordering his crew to abandon the tank, First Lieutenant Bales remained in the burning vehicle and covered their withdrawal by throwing smoke grenades to screen them from the enemy before taking cover himself. Later, he again went forward in the Company Commander's tank and directed effective fire on two enemy anti-tank guns and numerous strong points, until contact with him was lost.

**John A. Carlson**, First Lieutenant, (Missing in action) Headquarters Battery, for gallantry in action 16 and 17 January 1945 in the vicinity of Herrlisheim, France. First Lieutenant Carlson was forward observer with the 43rd Tank Battalion on 16 January when the tank company he was supporting met heavy anti-tank fire and a track was blown from his tank. Ordering his crew to abandon the disabled vehicle while he covered their withdrawal with smoke, First Lieutenant Carlson remained in the tank to direct fire on the emplaced anti-tank guns. This accomplished, he withdrew only to move forward again in another tank to continue to direct fire on enemy stronged, he continued on in a third tank and when last heard from was still directing fire on enemy positions.

Lt. **William F. Evans**

## AWARD OF THE BRONZE STAR

**Charles D. Hartman, Jr.**, Lieutenant Colonel, Field Artillery, Headquarters, for meritorious service in Eastern France.

**Celestine Staab**, Technician Third Grade, Medical Detachment, for heroic achievement. At 1635 hours the battalion command post and installations were subjected to a heavy enemy artillery barrage. The first shell which landed in the area wounded four men. Technician Third Grade Staab immediately went to their assistance in spite of the continued shelling and with disregard for his own safety administered first aid and arranged for the evacuation of the wounded men until the arrival the battalion surgeon. This outstanding performance and devotion to duty served as an example to the other enlisted men of the detachment. Entered military service from Catherine, Kansas.

**Anthony H. Couch**, Sergeant, Service Battery, for meritorious service from 5 December 1944 to 10 March 1945 in Eastern France. Serving as Chief of Fuel and Lubricants Section, Sergeant Couch at all times kept the battalion refueled under many and varying conditions. On 2 January 1945 at Witting, France, he refueled the unit under enemy artillery fire and while returning to the gas dump for a full load of gasoline, passed through two towns being shelled by enemy artillery. Sergeant Couch traveled over new routes, blacked out, and met the battalion on the road

to refuel. He maintained a full load of fuel and lubricants in the battalion and on his trucks even though this was attained only by continuous traveling and loading of gasoline for periods up to sixty hours. Entered military service from San Antonio, Texas.

**William F. Murray**, Captain, Field Artillery, Headquarters, for meritorious service from 14 December 1944 to 7 February 1945 in Eastern France. Captain Murray, as combat liaison officer to all supported units, at all times during this period distinguished himself by the efficient control of his observers and the close coordination and flow of information he maintained for the supported units and his own battalion. On 18 January 1945 in Weyersheim, France, when the Combat Command Headquarters was attacked, he manned an observation post in a nearby steeple under direct enemy fire. He efficiently placed artillery fires on the attacking tanks and infantry that were a decisive factor in breaking up the attack. His outstanding liaison with the 36th Infantry Division in arranging night barrages and defensive fires during the critical period when the 12th Armored Division was being relieved and the artillery remained in support, was of great benefit to both divisions. Entered military service from Brookline, Massachusetts.

**Thomas W. Reynolds**, Captain, Service Battery, for meritorious service from 5 December 1944 to 5 May 1945 in Eastern France and Western Germany. On 12 to 16 December 1944 in the vicinity of Singling, France, Captain Reynolds, Battalion Motor Officer, supervised the clearing of an area formally occupied by the Fourth Armored Division, salvaging tanks and half-tracks for the armed forces. Again at Schwanfeld, Germany, on 12 April 1945, when twenty-three vehicles were rendered ineffective by enemy fire, Captain Reynolds and his crew repaired these vehicles in eighteen hours. On 15 April 1945 at Zeilitzheim, Germany, when a bridge collapsed, Captain Reynolds planned and directed construction of a temporary bridge. Entered military service from Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

**James R. DeHaan**, Private First Class, Medical Detachment, for heroic achievement on 6 April 1945 in the vicinity of Bergtheim, Germany. At approximately 1400 hours the battery position came under heavy enemy artillery fire, inflicting several casualties. Private First Class DeHaan immediately left his half-track and went into the open to the aid of the wounded men. When the battery was forced to withdraw to an alternate position, he remained in this area in spite of continued shelling, administering first aid and evacuating four wounded men to a point of safety. With these men taken care of, he left his cover again and returned to the position, checking the area, to insure that no more wounded men remained under enemy shelling.

**Charles L. Zincon**, Corporal, Battery "A", for heroic achievement on 6 April 1945 in the vicinity of Estenfeld, Germany. When the battery position came under direct fire, Corporal Zincon left his place of safety, displacing to an alternate position and went to the aid of a wounded comrade, carrying him through the continuous heavy fire from one shell hole to another until he had reached a place of safety. After administering first aid he again left his cover and returned to the position area and assisted a second wounded man to safety.

**Edward A. Moore**, Private First Class, Headquarters Battery, for meritorious service. This battalion was subjected to heavy and continuous harassing fire from enemy artillery, beginning at 1815 hours. The vital wire communication lines between the battalion's fire direction center and an attached tank platoon, firing indirect fire, were severed. Private First Class Moore, with disregard for his own safety, set out alone under heavy artillery fire and repaired the wire breaks. Entered military service from Newark, New Jersey.

**Donald L. Elliott**, Private First Class, Battery "C", for meritorious services on 11 January 1945 in the vicinity of Bischwiller, France. Private First Class Elliott, under enemy artillery fire, repaired vital communication lines that had repeatedly been severed by enemy fire. Entered military service from Baltimore, Maryland.

**William F. Evans**, First Lieutenant, for meritorious service. First Lieutenant Evans was forward observer with the \*\* Armored Infantry Battalion when the enemy made a night attack. Although driven from his post when the Infantry positions were overrun, he continued to direct timely and accurate artillery fire on the enemy. Later, in spite of heavy small arms and mortar fire, First Lieutenant Evans returned alone to his forward post for better observation. He remained there for three hours, directing effective fire on the enemy thus breaking up the attack and assisting the Infantry in holding its lines. Entered military service from Des Moines, Iowa.

**Norman E. Vogel**, Corporal, Headquarters Battery, for heroic achievement from 10 to 12 December 1944 in the vicinity of Singling, France. Corporal Vogel, as a member of a forward observer team supporting the 43rd Tank Battalion, repeatedly left his cover while subjected to heavy artillery and mortar fire and under direct enemy observation repaired the wire line from the forward observer located in a pill-box to the radio relay, restoring communications and enabling the observer to neutralize heavily defended and fortified positions which were delaying the advance. Entered military service from Detroit, Michigan.

**Otto C. Nelson**, 36 272 586, Corporal, Headquarters Battery, for heroic achievement on 17 January 1945 in the vicinity of Herrlisheim, France. When his tank had been hit by anti-tank fire and was burning, Corporal Nelson calmly continued to fire his piece, until his tank suffered a second direct hit, making his position untenable. Entered military service from Minong, Wisconsin.

**Frank F. Huetig**, 39 540 191, Corporal, Headquarters Battery, for heroic achievement on 17 January 1945 in the vicinity of Herrlisheim, France. When his tank was hit by anti-tank fire and burning, Corporal Huetig remained at his post and continued to place effective fire on the enemy until a second direct hit on the tank made his position untenable. Corporal Huetig's remarkable display of courage and devotion to duty was a contributing factor in the safe withdrawal of the forward observer crew. Entered military service from El Monte, California.

**Mel Roy B. Farrand**, 02 016 382, Second Lieutenant (then Staff Sergeant), Battery B, for meritorious service from 5 December 1944 to 5 May 1945 in Eastern France and Western Germany. Serving as chief of howitzer sec-

tions, Second Lieutenant Farrand at all times demonstrated superior knowledge and ability and outstanding qualities of leadership. In addition to his assigned duties Second Lieutenant Farrand took a regular tour of duty as Battery Executive throughout combat and exhibited a superior knowledge of artillery technique and tactics. During the Division's drive across Western Germany, Second Lieutenant Farrand acted as an artillery forward observer with an infantry company and repeatedly brought accurate and effective artillery fire on enemy elements. His actions and accomplishments were of invaluable assistance to the infantry in capturing its objectives. Entered military service from Tomohawk, Wisconsin.

**Samuel Gambitta**, 02 007 168, Second Lieutenant, Service Battery, for meritorious service from 1 March to 5 May 1945 in Eastern France and Southern Germany. As Assistant Battalion S-4, Second Lieutenant Gambitta displayed superior judgement and initiative in the performance of his duties. His expert handling of ammunition supplies, so vital to the efficient functioning of the Battalion, a duty which often carried him into enemy occupied territory and under enemy shellfire, materially aided the Battalion in its successful operations. Entered military service from Oneida, New York.

**Leon T. Hainrich**, 37 316 258, Sergeant (then Corporal), Headquarters Battery, for heroic achievement on 1 April 1945 in the vicinity of Waldbrunn, Germany. When the Battalion Fire Direction Center was brought under direct fire from a platoon of enemy heavy tanks, Sergeant Hainrich refused to leave his post and take shelter in a nearby house but remained in the exposed Fire Control Vehicle to compute the necessary data to bring effective counter-battery fire on the enemy, forcing them to withdraw. Entered military service from Hobridge, South Dakota.

**Dean A. Boren**, 01 182 521, First Lieutenant, Battery B, for meritorious service from 5 December 1944 to 5 May 1945 in Eastern France and Western Germany. Serving as battery reconnaissance officer and forward observer First Lieutenant Boren demonstrated outstanding ability in calling for continuous and effective artillery fire for supported infantry units. In so doing, First Lieutenant Boren continually exposed himself to hostile observation and fire on vantage points well forward of leading infantry elements. During the attack on the Dillingen Bridge across the Danube River, First Lieutenant Boren accompanied the leading infantry into town against strong enemy opposition. During the heat of battle, First Lieutenant Boren became separated from the supported infantry and found himself alone and facing a truck load of enemy infantry. First Lieutenant Boren immediately took the enemy under fire with his carbine, wounding several and causing the remaining forty to surrender. Entered military service from Adel, Iowa.

**Chester C. Pierson**, 37 187 744, Technician Fifth Grade, Headquarters Battery, for heroic achievement on 10 April 1945 in the vicinity of Unter-Speisheim, Germany. While under enemy artillery and small arms fire, Technician Fifth Grade Pierson, tank driver, left the comparative safety of his tank, and with another man, made his way some three hundred yards over very difficult, marshy terrain to an injured infantryman. With the other man, Technician Fifth Grade Pierson administered first aid and removed



the injured man to a place of safety, thereby helping to save the man's life. Entered military service from Barlow, North Dakota.

**Charles W. Bogardus, Jr.**, 12 156 885, Technician Fifth Grade, Headquarters Battery, for heroic achievement on 10 April 1945 in the vicinity of Unter-Speisheim, Germany. When Technician Fifth Grade Bogardus observed an injured infantryman in a field some three hundred yards from his tank, he left the comparative safety of his tank, and although under enemy artillery and small arms fire, made his way over the very difficult, marshy terrain, to the injured soldier. With the aid of another man, Technician Fifth Grade Bogardus was able to administer first aid and evacuate the injured man to a place of safety, thereby contributing to the saving of the man's life. Entered military service from Lynbrook, Long Island, New York.

**Orville E. Cook**, 37 005 212, First Sergeant, Headquarters Battery, for heroic achievement on 1 April 1945 in the vicinity of Waldbrunn, Germany. When his battery position was subjected to heavy direct fire from a platoon of enemy tanks, First Sergeant Cook left the comparative safety of his dug-in guard outpost and ran to a point of vantage in direct view of the enemy. From this exposed position, First Sergeant Cook directed counter-battery fire on the enemy so effectively that the tanks were forced to withdraw. Entered military service from Osage City, Kansas.

**Paul W. Zanieski**, 33 396 926, Private, Medical Detachment, for heroic achievement on 7 April 1945 at Schweinfeld, Germany. With complete disregard for personal safety, Private Zanieski, upon seeing a supposedly wounded soldier from another unit lying in the street, left a position of comparative shelter to render aid. Finding the soldier mortally wounded, he carried the body back to a cellar to prevent further mutilation. Entered military service from Rochester, Pennsylvania.

**Francis E. Haum**, 32 159 127, Technician Fourth Grade, Headquarters Battery, for heroic achievement on 7 April 1945 in the vicinity of Schwanfeld, Germany. While serving as a computer, Technician Fourth Grade Haum refused to leave his position and seek shelter in a nearby house although his position was being heavily shelled by enemy artillery, and several men had been killed or wounded in his immediate vicinity. Technician Fourth Grade Haum's cool and efficient performance of duty in the face of this extreme danger contributed greatly in bringing effective counter-battery fire on the enemy guns. Entered military service from Newark, New Jersey.

**Hoyle S. McBane**, 34 454 734, Technician Fifth Grade, Battery C, for heroic achievement on 7 April 1945 in the vicinity of Schwanfeld, Germany. While serving as a computer, Technician Fifth Grade McBane contributed largely to the direction of effective artillery fire upon the enemy, often under very hazardous conditions. On 7 April when the battery fire direction half-track was subjected to severe artillery fire from the enemy, Technician Fifth Grade McBane was ordered to take cover in a nearby bomb shelter. Refusing to take cover he remained in a comparatively exposed position and continued directing the fire of the battalion. Entered military service from Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

**Edward L. Guy**, Private First Class, Battery "A", for meritorious service on 6 April 1945 in the vicinity of Estenfeld, Germany, when the battery position came under direct enemy artillery fire. Private First Class Guy left his place of safety, when the battery was forced to displace to an alternate position, and went to the aid of a wounded comrade, carrying him through the continuous heavy fire from one shell hole to another until he had reached a point of safety. After administering first aid he again left his cover and returned to the position area and assisted a second wounded man to safety.

**William P. Ford**, First Lieutenant, Battery "B", for meritorious service from 5 December 1944 to 5 May 1945 in Eastern France and Germany. During this period Lt. Ford performed his duties as a firing battery executive in an outstanding manner. On 7 April 1945 the battery position received extremely heavy counter-battery fire for four hours. Lt. Ford ordered the men of the fire control section to take cover in a basement while he handled the fire missions himself. At this same time he personally went to the aid of a man wounded by the shelling. On numerous occasions he has been the only officer in the battery position for extended periods. His knowledge of artillery tactics and techniques is superior, and has resulted in the rapid placing of artillery fire on the enemy.

**David M. Gordon**, Captain, Medical Corps, for meritorious service from 5 December 1944 to 5 May 1945 in Eastern and Germany. During this period Captain Gordon performed his duties in a superior manner, administering to the sick and wounded of this and other units, often under adverse weather conditions and enemy shell fire. His thorough understanding of all personnel and their problems and his efficient treatment of the wounded was instrumental in saving lives and reflects much credit upon the Medical Corps of the United States Army.

**Warren H. Weisz**, Second Lieutenant, Battery "A", for heroic achievement on 10 February 1945 at Auersmacher, Germany. Lieutenant Weisz was a forward observer with the 256th Infantry, which was counter-attacked. Due to limited observation, Lieutenant Weisz left his foxhole, moved forward of friendly lines, and succeeded in adjusting artillery fire on enemy troops less than one hundred yards from his position, materially assisting the repulse of the counter-attack. Remaining in this exposed position throughout the night he adjusted artillery fire by sound, thereby enabling the supported unit to repulse two counter-attacks and to remain in position to continue the attack in the morning.

**Leon E. Mauck**, Captain, for meritorious service as Commanding Officer of "B" Battery, 493rd Armored Field Artillery Battalion from 5 December 1944 to 5 May 1945 in Eastern France and Germany. Captain Mauck has demonstrated superior combat efficiency and leadership ability in commanding his battery and in carrying out the orders of his superiors. By his aggressive personal liaison with front line commanders and his continuous establishment of observation posts he has provided much valuable information and numerous artillery targets. Captain Mauck has on numerous occasions performed the additional duty of liaison officer with the tanks and infantry and through his untiring efforts has contributed much to the success of the operations.

**William W. Capehart**, Technician Fifth Grade, Battery "A", for heroic achievement on 3 April 1945 at Wurzburg, Germany. Although constantly harassed by enemy automatic small arms fire, Technician Fifth Grade Capehart fought his way to an observation post overlooking the infantry crossing of the Main River. From this post he efficiently adjusted artillery smoke fire, enabling the infantry to cross the river even though they had previously been subjected to heavy enemy machine gun fire. During this mission the enemy located the observation post and brought tank and artillery fire upon it, destroying a large portion of the building and disrupting the wire lines and radio communications. While the shelling continued, Technician Fifth Grade Capehart remained in the observation post repairing wire lines and protecting his radio from falling debris to insure communications, thus enabling a continuous smoke screen to be laid for the supported infantry. Entered military service from New York, New York.

**Harold J. Hershey**, Corporal, Battery "B", for heroic achievement on 10 April 1945 in the vicinity of Schwanfeld, Germany. Corporal Hershey, on four separate occasions under intense enemy artillery fire, went into the open and repaired the vital wire lines from the firing battery to battalion fire direction center, thus enabling the battalion to continue effective fire upon the enemy. Entered military service from Mansfield, Ohio.

**John D. Wiseman, Jr.**, Private First Class, Battery "B", for meritorious service on 19 January 1945 and 18 February 1945 in Eastern France. On 19 January 1945 in the vicinity of Weyersheim, France, when the officer in charge of his forward observation team was on a temporary mission elsewhere, a tank attack was launched by the enemy. In spite of direct fire from enemy tanks, Private First Class Wiseman remained at his forward post and directed artillery fire on the enemy, until the return of the officer. Again on 18 February 1945 in the vicinity of Auersmacher, France, in the absence of an officer and on his own initiative, he brought artillery fire on enemy tanks and infantry attacking the positions of the infantry which his team was supporting. His quick action was of great assistance in breaking up both enemy attacks. Entered military service from Murfreesboro, Tennessee.

**Vernon H. Wates, Sr.**, Private First Class.

**John C. Werznack**, Private First Class. For heroic achievement on 7 April 1945 at Schwanfeld, Germany. These men with complete disregard for their personal safety in exposed positions, worked during continued shelling to repair wire lines to the howitzers destroyed by heavy enemy artillery fire within the battery position. The work of these men maintained communication between fire direction center and the howitzers enabling the battery to answer numerous calls for fire from the supported infantry during the enemy counter-battery fire and also made it possible to get medical aid when battery personnel were wounded by shell fragments.

**Lester H. Miller**, Sergeant, Battery "A", for heroic achievement on 6 April 1945, in the vicinity of Wurzburg, Germany. When enemy infantry infiltrated to endanger

the flank of the "A" Battery position, Sergeant Miller took his M-7 to the woods and dismounted with part of his crew. Fighting as infantry, Sergeant Miller successfully led his crew to drive the enemy from the woods, securing the flank of the position and allowing the battery to proceed with a fire mission without interruption. Entered military service from Pittsburg, Pennsylvania.

**John A. Devine**, Captain, Headquarters Battery, for meritorious service from 22 December 1944 to 5 May 1945 in Eastern France and Western Germany. As Headquarters Battery Commander and Assistant S-3 Captain Devine demonstrated superior combat efficiency and leadership ability in commanding his battery and in carrying out the orders of his superiors. His activities as assistant S-3 indicated a superior knowledge of field artillery tactics and technique. He frequently established liaison with leading infantry elements, gaining information which aided in the more rapid placing of accurate artillery fire. Captain Devine's untiring efforts have contributed much to the success of the operations. Entered military service from Baltimore, Maryland.

**Robert W. Mullin, Jr.**, Second Lieutenant, Headquarters Battery, for heroic achievement on 15 February 1945 at Rimling, France. As artillery observer with a company of the 749th Tank Battalion, Lieutenant Mullin had been ordered to establish an observation post on the near edge of Rimling. Realizing that he could not accomplish his mission from the observation post, Lieutenant Mullin accompanied the leading platoon of tanks into the town and assisted the unit in driving the enemy from the town, using the piece on his tank as well as artillery fire. Leaving the comparative safety of his tank, he assisted the accompanying infantry to mop up the town and capture twenty-five German soldiers and large quantities of materiel. Entered military service from Orange, New Jersey.

**Vernon F. Wetzel**, Staff Sergeant, Battery "A", for heroic achievement on 18 February 1945 in the vicinity of Auersmacher, Germany. During a counter-attack, Staff Sergeant Wetzel moved from his foxhole to within 100 yards of the enemy for observation and adjusted artillery fire thereby enabling the supported unit to repulse the attack. Remaining in his exposed position forward of friendly elements, he called for additional fire during the night two additional counter-attacks, materially assisting the supported unit to remain in position to continue the attack in the morning. Entered military service from Maplewood, New Jersey.

**Robert A. Meier**, Major, Headquarters, 12th Armored Division Artillery, for meritorious service from 17 March to 8 May 1945 in Eastern France and Western Germany. Major Meier, acting operations officer of Division Artillery, handled the problems of fire direction with outstanding aggressiveness. In the fast-moving operations across Germany he maintained a forward command post in a half-track in order to overcome communications difficulties. He made careful disposition of artillery under his supervision and demonstrated superior efficiency in coordinating artillery fires under the difficult conditions encountered during enveloping tactics. Entered military service from Fort Wayne, Indiana.

**William P. Wilson**, Captain, Headquarters, 12th Armored Division Artillery, for meritorious service from 15 December 1944 to 5 May 1945 in Eastern France and Western Germany. Captain Wilson, while serving as a battery commander in the 493rd Armored Field Artillery Battalion, demonstrated superior combat efficiency and leadership ability in commanding his battery and the attached assault gun battery in support of the task force of Combat Command "A" in the attack and pursuit of the enemy across Germany. By his frequent presence with the leading elements for liaison, information and observation of targets, he has given the timely and accurate artillery fire which attributed greatly to the success of the various task forces he has supported. Entered military service from Maryville, Tennessee.

**Rudolph W. Meuser**, Captain, Battery "C", for meritorious service from 5 December 1944 to 5 May 1945 in Eastern France and Western Germany. Captain Meuser demonstrated superior combat efficiency and leadership ability in commanding his battery and in carrying out the orders of his commanders. His aggressive personal liaison with front line commanders and establishment of observation posts has provided numerous combat targets and important information for higher headquarters. He performed the additional duties of liaison officer on numerous occasions and has contributed much to the success of the operations. Entered military service from Pawtucket, Rhode Island.

**Vito J. Gaudiano**, Technician Fourth Grade, Headquarters Battery, for meritorious service from 5 December 1944 to 5 May 1945 in Eastern France and Western Germany. Serving as battalion radio repairman, Technician Fourth Grade Gaudiano has at all times kept the battalion radios in repair and operating condition. On 10 April 1945 in the vicinity of Grettstadt, Germany, Technician Fourth Grade Gaudiano crawled across an open field exposing himself to enemy infantry and artillery fire to repair the forward observer's tank radio and made a second trip across the field for a vital part necessary to complete the repairs. On numerous occasions he has traveled blackout over new routes to make radio repairs and perform maintenance under fire. He has frequently worked continuously for forty-eight hours to maintain radio communications, enabling the battalion to place timely artillery fire on the enemy. Entered military service from Houston, Texas.

**William Rosgen**, 01 177 957, First Lieutenant (then Second Lieutenant), Headquarters Battery, for meritorious service from 24 February to 5 May 1945 in Western Germany. Serving as a firing battery reconnaissance and motor officer, First Lieutenant Rosgen at all times demonstrated superior knowledge, ability and outstanding qualities of leadership. In addition to his assigned duties, First Lieutenant Rosgen often substituted as battery executive and performed that duty in an exemplary manner. During the Division's drive across Western Germany, First Lieutenant Rosgen acted as an artillery forward observer with an infantry company and his accurate and timely adjustments aided materially in the success of the drive.

**Robert E. Lee**, 01 168 332, First Lieutenant, Service Battery, for meritorious service from 5 December 1944 to 5 May 1945 in Eastern France and Western Germany. Serving as Battalion Adjutant, First Lieutenant Lee displayed superior judgement and initiative in the performance of his many complex duties. Through his superior knowledge and untiring efforts, all matters of an administrative nature were dealt with promptly and efficiently. In the course of his duties, First Lieutenant Lee quite frequently made long, blackout trips over unfamiliar roads and through terrain known to contain enemy elements to reach the widely scattered organizations of the unit. First Lieutenant Lee further distinguished himself by his versatility in performing, at frequent intervals, the duties of Survey Officer, Reconnaissance Officer and Battalion S-3.

**Archie T. Palmer**, 37 336 200, Sergeant, Headquarters Battery, for meritorious service from 5 December 1944 to 5 May 1945 in Eastern France and Western Germany. Serving as forward observer sergeant and tank commander, Sergeant Palmer demonstrated superior ability in adjusting artillery fire on enemy troops, vehicles and installations. His outstanding qualities of leadership and his coolness in directing the efforts of his crew under hazardous conditions were in a large way responsible for the very efficient operation of that forward observer section. Entered military service from Summit, Colorado.

**John M. Moleski**, 33 356 777, First Sergeant, Battery B, for meritorious service from 5 December 1944 to 5 May 1945 in Eastern France and Western Germany. Serving as First Sergeant of Battery B, First Sergeant Moleski at all times demonstrated outstanding qualities of leadership. On 7 April 1945, in the vicinity of Schwanfeld, Germany, while acting as a 105 mm Howitzer Chief of Section, First Sergeant Moleski and his crew were brought under intense counter-battery fire. Although two members of his crew had been wounded and evacuated, First Sergeant Moleski continued to direct the fire of his 105 mm Howitzer so effectively that the enemy counter-battery was silenced. Entered military service from Kingston, Pa.

Sgt. Elmer G. Spencer	T/4 Vito J. Gaudiano
Cpl. William J. McCarthy	T/4 Paul J. McManus
T/4 Donald J. Walsh	T/4 Donald J. Betz
S/Sgt. Maurice T. Verstraete	Maj. Charles R. Oliver
M/Sgt. Theodore L. Dwinell	T/Sgt. Harold R. Weller
T/4 Irvin Metz	Cpl. Alfred G. Bramble
T/5 Alberto E. Higuera	Pfc. Raymond G. Larson
S/Sgt. Paul W. Panach	Capt. Delmar J. Hayter
S/Sgt. John W. Thompson	Lt. Willard S. Gerling
T/4 Bernard F. Boland	Sgt. Joseph Masi
T/5 Clifford W. Sells Jr.	S/Sgt. Milton E. Hopper
Pfc. Marvin L. Bertelson	Pfc. David L. Allison
T/5 Harvey B. Shoemaker	lst/Sgt. Edgar W. Massey
Lt. Paul H. Gosser	Lt. Frank J. Czeiner
T/Sgt. Robert E. Davis	T/5 Paul F. Thomas
T/5 Jefferson D. Herrman	S/Sgt. W. L. Matsen
	Capt. Wolfe R. Nichols

## OAK LEAF CLUSTER TO THE BRONZE STAR

Lt. Col. Charles D. Hartman Jr.

## AWARD OF THE AIR MEDAL

Lt. William T. Crenshaw, Jr., Headquarters, 5 Oak Leaf Clusters  
Lt. Charles I. Dupont, Jr., "C" Battery, 4 Oak Leaf Clusters  
Lt. Dale F. Miller, Headquarters, 3 Oak Leaf Clusters  
Lt. Carlyle G. Schumann, Headquarters, 3 Oak Leaf Clusters

## AWARD OF THE PURPLE HEART

Lt. Jasper W. Arbuckle, Jr., "C" Battery  
Lt. Richard K. Potter, Headquarters  
Lt. Charles I. Dupont, "C" Battery  
Lt. Frank J. Evans, "B" Battery  
Lt. Jefferson P. Hill, "A" Battery  
S/Sgt. Francis B. Beckman, "C" Battery  
S/Sgt. La Verne K. Tuttle, "B" Battery  
Sgt. Amidio J. Passero, "C" Battery  
Sgt. Walter E. Liskow, "B" Battery  
Sgt. Francis V. Eichten, "B" Battery  
Tec. 4 Joseph E. Harrison, "C" Battery  
Tec. 4 John G. Pavolich, Headquarters  
Tec. 4 John Rufener, "A" Battery  
Cpl. Charles L. Herr, "A" Battery  
Cpl. Bertram Ottenberg, "C" Battery  
Cpl. Teddie Kasupski, "B" Battery  
Cpl. Otto C. Nelson, Headquarters  
Cpl. Alex Stein, "A" Battery  
Cpl. Thomas J. Williams, "B" Battery  
Tec. 5 Wayland F. Becker, "A" Battery  
Tec. 5 William G. Boer, "A" Battery  
Tec. 5 Alberto E. Higuera, "B" Battery  
Tec. 5 Edmund Therrian, "A" Battery  
Pfc. Richard J. Kucharski, "C" Battery  
Pfc. Charles West, "B" Battery  
Pfc. Joseph M. Zeglin, "A" Battery  
Pfc. William Zdziarski, "B" Battery  
Pfc. Michael A. Gancas, "B" Battery  
Pfc. Victor L. Lieberman, Service Battery  
Pfc. William H. Penney, Jr., "C" Battery  
Pfc. Matthew T. Silas, Service Battery  
Pvt. Harold W. Horton, "B" Battery  
Pvt. Kenneth Todd, "C" Battery

# BATTALION ROSTER

## and HOME ADDRESSES

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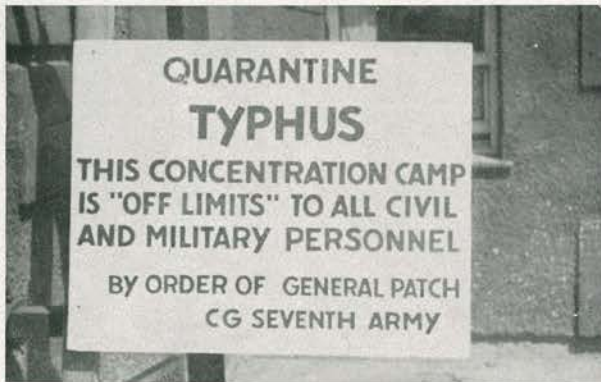
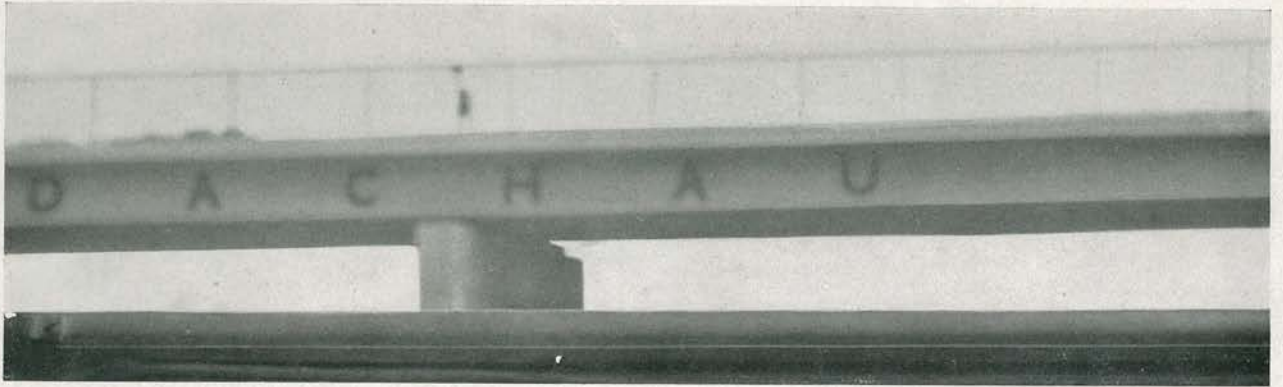
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# ALBUM

These and the following pages may be used as an album for personal photographs. The section about Dachau is produced in response to the requests by the men of the 493rd for copies of these pictures.



Disease caused many deaths amongst the 40,000 inmates, typhus being prevalent.



Massive hospital in which scientific medical experiments were carried out on humans.



Each barracks housed from 1000 to 2000 men. The inmates consisted of jews, intellectuals, anti-Nazis from all the nations of Europe.



SS administration building with inmates mess hall in foreground. Sign on the roof reads: "There is but one way to freedom. The miles are very short."



One of the six torture chambers. Victims were hung on hooks, beaten, attacked by dogs and later gassed.



Sign on door of room into which victims were herded to take showers. After the shower the occupants were gassed through the showerheads. "BEWARE! GAS! DEADLY! DO NOT OPEN!"



Pit in which the men were shot in the "Death Court".  
Identical pit for women is behind bank.



After being shot, bodies were dragged to this blood drainage rack to facilitate subsequent burning



Two of the six furnaces which rendered complete destruction to the corpses.



Building which housed gas chambers, four of the furnaces and, in the room on the right, a storage room for the bodies, which were stacked awaiting the fires of the Nazi furnaces.

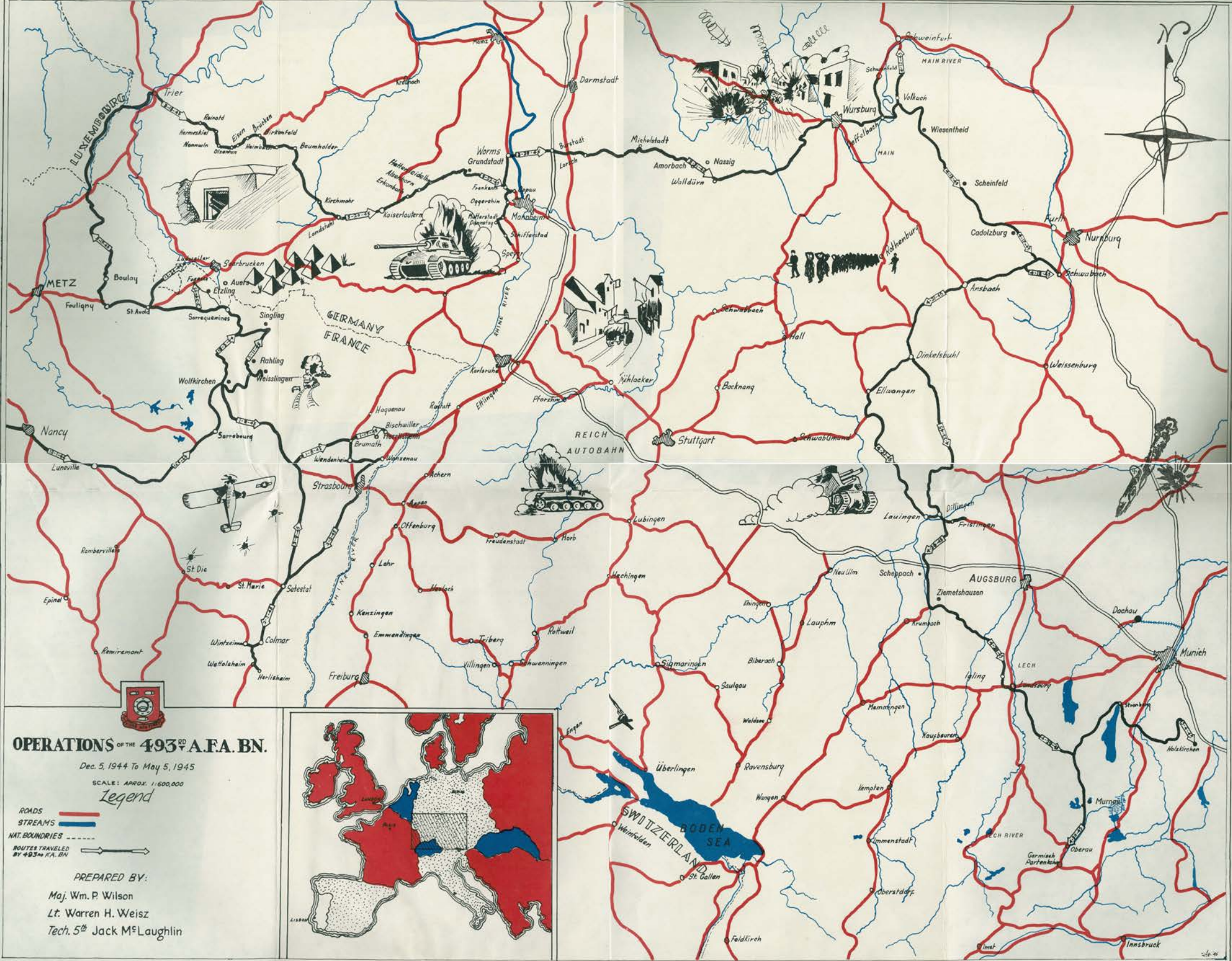


Bone pit where the ashes from the furnaces were dumped. SS men gathered any of these ashes which they sold to the victims' relatives for 180 marks.



Burning diseased debris of the Dachau Camp.

Shepard, Paul H., Jr.  
" "  
Mesa



**OPERATIONS OF THE 493<sup>RD</sup> A.F.A. BN.**

Dec. 5, 1944 To May 5, 1945

SCALE: APPROX. 1:600,000

*Legend*

- ROADS —
- STREAMS —
- NAT. BOUNDARIES
- ROUTES TRAVELED BY 493<sup>RD</sup> A.F.A. BN →

PREPARED BY:

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- Lt. Warren H. Weisz
- Tech. 5<sup>th</sup> Jack M<sup>e</sup>Laughlin





