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The Story of the 305th Infantry

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SECOND TO NONE!

The Story of the 305th Infantry

In World War II

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WASHINGTON
INFANTRY JOURNAL PRESS

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LEST WE WHO TRAINED, LIVED, LOVED, AND FOUGHT WITH THESE MEN: LEST THE WORLD FORGET THEIR COURAGE, DEVOTION, AND SACRIFICE: WE, THE LIVING OF THE 305TH INFANTRY, REVERENTLY DEDICATE THIS HISTORY TO THE MEN WHO PAID WITH THEIR LIVES THE COST OF LIBERTY AND FREEDOM. OUR BUDDIES WHO WERE LAID TO REST ON GUAM, LEYTE, KERAMA RETTO, IE SHIMA, AND OKINAWA PAID FOR A DEBT THAT WAS NOT OF THEIR OWN MAKING BUT WHICH CAN OCCUR AGAIN TO A FORGETFUL GENERATION. MAY THE SACRIFICES OF OUR HERO DEAD BE A REMINDER TO THE WORLD THAT FUTURE WARS WILL ALSO COST THE LIVES OF THE ELITE OF THE NATION'S MEN.

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Foreword

This is the soldier's own version—his story—of the activities of the 305th Infantry from the day back in March, 1942 when it was called out of retirement until early in the year 1946 when it was again inactivated. Some might term it a history in that it deals in chronological order and with actual facts which were checked for accuracy with G-2 and G-3 reports. But it is more than a history, for it is the story of the men of the Regiment, an account (perhaps prejudiced) of their feelings regarding the food they had to eat and the manner in which they had to sleep. It was written by the foot soldiers of the outfit in their own, everyday manner of speech. Perhaps professors of the English language might raise their eyebrows in horror at the grammar which is employed, but if perfect English were used the book would not be as the editors intended, a volume for the GI who trained and fought with the 305th Regimental Combat Team. So, for all faulty grammar, we beg to be excused.

We make no claim for impartiality. If we seem to resent generals and first sergeants, the Air Corps and the Marines, it is because of our pride in being Infantrymen and common foot soldiers who, had we ever wished a rating, were never eligible for one in the first place.

We offer apologies to all who are offended at what they might find here—as well as what they might not find.

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Introduction

When the 305th Infantry Regiment was reactivated at Fort Jackson, South Carolina, it was brought to the attention of its personnel that the unit had been one of the most outstanding during the first World War. The history and the *Esprit de Corps* of the Regiment cannot fully be appreciated without a brief summary of its achievements of a quarter of a century ago when our uncles and our dads had a job to do which was similar in many respects to the task which we had to accomplish.

It was at Lorraine that the 305th received its baptism of fire, but this sector was considered quiet as compared to the Vesle defensive, the combat team's second undertaking. The 305th was in the advance guard of the 77th Division when it relieved the 4th Division on the banks of the Vesle River. Here, under the constant pounding of German guns, it clung tenaciously to its position in the mud and slime of the ground in the vicinity of St. Thibault until the Division started a general advance to the Aisne. At the Aisne came the first real attack in which the 305th took an active part. The initial advance was rapid; however, casualties were heavy and when the titanic battle for control of the Argonne commenced the 305th was largely composed of raw recruits with only four to six weeks' training.

From time immemorial the Argonne had proved the stumbling block to military operations. Julius Caesar went around it. Napoleon avoided it. In this war neither the French nor the Germans had been able to push their respective ways through it. It remained for General Alexander, commanding the 77th, to conquer. The Regiment advanced with battalions in column for a distance of three kilometers before resistance was first found. The density of the forest made it well nigh impossible to control any group larger than a squad. An attack which was launched on the 26th of September caught the enemy by surprise and the savagery of the initial onslaught made the Germans recoil, although they continued to fight tenaciously, bitterly, and treacherously until they were finally routed in the first week of November, 1918.

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It was around this final and major campaign that the regimental insignia was designed. We consider it one of the best designs and the most distinctive of all such emblems. Where other outfits have emblazoned their insignia on a conventional shield, the 305th chose the Oakleaf.

The "Second to None" insignia consists of a leaf. It is of sable black. It represents the oaks of the Argonne Forest where the Regiment

showed the world its prowess. There is a trimming of light, silver line running around the entire leaf. At the bottom the stem curls into a sharp, pointed, devil's tail. The tail represents the town of Château Diable, or Devil's Castle, which was at the eastern extremity of the Vesle River defense sector. Across the flat field of the leaf are four bendlets which represent the rivers Vesle, Aisne, Oise, and Meuse where hallowed dead from the Regiment and the glorious living made such immortal history.

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A history of a regiment could never be written by one man. The assistance of every office and many individuals were cheerfully given when we began this project. Without the help of Father Donnelly, one of our chaplains, this book might never have been written at all. His constant encouragement and interest were largely responsible for any merit the reader may find herein. While in no way responsible for the errors of fact or style, he is in the true sense the man behind the history. To Chaplain Berrett we say, "Thanks sincerely," for his cooperation and advice in the progress of the editorial board and for the dedication of this book; his being constantly at hand to help us has been a necessity as well as a comfort. We appreciate also Colonels Kimbrell's and Hildebrand's assistance and cooperation in coordinating the policies of the book.

Each chapter has been edited and rewritten, but to the following men we owe our gratitude for the work they did in collecting the data and incidents included in these pages. The chapters covering Fort Jackson, Louisiana, West Virginia, and Camp Stoneman were written by Earl R. Dunn. Camp Hyder was written by Lieutenant D. F. Heany. Indiantown Gap was written by James Griffin and Earl Dunn. Griffin also wrote about Camp Pickett, Camp Bradford, and the ocean voyage to Hawaii. Lieutenant John Knapp described the Regiment's stay in Camp Pali. The Guam and Leyte campaigns were written by Philip C. Wood and the chapters on Kerama Retto, Ie Shima, and Okinawa were written by Charles West. Neil F. Wender wrote about the occupation of Hokkaido and the conclusion of the story.

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The photographs were taken largely by members of the Regiment's and the Division's photography staff. Credits are due also for the photographs taken by the 1st Information and Historical Section, U. S. Army, the U. S. Signal Corps, and we wish to thank *Life* for permitting us to use their photographs of our train movement.

The compilation and chapter arrangements were taken care of by Charles West and Philip Wood. The original layout was also planned

by Wood. Neil Wender handled the entire rewriting and the editing. Harold Butler served as circulation manager and assisted in the preparation of the manuscript.

The story is now ready for your perusal. We hope it will serve to revive memories of what few happy days your Army life permitted and recall a few familiar faces of old friends. We hope that not too many unpleasant memories will be brought to mind.

THE EDITORS

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Chapter 1: Fort Jackson

The telephone on the stand in the hall began its loud, raucous buzzing. The sound of soft, feminine footsteps hurried toward it. The buzzing stopped.

"Hello!" said a girl's voice.

"Hello! Mabel? I'm in!"

"In what?"

"In the Army, honey."

The feminine voice murmured a soft, expressionless, "Oh!" followed by a sigh. Nothing more.

"Yeah, the Army. Well, the guy in charge is yelling at me so I guess I gotta go. I'll write tonight, sweetheart. Goodbye!"

And that is how it started . . .

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It wasn't long before we reached the reception center. The train ride didn't seem too lengthy or uncomfortable because most of us were passing jokes back and forth and making comments as to what our new life would be like. There were a few among us who appointed themselves a sort of advisory board; they claimed that they had seen previous Army service in the days before the war. They tried to paint a gloomy picture of what our days in the service would be, but we paid little attention to them. Maybe our hearts were too filled with patriotism to care. Or maybe we were looking forward to the excitement that civilian life had not offered us.

There was not much to the reception we received. Because we were new and did not know just what to do or which direction we should turn, we received considerable pushing about and were at times led like sheep. We were marched into one building after another, receiving socks, shoes, hats, and other clothing which we were to wear for a good many days to come. We squirmed uncomfortably when we were led forward to get our "shots" and many of us had sore, stiff arms for several hours afterward.

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There was nothing wrong with the material in our newly issued clothing. The trouble lay in the fact that there seemed to be either too much cloth or not enough. For the first time, we became familiar with the old, old Army expression: "Clothing here comes in only two sizes: too large and too small." One of the fellows was overheard to mutter, when putting on his recently issued blouse, "Don't I get pins with this damn tent?" Later we learned that he was called Pete. For many months we were to put up with his never-ending flow of senseless

wise cracks. But, in spite of them, Pete was a pretty good sort of fellow. He would give a buddy the shirt off his back—especially if the shirt belonged, not to him, but to the United States Government.

In our previous life, most of us had been specialists at one skill or another. There were a few men with professions among us. We had heard of the Army's remarkable classification system, and we were quite confident that we would be placed in some type of work or duty suitable to our training. Joe, as a former storekeeper, was certain that the Quartermaster Corps was the proper place for him. Mike had been a bricklayer. He deserved the construction engineers. Jimmy had once flown all the way to the Pacific coast in an airplane, so, naturally, he would get the Air Forces. We had not yet realized what the medic meant when he said: "No flat feet here. These guys will do." But we learned. Joe did not go to the Quartermaster Corps, Mike did not go to the Engineers nor did Jimmy go to the Air Forces. All of us were assigned to the Infantry and promptly shipped off to Fort Jackson, South Carolina.

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On the train headed south we struck up new acquaintanceships. We met Tony, Max, Manuel, and men representing all the other peoples of foreign countries—all Americans. We amused ourselves by showing one another pictures of our girl friends and wives. We also passed our time away by looking out the train windows and waving at all the girls we passed. Here and there groups of men began playing cards and rolling dice. Such pastimes seemed to come easy. We later learned that it is a soldier's second nature to play poker or shoot craps or wave to pretty girls.

Jackson, we were told, was the Army's second largest infantry camp. We could see a part of the immensity of it from the first moment of our arrival, but we were not given a great deal of time to look the place over before we were hustled into a large recreation hall. There we sat on our barracks bags (we were beginning to learn that they did have a practical purpose after all) while another group of men who were obviously recruits like ourselves began to form a line for doughnuts and coffee. Knowing that soon we would be getting our turn at the refreshments, we began digging into our bags for our new canteen cups which had not yet been taken from their tissue paper wrappings.

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A group of men entered the building, men who wore uniforms that looked of neater make than ours, uniforms smartly pressed. Someone shouted: "Ten-SHUN!" and we awkwardly got to our feet. One of them, a tall, grey-haired man with an enviable military bearing was introduced to us as Maj. Gen. Robert L. Eichelberger. The general greeted us in a friendly manner and extended a welcome to Fort Jackson. He informed us that we were now members of the famed 77th Infantry

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Early commanders of the 305th Infantry. Left to right: Lt.Col. Emil Krause, Executive Officer; Lt.Col. Floyd Dunn, CO, 3d Battalion; Col. Lincoln F. Daniels, Regimental Commander; Lt.Col. Charles T. Senay, CO, 1st Battalion; Lt.Col. Paul R. Knight, CO, 2d Battalion.

Division, an organization of which few of us had previously heard, but of which the entire world was to hear later. His speech might have been inspiring had we not already been fatigued by the train ride we had just left.

Shortly after the general departed we were distributed amongst the various companies. We took needed showers and then hustled into our bunks, not bothering to unpack any of our belongings. Soon we were fast asleep.

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The suddenness with which we were routed out of our beds at 0545 (which is 5:45 a. m. civilian time) caused us to regret that we had not made proper preparations for reveille. Half asleep, we tore into our barracks bags in search of our fatigue uniforms. It must have seemed to be a hopeless situation to our cadremen who told us to fall into ranks just as we were.

In days to follow we learned many new things, made new discoveries. The blankets on one's cot must be smooth and tight enough for the inspectors to bounce a half dollar upon them. The floors of each room

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The first infantry band of the new 77th Division, that of the 305th Infantry, which got its start under the able leadership of Lieutenant Collier.

must be swept and mopped and the bunks placed in a perfect line before the first formation of each day. From now on everything must be exact in every detail. We were in the Army now.

Some of the things we learned have always been and probably will always be a mystery to us, but the Army thought they were important. So we learned them.

We were taught the manual of arms, close-order drill, and how to carry a rifle so that we did not create the appearance of a gang going coon hunting. For a week we marched to the airfield on Tank Hill for mass instruction in sighting and aiming the rifle, the various firing positions, and the technique of shooting. It was all properly termed a "dry run."

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We had our spells of homesickness. Perhaps the atmosphere and enormity of the camp made us feel so far from home. We became aware of our own insignificance in this world of wooden buildings of identical structure. We felt the rigid rules, and the heat and hot sand. We became almost perfect examples of obedience in order to adjust ourselves to our new order of life. And, in the meantime, we felt that we were being robbed of our own individuality.

We also learned that there was a brighter side to Army life after our day's training was over. There were the service clubs with their soft chairs where one could relax while waiting for a buddy to accompany one to the movies. There were the post exchanges (PXs) where we could buy all of the necessities of life which the Army did not provide, where we could drink a Coca-Cola or a bottle of weak beer, or munch on a sandwich to fill empty spaces in our stomachs. We had our company dayrooms where we could write letters to those who were waiting for us at home. But none of these places could satisfactorily fill that aching place in our hearts or drive away the lonely, depressed feeling we had acquired.

Our big day finally came, the day we were first eligible for passes to the nearby city of Columbia. Besides being the capital city of South Carolina, it was in every respect a typical southern city. It had a population of about one hundred thousand, but it seemed to give the impression of being very small. It was crowded whenever we went to town. In order to progress from one place to another along South Main Street it was necessary to propel oneself along on sturdy legs using an elbow as a bumper. The elbow was also practical when it came to squeezing up to a bar in one of the many honky-tonks along the main stem. There was always a human wall of soldiers from the 77th, 8th, and 30th Divisions around the bars.

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Bed check by the charge of quarters at 2200 was instrumental in

preventing any of us from going to town without a pass or from neglecting to sign out. Of course, there was always the old stunt of padding the bed so that it gave an appearance of a sleeping soldier, or, providing the CQ was a special friend of the absentee, one could always make a deal with him.

As time went on, going to town became a means of breaking the monotony of camp life. On the first trip to town a man could take in all there was to see. But there was one thing which drove us to Columbia at almost every opportunity. Joe named it. We did not want to become "barracks happy." Columbia, like the towns around other army camps, was a boom town. It really had nothing to offer us but a second influx of "carpetbaggers," business men with cheap merchandise and high prices who extracted money from us regularly. A lonesome soldier has nothing to do except spend his money. These merchants were a problem to us. They overcrowded the hotels, the apartment houses, and even the private homes. It became quite difficult for us to find quarters for anyone who might be coming from home for a welcome visit. The guest houses on the post gave us very little consolation. A few were lucky enough to find a room for a few brief days for wives, mothers, sisters, or sweethearts. But the demand for rooms was so heavy that they were always filled and reservations were filed far in advance of the expected visiting date.

The first two weeks of our training was spent on elementary but important subjects: the theory and practical appliance of the individual soldier's schooling. When we drifted into our third week of basic many schools of training along technical lines had been opened for us. School plus our customary drilling lengthened our day until we found that, too frequently to suit us, we were not finishing until 2000 in the evening. To top that off, those who had been appointed acting noncoms found that they must attend classes after the evening meal.

The Army had developed a new and unique method of adding to the soldier's education. Every phase of the training we underwent was expressed more vividly for our benefit by training films at one of the post theaters. It was not uncommon to see some well known actor going through the same training on the screen that we were experiencing in real life. Many of us found them a medium of comparing our endeavors with the proper method, and when we discovered a point on which we were imperfect to correct ourselves later. The chief fault with these films was not that they lacked appeal to our interest but that they were usually shown right after our noon meal when we were inclined to feel a bit lazy and sleepy. Now and again a head would nod as its owner slipped off into slumber. This might have been a good oppor-

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Sergeant Mike T. Pistol, Company B (left), being coached by Captain Robert J. Brink, his CO. Pistol made the highest score with the M1903 rifle—279 out of 300. At right, Corporal Earlston Measure, of Company H, listens to instructions of his coach, Private Edward McGole. Corporal Measure was high scorer with the M1 rifle, making 198 out of a possible 200.

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tunity for us to catch up on the sleep too strenuous training was robbing from us, but there was usually some eagle-eyed officer nearby to see that the sleeper was promptly aroused.

The fifth and sixth weeks of our basic training called for range firing. The Leesburg Range was located some fourteen miles out of camp, so the entire Regiment packed its necessary equipment and off it marched. Fourteen miles of hiking wearing a full-field pack, our rifles slung over our shoulders, our steel helmets, which seemed to weigh tons, on our heads gave us cause for great consternation. We had been quick to gripe about the short conditioning hikes of only a few miles, wearing only the light combat packs.

On the morning of May 9, bright and early, we left the camp. The march itself had been a real day's work, but it was only the beginning. After the march was completed we were put to work straightening squad tents, doing the kitchen police jobs, and countless other little details that the Army seemed to think had to be done. At the close of the day when we were given an opportunity to rest our aching arches and tend to sore blisters, many of us found that walking to the latrine at the end of the company street was almost too much of a job.

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The next day, Sunday, was not even a day of rest. All felt within themselves that it should have been. But there were still too many details to be done. The officers and the sergeants used up a great deal of time directing us to ". . . put that here and move that over there. Pick that up. Be sure to clean this mess; we are not living in pig pens. Hey, you, soldier! What the dickens do you think you are doing?"

On Monday the range season opened. For two weeks we arose and were in position on the firing line before the sun was high enough for

us to see our targets clearly. A clever system of firing was arranged for us. Each target was numbered and each of us had been given numbers to correspond to designated targets. And we had to hit our own target to score; Pete's bull's-eye on Joe's target gave Pete no score for that shot. The system further placed one man before each target on what was termed the firing line, another man behind him on the ready line, and a third on a waiting line. This was to speed up the firing. After one man had expended his rounds no time was lost in looking around for the next man who was to shoot. The men who were not on one of the three lines got no rest. They were put to work filling clips, polishing brass, or working in the pits. The pits! That was really a job. It is amazing just how hot it can be down in that hole behind an embankment of earth and cement, hustling to patch bullet holes in each target so that the rifleman could be certain of getting at least an accurate score. Hearing those .30 caliber bullets zinging over our heads made us slightly nervous too, the first time we entered the pits.

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The men on the firing line were probably as nervous at first as those behind the targets. Those on the ready line especially, had food for thought when a man who had just finished firing came back with a cut eye where a misplaced thumb had caught him as the gun went off, or when someone came back massaging aching shoulders that had been bruised by the kick of the rifle. We soon learned that there is a proper way of holding the rifle which will hold the kick to a negligible minimum. We learned to squeeze the trigger slowly for each round rather than to jerk it. Jerking a shot caused flinching and flinching caused poor scores. We were coached by experienced and capable instructors who helped rid us of nervousness and showed us how to handle the weapon in a manner which later became a habit.

This training went on from day to day, dawn to dusk, rain or shine. We became accustomed to sitting or sprawling prone in pools of water or mud, squinting through sights of rifles as the rain fell so heavily we could hardly see the targets for the downpour. Speed seemed to be the keynote in training, and every possible hour of the day was used for that purpose. If we wished to have any recreation we had but little time to sleep. As a result a lot of us did not get all the rest our bodies required.

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When someone asked Pete, who was beginning to wear dark circles under his eyes, why he didn't get a little more sleep, he replied: "Sleep! I can't sleep. That is the one thing the Army hasn't taught me to do." Maybe he was right. Fortunately our days on the range finally came to a close on May 23, when we returned to our barracks in the same manner as we had left them for the range—on foot.

The remainder of basic training was used in unit tactics. These problems took us out more frequently to the training area in the wooded section of camp beyond the Regimental area. We started with squad problems and platoon problems, and eventually graduated to company, battalion, and then Regimental training. In this period we learned that modern warfare is anything but an individual battle. We discovered that the only thing we had to do as individuals was to dig our own foxholes. Time after time platoons and companies attacked one another in sham battles and we always got our turns at attacking or defending given positions. The process was repeated over and over until each man knew what was expected of him in any situation so that he might better coordinate his actions with those of his team mates without undue hesitancy. It also developed the *esprit de corps* which was taking root in the men. We began to understand the important role our branch of the service would be called upon to perform in this new World War. We knew that the thin black line on each war map was infantrymen. We were becoming proud of being infantrymen. Joe used to boast: "Some day when I'm in pin stripes again and I walk into the bar and hear some man say that he was in the Army I'll ask him which branch of the Army. If he says Air Corps, I'll say, 'Move down to the end of the bar, sonny, and I'll stay up here with the men.' "

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Our toughing-up process was the most hated part of our training. Calisthenics was bad enough. That was the way the Army started us. That type of exercise was mild but tiring. But when we started taking the long exercises and grass drills we really began to groan and our muscles began to ache. Then the exercises began to take in frequent trips over the obstacle course, which consisted of jumping over ditches, crawling under barbed wire, running the length of crooked rails which were lifted a few feet above the ground, taking hurdles with the support of one hand, swinging across ravines on a rope, and finally scaling high walls. This method of physical torture, however, was a challenge to our prowess which none of us cared to let pass without a good attempt at it. In a spirit of competition two men would start together over the course. The first man to finish was declared the winner. It is a wonder that arms and legs, and possibly a neck or two, were not broken in these races.

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In the first few months of basic we had learned to march and to drill. That may have seemed foolish, but it did develop the team spirit that later helped us fight and win as a unit. We had classes on how to use the ten different types of infantry weapons. No one could know but that some day any one of us might be called upon to use one of these weapons and it would never do for him to find it a stranger. We learned to use

the compass and to follow a map. After all, we were going to strange lands where there might be no one to direct us to our destination or back to our unit once we were separated from it. Long torturing hours were passed in learning the technique of destroying an opponent in hand-to-hand combat by means of the bayonet. There seemed to be a never ending stream of lessons that were only incidental in the making of infantrymen.

Day after day our cadremen, noncoms from the 13th and 28th Infantry Regiments of the 8th Division, the 32d Infantry, and the 117th Infantry of the 30th Division, plugged away in their efforts to make us perform. They created in our minds an ever-present fear that we might make a mistake. They kept after us about performing our jobs from the most important phase to the most minute. In our eagerness to perform correctly the task at hand we quite frequently allowed ourselves to slip on other items we had learned, and when that happened we learned that these noncoms really knew how to chew up the recruits when they thought it necessary. They never did get around to explaining why it was essential that the ranks should be so straight and even that they had to close one eye to inspect the files before we could go on with our drill. It didn't make much sense to us for we knew darned well that the lines would be crooked again the first movement we made of the first drill.

We also found cause to wonder about the importance of the monotonous system of beginning each drill with the statement, "The next exercise will be done in this manner," followed by a demonstration. We had seen them done over and over; had done them ourselves. But that was the Army's way.

As we were progressing in our training we were also getting wise to the ways and means of making Army life easier for us, by catching on to the little tricks that soldiers had been pulling long before we ever thought of being inducted. They were more or less stock methods by which the GI made things easier for himself. For instance, if he had been on a work detail he would not be an ambitious soldier and finish early. If he did he might find another detail waiting for him and would at least be in time for standing retreat. He learned to time himself so that he arrived just before the company fell out for retreat when it would be too late to change into the Class A uniform and fall out with it.

Saturday inspections seemed to be the most important thing in the world. Preparation for them began on Friday afternoons when the entire company pitched in to get the barracks in shape. Every man did his part. Some did the windows while another group washed the walls and woodwork. We tried to picture each little corner the inspecting

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officer might suspect of harboring a speck of dust and then we rendered that corner spotless. The floors were scrubbed to a glistening shine. This procedure was called a "GI party."

After the party was over it was time to attend to our own personal equipment. It, too, had to be in spotless condition. Some men were known to work far into the night on their rifles while others began their preparation the first thing in the morning until 0945, time to fall out into the company street to await the arrival of the battalion commander and his staff. They descended on the company with such over-bearance that we all wished that we had worked just a little bit longer on our rifles and we wondered if we had straightened that small wrinkle on our bunks that was caused by our last sitting upon them.

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Company officers usually examined the rifles and made a more minute inspection of us than the battalion commander, who, nevertheless, never failed to see some neglected little detail. He would stop occasionally to point out a man needing a haircut, another whose shoes could have stood a little more shine, or another whose manual of arms was not up to par. The platoon sergeant would look sternly at the offender for a brief moment, then jot his name down in his little notebook. That was known as a gig, and any man who was so dishonored did not need to look forward to seeing Columbia that week-end.

There were quite a few advantages to surviving that inspection. It was possible to wangle an overnight pass from the first sergeant which would entitle its bearer to visit anywhere within a fifty-mile radius of the fort. It meant that the soldier could spend the weekend catching some lost sleep at the Wade Hampton, the Jefferson, or any of the other hotels in town, where it was possible to salvage that lost privilege of being waited on while taking it easy.

Probably the most famous or infamous of Army details is the dreaded kitchen police or KP. It has been described by the best fiction writers, penned by leading cartoonists, and ballyhooed by movie scenario writers, until the civilian public is almost as familiar with it as we GIs ourselves. Yet there remained one difference between our observations of the tasks of peeling bushels and bushels of spuds or mopping large messhall floors and the observations of the same jobs we made in civilian days. It is not quite so humorous when one finds himself on the handle of the mop or seated on that upside-down pail with a paring knife in hand and a pile of spuds beside him. There were some standard jokes connected with the mess sergeants or cooks informing us of the proper method of performing the jobs, but, as most wisecracks that were handed to us by some superior, we passed them by without retaliation and in

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time they were forgotten. We shall leave them forgotten until the cartoonists or the writers revive them to amuse the general public.

A KP's day began about 0530, a half hour before the rest of the company was called to breakfast. It ended late in the evening; how late depended mostly upon how well we worked together throughout the day. The first KP to appear in the messhall in the morning usually had his choice of the job he was to do all day. He would select what he thought to be the easiest job of them all. The catch of it was that none of them were ever actually easy. As each of the later arriving KPs reported to the mess sergeant, he was assigned to a particular type of work to be done immediately after breakfast. Breakfast was the most pleasant part of the KP's whole day. He had one advantage over the rest of the company: he could eat first and be certain of getting his fill of some delicacy. He had no other pleasantry all day long, only long hours of drudgery.

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There were a lot of headaches in the kitchen. The mess sergeant always had one before the medical officers' inspections. He passed it on to the cooks as he rode them to insure that a good, clean job was done. The cooks passed them on to us. It was our chief job to see that all pots and plates and pans were spotless before the medics arrived. But the cooks would not seem to cooperate. The men wrestling with the pots and pans would complain that it was impossible to get them done as long as the cooks continued to dirty one as fast as it was washed.

There was always a feeling of friction between the cooks and the KPs at that time in the morning when the bulk of the work was done. To the KP everything appeared spick and span. But the cooks and the mess sergeant always seemed able to find something else to be policed or scrubbed or merely to be put away. Deep within us we felt that it was a conspiracy. More than one of us has at some time or other remarked that they were probably gambling among themselves to see who could drive the most KPs "over the hill." But when it came the KP's chow time our feelings for the cooks took a sudden turn for the better. They won our hearts by appealing to our stomachs, by offering us just a little bit more of this or that. Then came time to feed the entire company. Both "slaves and masters" worked side by side to feed the mass of humanity that filed into the mess hall at dinnertime.

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Peeling potatoes was more of a respite in a KP's day. It was a chance to get off one's feet and it was less strenuous than wrestling with a pot or manicuring a pan or waltzing with a mop. It gave us an opportunity for a bull session, a chance to discuss everything from the possibility of the war having an early ending to the personality of the mess sergeant and what he had been before he came into the Army. For those of us

who had never peeled potatoes before one of the cooks would give a demonstration, to our secret amusement, to show us how it was to be done and how many he wanted peeled.

Some days there was more work than others. At no time could we be certain just what hour would find us finished at night. Those who drew kitchen police during the first month of training worked as many as seventeen hours in the kitchen, but as time went on we began to learn all the short cuts and found ourselves finishing much earlier. The cooks seemed to be softening at heart, too, for they piled less work on us. Generally speaking, we had been "zeroed in." That is, we had learned to do things the easy way and to avoid the Army method. There is one thing which should be cleared in the minds of movie fans or cartoon audiences: KP was never handed out as a punishment. Each man in the company had his turn at it. Usually starting in alphabetical order the topkick would draw from the roster a daily group for details. As soon as he had run through the entire company he would start all over again. Sometimes KP was a good thing. It kept a lot of us off long hikes or occasional tough field problems. The worst that could happen was to draw it on Sunday. In such a case the unfortunate KP would try to pay someone to take his place. That was permitted. However, the standard price for a supernumerary at KP was a rather stiff five dollars. We generally thought twice before parting with that much money, and only then if having a pass on a certain Sunday was extremely important.

A fatigue detail was often looked upon as a good thing, particularly if the training schedule called for either monotonous or strenuous subjects. We would report to the provost sergeant at the recreation building at 0800 where we usually sat around for an hour or so waiting for trucks to arrive, while our companies did calisthenics or close-order drill.

While working on these details we experienced a feeling of freedom from the tension of drilling under the pressure of some (here certain choice, descriptive adjectives are omitted) sergeant. It was a relief from the mental strain of keeping up with the ever-changing orders and the uncertainty of the sergeant's temper. The work was menial; it made us feel good all over to know that we were not working as hard as the other members of our company.

If we were on the trash detail we could always find something to read in our idle moments. Perhaps it would be an old magazine or a comic book. More often than not we would find, and get a great kick out of reading, a letter that had been discarded intact from some GI's loving "hotsy-totsy" back home. It was also an opportunity to salvage some

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piece of equipment which we might be lacking and which we might some day have to pay for from our meager allowance.

It was hard to decide which job was the crummiest: the garbage or the coal detail. Waiting at the coal dump took time and we would only manage to do four loads each day. But the time we spent washing the soot from our clothes, necks and ears was enough to compensate for the hours of goldbricking we had done that day. As for the work we were sometimes called upon to do on the garbage detail . . . well, it is not necessary to talk about that. One knows.

The ideal detail for a soft day, a "gentleman's endeavor," was working on the ration truck. Once the truck was loaded with the Regiment's daily supply of bread, produce, groceries, or meat, one just sat on a bag of potatoes and enjoyed the ride. As the truck stopped before each mess hall, the detail emitted a lusty yell, "Kay-PEE-EE-ES outside!" Then one would exert himself no more than to drag that company's quota to the tail-board. The KPs would tote it inside. Why the men on the truck never carried the rations into the messhall is another of those questions that has never been answered. A good guess might be that some truck driver in the past had established the precedent at the suggestion of the men on the ration detail. At any rate, this custom was seldom broken, but like everything else in the Army, we knew that some "zebra" or some "brass" could change it by the mere utterance of a few commanding words.

Compared to the training schedule, a day on detail, any detail, was easy. Nearly every day called for some field problem on the functions of a platoon, company, or battalion. Some mornings we marched into the wooded area of pine trees beyond Camp Marion, where we set up defensive positions or practiced the art of advancing by fire and movement. The latter was extremely tiring and enervating on an August day with the sun cooking the needles of the pine trees. Other mornings we marched to the vicinity of Batson Hill, a four-mile hike over a deep-rutted, sandy road that made walking more tiresome than the distance warranted. It was over this road that we hiked to our first night problem.

It seemed to us rather odd to be dressing for the field immediately after supper instead of putting on our Class A uniforms for town. The whole Regiment was to take part in the problem. Two battalions were to dig in and hold a defensive position. The other battalion was to infiltrate through the defended lines after dark.

As we lay there in wait for the "enemy" we thought over the many warnings our officers had given us of tricks they might employ in trying to break through the lines. They even suggested that the opposing group might try to play rough in their attempts to break through to our

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command post. We were instructed to play equally as rough, to stop them at all costs—with the butts of our rifles if necessary. This suggestion, however, met great disapproval from us. It was not sporting. These men were our buddies, the same men we would one day be fighting beside. So no rifle butts were used. Now that we have had time to think it over, we realize that our instructors knew at the time they made the suggestion that it would be ignored.

Instead of maintaining strict silence, many of us gave our positions away by challenging noises made by the breeze as it blew its way through the shrubbery and the trees. The problem was for the purpose of acquainting us with the techniques of defense at night, but it also impressed us with the necessity of being alert to expect events which could possibly happen under the covering darkness. We had waited for the enemy, unable to smoke, cough, whisper, or make any sound. We had even expected an attack of tear gas, so we almost stopped breathing lest we suddenly inhale nostrils full of the stuff. At times some of the men imagined that they smelled gas and almost threw the rest of us into a panic as we attempted to don our gas masks.

There was no personal danger for any of us, unless, of course, some "foe" might object to being taken prisoner and kick up some sort of a rumpus. Nevertheless, our imaginations kept us on edge. The silence would be broken now and again by one or more voices commanding someone to halt, followed by a scuffle, and then more silence. The greatest commotion took place when a civilian automobile drove into the area to park. More than one man, defending a designated position, scampered out of the path of the approaching automobile to safer surroundings. Probably, though, the motorist and his lady friend were even more startled than the men who had nearly been run down, for they lost no time in searching for a more secluded spot to proceed with their petting.

In the meantime other problems of similar and different natures fell upon us. But we were all having our own personal problems, too. It seemed that ages had passed since we had arrived here from the reception center. Throughout thirteen weeks of basic training we talked, listened to rumors, and expressed ourselves freely on the Division's furlough policy. Thirteen weeks seemed to be such an awfully long time, and that time was hanging heavy over us. We all agreed upon one thing, that we had worked hard enough and long enough to deserve a vacation. In our despairing moments we concluded that the Army was ignoring this little factor of morale boosting. When the orders did finally come

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through authorizing furloughs for the entire 77th Division we hardly dared believe it to be the truth.

There was a great deal of excitement the day that we left for home. There was a hurried search for handbags which we could borrow; there were quick promises to stop in at some friend's home and say "Hello" to his Mom. But many of us found that going home wasn't a simple problem. We did not all live in New York City, and those whose homes were in scattered parts of the country learned that there would be difficulties. Certain concessions had to be made, such as an allowance for time in travelling so that one who lived near the Canadian border could have as much time at home as those who did not have to make train connections.

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Once we were on the train we relaxed. Now nothing short of sabotage could stop our seeing our folks again. We probably behaved, in our jubilant spirits, more like children than like soldiers. But we did not care. We knew it wouldn't happen to us very often and our remarks and the sheer joy we displayed over being free once more must have convinced the civilian passengers that this was our first furlough.

We left Columbia about 1700 and we expected to be in New York early the following afternoon. Our excitement made sleep an impossibility. Oh, well! We would allow ourselves a short nap in our own beds at home. We talked of our folks, bragging about how glad they would be to see us, planning stories to tell them about our Army life, and we thought of how proud the girl friends or wives would be to go out with us for the first time in our khaki uniforms.

There were soldiers from other divisions on the train. Their strange shoulder patches aroused as much curiosity in us as our Statue of Liberty in gold on a blue background aroused in them. We took up a great deal of time asking each one to what outfit he belonged, and we expressed great pride in telling the other GIs about the 77th, which, by now, we had come to recognize as being a part of our Army life.

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As the train pulled into home towns, we began to feel a little strangeness about us as we looked at the familiar surroundings. Our dreams of home had perhaps magnified the old place in our imaginations. Perhaps we had remembered only the better parts of the old town. Now here it was before us exactly as we had left it. We did not linger long at the station; we made straight for our folks who had awaited our return for the past six months.

Five days were not nearly a long enough time to do all the things we had planned to do and all the things we should do for which we had neglected to plan. Almost from the moment of our arrival we were on the move visiting old friends and places. We were flooded by an

avalanche of queries about our Army life, and it did not take a great deal of persuasion to get us started talking about it. Our long-windedness probably caused them to wish they had never got us started on the subject, but we undoubtedly succeeded in convincing them that we thought that everyone the draft board had by-passed was indeed lucky from our point of view.

Realizing that we might not get another furlough again in several months yet to come, we tried to extract pleasure from every hour of our wakefulness—and we were awake most of the time. Sleep was a luxury our friends and families could enjoy; we had but five days to "live." And being home did its part to make us feel important. Our friends greeted us with so much enthusiasm that we felt we must have appeared like heroes in their eyes.

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Everywhere we went the same thing happened. If someone noticed us standing in a night-club at a bar, the civilian would approach with the usual question: "To what outfit does that patch belong, buddy?" We discovered that it aroused in us—and to the old veterans of the World War I 77th—a certain, inexplicable pride.

The week of freedom ended almost with the same speed as the way we had lived it. We were sick at heart; we had not done half the things that we had planned to do. The dissipation we had brought upon ourselves in attempting to burn the candle at both ends, the excitement caused by fast living, created a nauseated feeling in our stomachs when we realized that the time had come for us to return to Fort Jackson, South Carolina.

It takes quite a while to get over furloughs. For weeks we moaned about our duties, thinking of the time when we would get the opportunity to visit home again. How wonderful it would be to stay home forever! This state of mind was called the "furlough blues." Every soldier has experienced them at some time or other, but some men are affected more than their stronger and less sentimental buddies.

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One group returned from furlough to find the Regiment in the field on a four-day bivouac. The outfit left camp that morning before the train arrived. That should have been a good deal, but it was not. There was an officer left behind for the sole purpose of organizing the returning men into a unit and leading them over a twenty-mile route of march to the encampment where they joined their respective companies.

That hike would have been rugged enough for any man in the best condition. But we who had just returned from home were far from being in the best condition. Long days and short nights, over-indulgence in play, and general running-down of physical condition had weakened

us no end and had shortened our wind considerably. We could no longer, for the next few days at least, call ourselves "tough combat material." A twenty-mile hike over rugged countryside, a full field pack on the back, will take the starch out of any man. The hot sun of this August 19 aided in making our march pure torture. To make matters worse, we were marching along with empty canteens before we had covered too much ground; our water discipline was lax. There was no place to refill them with tested and approved water. Some of the weaker men filled their canteens with untested creek water in one of the breaks. However, all torture must eventually end and we finally reached our bivouac area.

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While awaiting to be assigned to our company areas, a few of us who had enough energy took off for a well which we knew to be nearby. Others swarmed to a small country store in search of soft drinks, or harder beverage if they had any. It made no difference to the doughboy, who wanted only to ease the dryness of his parched throat. This landslide business for the merchant soon came to an end when guards were posted at the door and the establishment was declared "Off Limits." But this was one time when we had the laugh on the Army; we had already bought up all the merchandise the store had.

Once our pup-tents were pitched and well camouflaged in compliance with orders, we crept inside them hoping that we might have a few minutes to give our aching muscles a rest, knowing all the while that our hopes would probably be in vain. As sure as we were alive the big sergeant with the bull-dog frown and the foghorn voice would be calling for men to dig the latrine, help to set up the kitchen, police the area, or, providing that was not immediately necessary, start cleaning our rifles. We began to whisper among ourselves that "the powers in brass" must think that we were supermen, and we, groaning over aching muscles, knew that we were not.

We wondered how terrible it must be for the men in combat to have to walk twenty or thirty miles toward an objective but, upon reaching it, to find that the feet were too tired to respond to combat orders or the muscles too weary or the general condition of the soldier too worn for effectiveness. There would be no doubt to the outcome of that skirmish.

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There were men among us who would boast that they could easily have gone another mile or so. We believed them. Had not the men on Bataan in the infamous "Death March" done more than that extra mile or two? But we, with our aching arches and blistered heels, thought our buddies who would march that extra mile or two just to prove that it could be done were trying hard for a "Section 8" discharge.

Our work and training on the field went on very much as it had back in camp. We fell out for reveille, took our morning calisthenics, and then went out for tactical training or unit problems. The routine was the same, but garrison life offered so many more comforts than life in the field that we seemed to be enduring a trying ordeal. To be certain, the "field" had been made as comfortable as possible for us. A post exchange truck rolled into the battalion areas every afternoon loaded with beer, soft drinks, and candy (but chiefly beer) and those of us with the most stamina or the loudest voices, managed to get through the mob of eager customers who milled about the field exchange and so got our share.

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Our field problems took us out into the rural South and we were given a welcome chance to search for signs of the countryside of which we had heard so much. We did not see any evidence of life as the characters in "Tobacco Road" lived it, and we had no way of knowing whether the farmers were sharecroppers or owned their own property. But we did see evidence of much poverty, and many of us were inclined to shake our heads and remark that the North was never like this. We did not at the time think of our own backyard; the crowded slums from which even some of our buddies had come were as much a national disgrace as the poverty-stricken areas of the rural South.

This four-day bivouac period was only the beginning of many which lay in store for us. Several weeks later the Regiment went into the field again by battalions for three days of firing on the combat range. This new phase gave us training in using our rifles as units. We had previously learned to handle our rifles as individuals; now we were to learn to use them as members of a squad, or platoon, or a company. The unit was to be tested on its fire power by the efficiency with which its bullets were distributed over a "skirmish line" of surprise targets and hidden targets. A pit detail raised and lowered the targets at the commands of the fire-control officer. The unit leader would point out the targets to his men by some method of his choice, usually by firing at the central target himself, and the members of the unit would then distribute their shots over the area of the skirmish line whether the targets were visible or not. The scoring was done by counting the number of targets hit and taking that into consideration with the number of shots fired. Each target hit once and all the remaining shots wasted would earn a better score than to have every shot a bull's-eye in the same target. The reason is obvious. In combat there would be no need for an entire unit to empty all its ammunition into one or two men of an opposing unit but leave the bulk of the enemy force still able to fight back. The first shots to hit those targets would put a man out of commission; the following shots were wasted as much as though they had been fired into the air.

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Arrivals from the reception center—rookies all.

In November new blood was injected into the Division when it received some three thousand recruits from reception centers. These completely raw men were to replace those who had received discharges for some reason or those who had been reclassified because of their inability to do field work. The three regiments of the Division were to draw their quotas of these men after they had completed an eight-week basic training period. The plan called for the Division to have its own Recruit Training Regiment at a part of Fort Jackson known as North Camp. The cadre and the contingent of rookies were placed under the command of Lt. Milton Fineman and were marched to North Camp where they were assigned as "Company A, Recruit Training Regiment." Their welcome was not a fitting one. They found their quarters bare, dirty, one-storied barracks or huts devoid of beds and bedding. They found no mess equipment to use for a doubtful chow.

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Despite many handicaps and obstacles, the Training Regiment functioned well enough to carry out the required training schedule. With the passing of each week more and more recruits arrived at the camp. The administrative work of the training camp was done by the three regiments of the Division. This was somewhat confusing and more than once complicated matters. Let us say, as an example, that Willie was lacking a certain piece of equipment. He had to draw the item from the supply room of a certain company, the outfit to which he had already been assigned on paper, at the other end of Fort Jackson. Willie himself was to go to this particular company after he had completed his training.

The rookies' training period was to be eight weeks in length. During those eight weeks they were to learn all that was taught in the usual seventeen-week cycle. They were put through a tough pace; they had longer hours of drill and longer hours of schooling. But they displayed a willingness, even an eagerness, to learn. Perhaps they resented hearing Joe and Pete tell each other within their hearing that ". . . believe it or not, once we looked like that." They intended to absorb enough to enable themselves to stand up as equals with us whom they called "veterans."

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As for us veterans, the problems that followed our stay on the combat range kept us in the field a good part of the remaining days of basic training. We thought we were having a hard life. Long marches, sleeping on the ground, the general hardships of living out of doors must certainly be shortening our lives. We had gotten over the false impression that our training would be eased after our seventeen weeks of basic were over. We found, instead, that each problem was more severe, more intense, than the preceding one. The hikes were of added

mileage; the weather was growing cooler; each problem was growing longer. Our thoughts of a let-up in training pressure had been thoroughly dispelled when the new Division Commander, Gen. Roscoe B. Woodruff, assembled the Regiment to hear an address which we had previously thought might be in connection with some of the rumors we had been hearing of something big about to happen. But the speech turned the tables on our hopes when the General, in measured words, told us to rid ourselves of any foolish notions we might have been harboring that there would be a slackening of our training program. What lay ahead of us would make our twenty weeks of previous hardships seem like child's play. From the stage of the open-air theater behind the 302nd Medical Battalion area he recounted many of our faults. From his reference to the future he knocked out any cockiness we may have assumed that we were already well trained, hardened soldiers. He stressed many things on which he thought we must perfect ourselves before we would be ready to face either the enemy in Europe or the Japs in the Pacific.

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He left us with downcast hearts and worried minds. As we marched back to our barracks, his ringing voice stirred visions of more problems over the same ground on which we had already nearly worn the bottoms of our feet to the bare bones, and we found it difficult to imagine anything worse within the bounds of humane treatment. He had also aroused a certain indignation in us concerning the regard he felt for the months of our toil and sweat; our accomplishments had been our pride and he had dealt with them with insulting lightness.

And he kept his promise.

He had promised us heavier training and we got it. Very shortly after his speech we began a 25-mile speed or forced march. It was truly a forced march because everyone was forced into it, including the artillery which usually accompanied us in trucks with their big guns trailing behind. The march gave us more food for thought and a new topic for discussion. We talked of means of finding ways to avoid the hike, but without avail. We griped among ourselves about its necessity. Some of us wondered if we would be able to stand up under so great a distance, walking at the speed we had been informed our pace-setters must use.

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We started the hike with a pace of 140 steps per minute for the first few miles and the pace was gradually dropped to 120. We were decked out in full field packs, rifles, and steel helmets as usual. It was a chilly November morning, yet none of us felt cold. The strain of the march had our blood circulating so fiercely we could not be other than warm.

We had been ordered to keep in step so that gaps would not be formed in the columns. As we progressed it became noticeable that those who were unable to take long steps began to lag behind, so the short men were rearranged to head the columns. But it was still as bad. With their short, choppy steps, they were taking quite a beating and were throwing the men at the rear of the column out of stride. Some of our men were so tall that they were able to take one step and equal the stride of two taken by the shorter men. This created an added strain on all of us and was an irritating annoyance.

The pace at the beginning was far from being a normal step for any of us. After the first two hours we began to notice the strain of it; our leg muscles began to feel knotty and tightened; our arches, which we were certain were developing complete flatness, were causing our shins to ache. But aches, pains, and bruises were no excuse for any member of the 305th to give up the struggle. The real agony would be felt when we entered the closing miles of the march.

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At noon we stopped to eat our lunches of two sandwiches and a piece of fruit each. We were allowed twenty minutes for that. It is still hard even today to determine which was the more refreshing to us, the lunch we consumed or the opportunity of relieving ourselves of our heavy packs during the short period. The Medical Corps men were given no chance to enjoy this break; they moved among us patching blisters and commenting upon our complaints that our legs were being worn off to the knees.

Getting to our feet again was a painful ordeal. Every sinew in our bodies drew tighter and our knees almost buckled as the shock of once again supporting that heavy load shot through them. But, on our way once again, we began to discover that the pain was not so much after all. It is true that one's legs continued to remind their owner that they wanted a rest and each passing minute before the arrival of the next break seemed like hours, but it was now dawning upon us that the human body can stand a great deal of pushing. A few of us even admitted, secretly to ourselves, that our training might stand us in good stead some coming day. It was a case of mind over matter, or so the psychologist might say.

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Wisecracks and conversation had ceased miles back. Even Pete who seemed always ready to burst forth with some needless comment now found himself too tired to talk. We got relief only by concentrating on other thoughts and avoiding self-pity. Naturally, though, it was not possible to forget the march entirely. There was always the lingering fear that we might not make it up the next hill. We were constantly bothered by the query why they always speeded the pace going uphill

and slowed it going downgrade. We would curse the fates which caused us to land in the infantry instead of in some soft mechanized unit or the Air Corps. One would review his past to see if he had committed some grave crime or sin to deserve such punishment as this. One could not escape the march by merely falling out of ranks. He would only be compelled to fall in at the rear of the column with the stragglers. To ride the remainder of the distance in the "meat wagon," one would have to fall flat on his face and then have a skinned proboscis to offer as evidence to the doubting medics. There was also that one admirable quality about the infantryman which makes him want to keep going—a quality which is often referred to as "just plain guts!"

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Walking into the area in which we were to bivouac for the night was almost as pleasant a feeling as it would be to walk into one's own home after a long absence. To be able to remove our shoes, to lie down and allow those swollen, throbbing feet to take in the crisp autumn air was the succor for which our aching bodies had been craving. Many feet were in bad shape and had to be treated. Some of the men were even wearing bloody socks.

Chow was served shortly after we arrived. We were permitted the privilege of building fires and most of us huddled near them and talked with mixed feelings about the toughness of the hike, but a few of the men whose feet were in better condition than the feet of most of us stole off to stores to buy whatever delicacies they could find to supplement the supper which had failed to completely satisfy ravenous appetites. The nights were growing more chilly as the time passed so we paired off with each other that we might get more benefit of our blankets. We made mattresses of pine needles as an added means of keeping warm. Yet the next morning found us sorely cramped and more than one GI insisted that during the night *rigor mortis* had set in. Fortunately for us, for it is doubtful if we would have made it afoot, we were shuttled back to camp in trucks, and, for honesty's sake, it is better that we mention that many of us were so lame that the drivers had to assist us to climb into the vehicles.

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That was only the first of several speed marches. Another followed the next week when we left camp for a five-day problem. We were hauled in trucks to a concealed assembly area where the Regiment formed to move afoot to another assembly area five miles away, to be reached in only an hour's time. The leading companies started off at double time for a short distance, and then slowed to a pace of 132 steps per minute. The route was over a paved highway, but we moved over the soft shoulders of the road as civilian cars and busses passed, their occupants waving encouragingly to us. In a speed march such as this

one the distance was not so long and the required energy was not so great. It was strenuous, nonetheless. The fast cadence affected the leg muscles and the double-timing robbed us of our wind and caused stabbing pains around our ribs. We had only to suffer for the hour, a far cry from having had to put forward unimaginable endurance all day long.

It began to rain just after we had crossed the finish line. In spite of that, no time was lost in reassembling us for a tramp through the dense woods on a problem which lasted about two hours and which brought us out somewhere near the highway again—from where we marched to another area. Now we were crammed into trucks, piled all over each other, jamming elbows into our buddies' ribs as we removed our packs. Each of us learned that we were fit to be contortionists for we were in unpicturable positions. We had thought at first that after marching, riding would be swell and we would be out of the rain for a while. Well, it wasn't worth it!

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The rain had stopped when we were dumped off at a bivouac area. It was just a short while before midnight so we had no opportunity to dry ourselves. We hurriedly pitched our tents and went to sleep, but not for long. Why? Why in the name of everything to which we owed allegiance were we being shaken out of our beds in the middle of the night? Did someone say supper, or was that just a part of our dreams? No, that was it. The kitchen trucks had finally caught us and we were given a cold meal that we should have had hours before. We all agreed upon one thing as we sat about in the darkness, half asleep, chilled to the bone: supper was not worth losing sleep over.

The next day we spent in the same area giving our rifles a needed going over, rearranging our tents into platoon groups, and preparing ourselves for a couple of days' stay. It was the day before the Thanksgiving holiday but the day gave us no joy for which to anticipate a happy occasion such as we used to do back in our civilian days. The only reminder of the spirit attached to the occasion was the number of postcards and letters from our friends and families back home.

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Thanksgiving morning we arose at 0300. We ate the usual breakfast, were given a sandwich lunch to carry with us, and in a short time we were on the road, double-timing to reach a position we were to defend just before the coming of dawn. As soon as we arrived, perspiring and exhausted, we dug in and awaited daylight. We shivered in the cold, early morning air and futilely tried to warm ourselves with the raincoats we carried in our light packs while we awaited a theoretical enemy attack. Pete offered the reminder that Sherman was right about war.

Just after daylight we moved out in attack formation and followed the withdrawing "enemy" until late afternoon. We waded through dense woods and streams and each of us held the secret hope that we would be tagged a casualty by the medics so that we wouldn't have to walk any more. But the battle finally ended and we returned to camp for a doubtful and belated Thanksgiving dinner.

The meal was a delicious surprise to us. It had been prepared in the messhalls back in camp. It was served on paper platters which meant that we had no mess gear to clean afterward. Our plates were so filled with extras that there was no available space left. We had eaten only a solitary sandwich for dinner and the turkey, mashed potatoes, giblet gravy, peas, cranberry sauce, and mince and pumpkin pie made our stomachs howl with glee. It was worth every minute we had waited for it and was cooked with more skill than we had known our cooks possessed. Then, to top the day off right, came mail call.

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We awoke to an even colder morning. The problem was continued over neighboring farmlands and open countryside. At 1400 it was all over. Then, since our training now seemed to stress speed marches, we took off on the double for another seven-miler to our next bivouac area. We had not been informed how far away we were from the area, only that we should be there within a couple of hours, but we had not passed the first hour before we were beginning to imagine that we were participating in a cross-country run.

And from that bivouac area we started another forced march. There seemed to be no end to them.

In the early morning before dawn we commenced the next hike. We covered seven miles just before dawn, half running, half walking all the way. We were beginning to discern familiar landmarks. We had passed Twin Lakes. Another mile and a half away lay Tank Hill; we were there at 0700. The leading elements of the Regiment broke the tape ten minutes before an estimated two hours were up. A nine-and-one-half-mile march had been completed in one one hour and fifty minutes. Our extra heavy packs had not hampered us one bit. This was a Saturday morning.

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Then came an order that caused us to almost blow our tops. *We were to stand the regular Saturday morning inspection.* However, we were quieted with the arrival of a tip that everything did not have to be perfect; if we did the best we were able allowances would be made. Some men who fell out with beards and dirty shoes were noticeable in the ranks. We did change to o.d. uniforms, however. The battalion commanders approached with pleasant smiles, a sign that we could relax, and strode before us and approved of us as though we were as

spick and span and as well polished as we had ever been. The usual snappy questions were dispensed with and were substituted with queries of a more personal nature. One major stopped before Joe who was wearing a heavy stubble on his chin. "How do you like the Army, soldier?" he asked.

"The truth, sir?" Joe asked in return.

"Never mind!" said the officer and moved on.

During December and early January many of us went home on our second well deserved furloughs. The less fortunate went into combined training under the control of XII Corps, commanded by Maj. Gen. William H. Simpson.

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Returning to Fort Jackson in January we began to plan for movement. We were to go by train to another type of training in Louisiana. We were confronted with many new details, the property checks, crating and loading equipment, overhauling vehicles.

Jackson had been tough. Had we learned anything? Well, we had learned to gripe. Our first months in the Army drew one gripe after another. But they also furnished us many laughs at the time and many memories later.

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Chapter: 2: Louisiana Maneuvers

At noon of the 24th of January 1943, we left Fort Jackson in the usual attire, bearing full-field packs and carrying arms. From our assembly point we marched to the quartermaster depot and there we entrained. All of us were a little excited; this was our first movement on such a large scale since our induction into the Army.

In spite of the excessive training we had already undergone, we were still more or less in the recruit stage, although we felt at the time that we were seasoned veterans. We had gone through so much, suffered such unbelievable privations, that it seemed impossible there could be anything further to add to our training. Little did we know; little did we know!

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The weather was cold. Even in the Sunny South we felt a chill in the air and something akin to frost on the ground. The train's heating system reminded us of a well kept, air-conditioned cold-storage plant. It would not be too greatly exaggerated to say that one had occasionally to grope for his feet with his hands to be sure they were still attached to his legs. Guards were posted on the train for some inexplicable reason; such guard duty was an endurance contest between mind and body. The hot coffee which Chaplain Saucier provided after guard was appreciated by all.

On the morning of the second day we pulled into Chattanooga, Tennessee. Some kind soul earned our thanks by deciding that we could stand a few limbering up exercises to drive the kinks and cramps from our weary bodies. So, with the eyes of curious civilians looking on, we were marched through the station to the railroad yards beyond, doing quick time and marching to cadence as we moved. Some one pointed out to us at this time the very famous "Chattanooga Choo-Choo," which to most of us looked like any other train. Perhaps had the weather been only a little bit warmer we might have appreciated the incident more.

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January 27 found us detraining at a place called Many, Louisiana. There was a band out to welcome us. They played "The Old Gray Mare" to our amusement and Joe passed the comment that: "It certainly is an appropriate tune. Every time I put this pack on my back I wonder if the Army hasn't mistaken me for a horse."

Trucks carried us to our bivouac area, six miles out of town. We remained there for several days while we got our equipment in order for the much talked about but little understood maneuvers. As usual,

we were encamped in a very heavily wooded section, which created more work to keep our bodies and our minds well occupied.

Stumps, brush, and small trees had to be cleared out of the way before our pup-tents could be pitched. There were a good number of explanations offered concerning the reason for their being called "pup-tents." The oldest and perhaps the corniest reason was that they were so small that there was only sufficient room for our "dogs" in them, but the most generally accepted was the theory advanced by Pete, who said, "Ever since I started sleeping in pup tents I have led a dog's life!" The weather hadn't turned any warmer and those nights we slept on the ground in our tents will never be forgotten.

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Meanwhile, in order to keep us in trim and to remind us that we were still foot soldiers, we were compelled to take another ten-mile hike. Whenever we found opportunity we invaded the town which, though small, made up for its lack of size by providing pleasant amusements for us.

By January 31 our bivouac area offered a presentable appearance. Large pine trees were silhouetted picturesquely against the azure sky and beneath them our tents were arranged in neat rows. The pine needles made a suitable substitute for mattresses. But, unfailingly, as soon as we have one area cleared to our satisfaction, and begin to feel comfortable and agree among ourselves that the world is a worthwhile place in which to live after all, we are given the order to pack our belongings and prepare to move. We hastily gave the area a final police job and made a rapid departure, a several-mile march, to a new one. Early the following morning we set out to meet the "enemy." At this time the Regiment was commanded by Col. Lincoln F. Daniels and the executive officer was Lt. Col. Cecil W. Nist.

We were opposed, during the maneuvers, by the 90th Motorized Division which had been activated the same day as the 77th. The maneuvers were divided into several phases, each phase consisting of two weeks of action followed by a week of rest. Incidentally, our week of rest gave us very little relaxation for we used that time for cleaning up. In the first phase the 77th was the superior or Blue Force and the 90th was the Red or inferior Force. The first engagement began on the morning of February 1.

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We started on what seemed to be another of those innumerable hikes. We were marching along in column, passing our time by cursing the mechanized Army and the service in general when some alert individual shouted, "The enemy is in sight." Our dispersion was commendable. We instantly sought cover. But we did not remain hidden, for such inactivity could easily cost us the war. We continued to ad-

vance and, according to plan, the enemy fell back. The entire two-week period consisted of such encounters. Simple, yes, but it taught us something. We learned in this first period of actual maneuvers against organized resistance that a battalion in the field is a far cry from the compact unit it presents upon the parade ground. Whole companies seemed to have the habit of getting lost, and large numbers of men and vehicles were forever inclined to take the wrong turn. We learned what it meant to sleep in foxholes, to be in outposts in every kind of weather, to rest when there was little or no time to rest. We learned to rely upon and to look after ourselves, still not forgetting that we were a part of a large team. We also learned, as we seemed to drift farther and farther away from civilized customs, to sleep with our shoes on our feet.

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As all things must eventually end, so did these first two weeks of mock combat and we were finally granted that first week of rest. In spite of our cleaning-up process we were granted opportunities to visit Alexandria, some fifty miles away. Needless to say, we made the most of the opportunities. None of us left camp the first day. There was equipment to clean, rifles to go over, clothing to wash, and the area to police. The next day all who were allowed passes appeared at the orderly room "shined, pressed, and polished" to receive that small sheet of paper which permitted its bearer to be absent ". . . from duties for a period of twelve hours." We pushed off in busses, and as we cruised along we waved at the children, whistled at the girls, and carried on like a group of men might who had just returned from the front lines but had left their manners behind them.

The first place we headed toward was a chow house. Soldiers are always hungry, and at this moment we had a thick, juicy steak with all the trimmings in mind. Beer parlors, curio shops, and moving-picture theaters were taken in succession. A few of us wandered off in search of a place where dancing would be permitted, and we found places to partly cover our desires. There was music, there was a smooth floor, and there were girls, but there the similarity between the places we chose and dancehalls ended. Most of us were "jitterbugs" and we were accustomed to having a place to properly "jit." In these establishments we found barely enough room to move at a slow walk between the tables. Needless to say, we did try, but in only a half an hour or so we gave it up as impossible and meandered away, leaving a few MPs glaring after us and hoping there would be trouble. Most of us returned to camp in the allotted time, and those who didn't were sorry afterward

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for there are no limits to the number of details a gloating first sergeant can dish out on any pretext.

The next day we were informed that Alexandria was "Off Limits" as far as the 305th was concerned. Naturally the fellows who had not had an opportunity to get into town weren't elated over the idea and said so in strong, emphatic language. Joe and Pete, who had not had their passes yet, made some pointed remarks which common decency prevents repeating or recording. There were many rumors why that city was forbidden to us and we finally came to the conclusion that we and the military police who were on duty there did not see eye to eye on certain small items. Of course, because we were perfect gentlemen at all times, it was taken as a matter of course that the MPs were naturally at fault. On the other hand, we must admit that the men of the 305th would never be pushed around by any outside unit. So it came to light that someone started a brawl and no one took the time to bicker or argue it out. When the smoke of battle cleared away, so the story goes, the Statue of Liberty men majestically strode away leaving a few MPs behind them in an undignified prone position. It was later learned that the defeated men, instead of being MPs, might have been members of the mechanized unit. But we shall never know for sure. MPs or the mechanized unit, the result was the same.

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The next phase of the maneuvers dealt with the all-imporant art of crossing rivers. In the previous actions we had pushed the opposing team to the far side of the Sabine River. Now we were confronted with the problem of crossing the stream to continue the attack. The Sabine River, which flowed through our maneuver area, forms the boundary between the States of Louisiana and Texas. The Red Forces were defending the west bank. Our job was to learn the best strategic method of crossing, taking with us all men and supplies. The river at this point was about fifty yards wide. The water was swift-flowing and muddy. It was much too deep to attempt a crossing by foot troops or vehicles without the aid of some sort of bridge. For that purpose the Army provided engineers who, when called upon, constructed ponton bridges for the troops and huge rafts for large guns and equipment. Rain had been falling all morning and every man was wet and cold. The stage was set; plans had been made and now was the time for the execution of those plans. The main body made its attack directly across opposition and get it over.

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Patrols which had gone out several days before had sought out the enemy's weak points and gained information concerning his dispositions. In an irritable state of mind we were more than eager to meet the

the river. Thirty miles to the north the 3d Battalion under the command of Lt. Col. Ward Caddington, with the engineers and attached units, was given the assignment of making a feint to the rear and confusing the enemy. In this separate combat team were companies from the 306th and 307th. The idea was that if any men on vehicles were captured it might cause perplexity among the Red Forces, which in itself might have been a good idea had it succeeded. Both the main body and the diversionary force made their crossings, but it so happened that the vehicles of the 3d Battalion did not get across until much later, not until the foot soldiers of the battalion had marched for 23 miles through the swamps and woods. The next morning they were forced to withdraw so that contact between troops and supplies could be made.

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However, the goal was finally achieved; the Division made the crossing complete and attained its objective. So ended the second two-week phase of maneuvers. It was time for another week of rest.

This time were were bivouacked about twenty miles from Leesville, Louisiana. Again we were granted passes.

The trip to town, via GI bus, took about an hour. The bus (GI busses always seemed to be old contraptions which had seen their best days long before the Army took them over) grunted, struggled, and groaned to chug its way up each hill, and then rolled down the opposite grade as if it had no brakes. But no accident befell us.

The beer situation in Leesville was acute. The town was almost too small to handle such a large influx of soldiers. There was beer to sell. The problem lay in getting it. At least fifty GIs would crowd a bar which was originally designed to accommodate about fifteen. Another fifty would climb upon the backs and breathe down the collars of those who had already fought their way to the rail. One earned every drop of the flat beer one had wrested from a perspiring bartender. Some of the more fortunate fellows who had elbowed their way in first tried to drink the place dry, which resulted in upset stomachs and deep headaches. They spent the remainder of their passes trying to dodge MPs.

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Our uniforms didn't seem to impress the girls of the town. Soldiers were nothing new to them. Being a soldier in a place where there are and have been innumerable other soldiers puts two strikes against a guy to begin with. We were, we have always maintained, gentlemen at heart, but we could not convince the ladies that we were. The girls remained on guard and on the defensive.

About 2130 the round-up began. It seemed to take a lot of preparation to get us back to camp before 2300. Some of the more playful men played a game which amounted to slinking past an MP without getting caught. These men were the same men who had broken the 96th Article of War which says something about "bringing discredit upon the military service."

We passed our ride back to our place of bivouac telling one another of the many things we had done or wanted them to think we had done. There were some, the playboys, who were too sick to talk at all. All of us passed time thinking of what we would do the next time we visited Leesville. And all of us were trying to forget the time when we would commence the third phase of the maneuvers, an unpleasant subject which had a habit of creeping into our most personal thoughts.

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Next we were the Red or inferior force which meant that it was our turn to be pushed back across the river. We might have had an allergy against being placed on the defensive and a few of us may have had the urge to surprise our opponents by not allowing ourselves to be pushed, but upon considering that they had cooperated with us—and our officers might not have liked it so well had we not withdrawn when the orders were given—we allowed ourselves to retreat to the west bank where we set up a defensive zone. We held that position only overnight. The next day two battalions of parachutists floated down from the sky quite near us and we were forced to withdraw another six miles. We continued to fight a rear-guard delaying action as we marched, but it did us no good. The plans read that we would lose this engagement. So we lost it.

In that manner the remainder of the maneuvers proceeded. We fought delaying actions and retreated continuously, and all the while we waded through mud and water, across fields and through swamps. It did us good. It prepared us for the days to come when we drove the Japs through jungle swamps and rice paddies in the Pacific Theater of Operations. Most of the time there is a purpose behind the training the Army gives its men. Yet there remains that small amount of training about which we shall always wonder.

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The natives insisted from the beginning of the maneuvers to the day of their ending that all the rain which had befallen us was more than unusual; this time of the year was supposed to be their dry season. But we had heard those same laments and explanations in South Carolina. We expected to hear apologies for the weather no matter where we might go from there. In some cases one of the disgusted men would stop a native in the middle of an apology and say: "If this is such

unusual weather why do you have so many swamps? They don't spring forth without some sign of dampness." That would stop them.

The final flag went up amidst our sighs of relief and our questions which showed confusion. We were happy because the tactical situation was over; we were confused because we did not have the slightest idea who had won. It was our own guess that our job had been well performed but we stopped patting ourselves upon the back long enough to admit that the 90th Division was a pretty good combat team after all. We felt that both sides had gained much practical experience and could not have helped but profit greatly by the problems.

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Now we were given a chance to take a hot bath and clean up. We were loaded into trucks and driven about six miles to an isolated spot where other trucks bearing huge tanks with shower apparatus were waiting. The showers weren't constructed to accommodate many of us at one time, and the water seemed to drizzle instead of spray. The showers' heating system was attached to the trucks and we were all afraid that the hot water would give out before it became our turn to wash. No man removed his clothes until it became his time to dash under the drizzling drops; the weather was too cold for men to stand in line and wait in complete nakedness. Then, after one had taken his turn, one lost no time in throwing on his clothing. No burlesque queen ever made better time getting dressed during a police raid than we did after emerging from beneath these improvised showers.

What now? The 305th was comprised of a rugged and ready bunch. We knew it. We had marched circles around a motorized division. For over three months a man's bed had been the ground beneath him, his shelter had been his raincoat. All of us had gained in physical stamina and sheer intestinal fortitude (as well as intestinal cramps and other intestinal difficulties which sleeping in muddy foxholes can create). None of us will ever forget the rain, the mud, the swamps, the snakes, the wood ticks, the pigs, and the various other hardships with which we had had to contend. Through long familiarity with the crawling reptiles, our instinctive fear of them had now become nothing more than a mere distaste. We learned to live among them as though they were our next-door neighbors. Nor will any of us recall the State of Louisiana without thinking at the same time of the porkers we saw running free in almost every direction we turned. At the same time we will think of the side trips we had made to various farmhouses to replenish our appetites with fried chicken or ham and eggs and soft, hot rolls.

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Getting one of these dinners was an art in itself. During the weeks of rest it was not so very complicated although it was taboo in Army Regulations. But during the problems it was no easy matter and tested the ingenuity of the individual soldier. It was possible to become tired and fall back from the main body and become lost, providing one did not become too lost. Then, once on one's own, came the selection of the house. An inviting house was not necessarily a large, fine building but rather one where the inhabitants appeared hospitable. A couple of daughters around would always be a decisive factor in the selection. We would meander up to the house, being as nonobservant from the road as possible, and then hang over the fence like hungry cattle until someone came out to ask what we wanted. We would then offer to cut wood as well as furnish sugar and coffee (both rationed articles which we had got the night before from some KP's private black market) and also pay cash for a chicken if the lady of the house would condescend to prepare it for us. This would usually work. Most of the farmhouses had service flags in their front window anyhow.

Anyone who has never partaken of a real Southern fried chicken dinner with hot biscuits, jam, and butter has certainly missed one of the finer points of life. We would tell them, between bites, all the misery we had been suffering because of the rain and the cold and the dangers connected with the maneuvers, not to mention that the Army was literally starving us. We really spread it on thick. Then, when we had run down, we would be informed that the lady of the house had fed hungry soldiers before. She had come in contact with many goldbricks from the training grounds. She knew exactly what our training consisted of. On our way back to the Regiment we would agree among ourselves that "sometimes soldiers talk too much." Meaning, of course, those who had been there ahead of us and not ourselves.

We moved to a point near Slagle, about six miles from Leesville, where we remained for a week. While here, we prepared for our next movement. In that time, as usual, knowing all the while that we would be there but for a brief period, we cleared a spot for our tents. In our area there seemed to be about forty acres of stumps which we were detailed to remove. We blasted, dug, grubbed, and wrenched them forcibly from the ground and then filled all holes until the ground was leveled. When the work was done we had thought there might be another chance for a brief pass to Leesville. But the soldier can make no decisive plans. Amid groans and lamentations we were informed that the outfit was headed for desert training in Arizona—Hyder was the name of the camp.

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On April 5 we departed. Since that day we have looked back over it all and have wondered about the many times we complained of the hardships we had experienced. Had our gripes been justified? Who can say?

On April 10 we arrived at a stopping-off place in the desert which consisted of a couple of shacks and a water tower. . . .

But that is another story in itself. . . .

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Chapter 3: Desert Training at Hyder

Every window of the train was crowded with GIs as the train pulled into the station. All were anxious for a first glimpse of our new home. "Can't see a thing except cactus," one soldier would comment. Another shouted as though he had spotted something marvelous: "I can see a water tower; at least we won't die of thirst." Pete put in his expected remark, "Buildings! Two of them—maybe three! We are still in civilization." A casual glance would have revealed to anyone that, in spite of our casual comments, we were much let down; we had expected something better. We were tired of bivouacs, tired of hikes. We wanted a break—a bed to sleep in, good chow, a chance to go to town on our days off. We had hoped that Camp Hyder would have those few blessings to offer us. But stern realization had hit us with full force. Hyder was just a spot on the desert, a water tower and a few shacks, just space—no people, no stores, no animals, no nothing!

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Looking for all the world like Sad Sack's twin brother, each of us piled out of the cars, struggling with our barracks bags on one shoulder and our M1 on the other. The dust was ankle-deep. Had this been an individual excursion on our own, our minds would have been changed right there, but a soldier never changes his mind. He keeps going until someone changes it for him. So we loaded our bags into trucks and climbed in behind them.

We had not ridden far before another terrifying discovery was made. There were no roads at Hyder either!

For about three miles we bumped and jogged along over sand and dust, mostly dust. It began to fill every nook and corner of the truck. It piled in upon us so swiftly and with such force that we were hardly able to distinguish the faces of our buddies who sat immediately across from us. We became a sorry-looking mess. We were disappointed and chagrined. But suddenly there came a great transformation in our behavior. Joe began to laugh at the sorry spectacle Pete presented. Pete decided that Joe, too, presented a humorous appearance. Soon we were all laughing at one another, and with that sudden burst of humor we knew that we would be able to get along at Camp Hyder, Arizona. A man with a good sense of humor can be at home anywhere.

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Dust or no dust, each of us reached for his messkit when the chow whistle blew. That first meal was something to write home about. The chow would have been OK had it not been for the dust which was given no chance to settle. One would almost get a large bite into his mouth when a passing truck would throw so much in his direction

that his potatoes would be coated with it. Then he would get that scraped off to a fairly palatable cleanliness when Pete would shuffle by in his haste to get seconds and the mess gear and its contents would be covered again.

When we turned in for the night, we did so with countless speculations passing among us. How long could one live in such heat, in such conditions? One soldier was willing to bet that we would be there only for a few weeks. Another vowed that he had it straight from Personnel (one of the rumor factories) that we were headed for a California port of embarkation. A few managed to find consolation in wishful thinking, but most of us knew that we were stuck in the desert, for how long no one could say. So we griped at each other, at the camp, at the commanding general—and we awoke the next morning feeling much better.

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There were things for us to do. There always were. But the hot desert sun put a premium on the art of goldbricking. Men were selected to bring newly arrived equipment from the station. Other men were given shovels and the command to start digging; that meant a latrine or a sump hole for the kitchen.

One bright Saturday morning found us in the company streets laying out clothing and equipment for full-field inspection. We groaned about it. We always did, but we knew better. Desert or no desert, heat or no heat, sand or no sand, the toothbrush must be placed thus and a clean pair of socks must be displayed. Every following Saturday was the same.

It never rained. The thermometer hovered around 115 degrees, more often shooting above that mark than falling below it. It was hard for us to see the big picture. How did this basic training stuff help win the war? Why didn't we get a chance to fight? Did they expect us to draw a bead on Hitler's Afrika Korps from here? The present overwhelmed the future. We could only see that someone else was doing our fighting for us, while we, the best combat outfit in the Army were laying out full-fields.

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To add to our woes, the chow situation took a turn for the worse. The War Department tried a series of experiments with the familiar B rations as the base. We were the guinea pigs. What would be the effect on the men or the efficiency of an infantry combat unit after a steady diet of B rations? Could men hike and fight on canned chow? The 305th wears no combat ribbon or medal for meritorious service for its role in this series of important investigations. It can only be proud to have finally been of service to the Nation in helping to win the war.

Our training program was modeled on the tactics that had been refined by our forces in North Africa. Camp Hyder was only one of several such desert training camps. We had much to learn about desert warfare, and even more about the desert itself. The first respectable hike we took convinced us of that.

Our introduction to desert warfare was gradual enough. Each morning we would hike out into the burning sand for two or three miles. One place looked no different than another except that one spot bore a sign which proclaimed it the training area. As it was no different from the locality behind our tents we puzzled over the necessity of placing it so far from the camp that we had to walk to reach it. The only explanation could be that someone had dreamed up a theory. The brass of the higher echelons always had theories.

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Instructors had always seated their classes in the shade. Here there was no shade, so each platoon deployed as best it could. We took so much time mopping perspiration from our brows or necks that we paid no attention to what was being taught us. We even pitied the young lieutenants who conducted the classes; they suffered from the heat as much as we did. Parched throats prevented our being interested in lengthy discourses upon the intricacies of military courtesy or the technique of rifle fire. We wanted only to get back to camp and the Lyster bag. It is doubtful that a personal appearance of Lana Turner could have robbed our water supply of any of its glamor.

Hyder always looked good to us after a session in the desert. We could bear that last formation. We listened for the first sergeants' bullfrog voice: "COM-M-M-PAN-NEEEE, 'ten-SHUN! Inspection ARMS! Fall out." There was a roar like Niagara Falls and the company vanished in a cloud of dust. Men dove for the spigots of the Lyster bag, fought and shoved their way into position to be next. Anxiety filled the eyes of the men on the outer edge of the mob; a fear was in their hearts that there would not be enough water to go around. Cotton may have been king in parts of the South and in Miami the bathing beauty may have reigned as queen. In the desert only one thing has a supreme value: Water. It need not be cold or clear; it need only to be wet. The temperature of water, its alkaline contents, its purity were things that civilians could afford, but in Camp Hyder we had forgotten them.

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There was one bright, shining spot in the period of our present phase of training, just one of the pleasant memories we will always carry with us. Mention the town of Phoenix to any man who has soldiered in Arizona and the chances are that a far-away look will creep into his eyes and he'll mutter, half to himself: "Yes, Phoenix was quite a town.

If I didn't intend to spend the rest of my life in Skowhegan I think I would make Phoenix my home."

Early on Saturday mornings the trucks would line up on Motor Pool Road. (Constant use had made pathlike roadways here and there and our own engineers had helped to create places for the Army to drive its jeeps and trucks over.) We made a strange appearance as we boarded the trucks, an overnight bag in one hand and a full-field pack on our backs. The convoy officer passed up and down the line, checking passes and looking over the vehicles. We resented the delay this officer was causing us. We were ready; why wasn't he? He was blamed for the heat, for the bumps in the makeshift road, for the delay in starting, and for any breakdowns or flat tires we chanced to experience on the way. Soft-hearted Willie made the rather dangerous remark that it might not have been entirely his fault. Perhaps he didn't even want to be the convoy officer; he might be doing punishment for a gig. Just a Sad Sack with bars!

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The trek to Phoenix was a long one. Hyder was located exactly eighteen and one-quarter miles from the closest sign of civilization, a gas station, a highway, and a billboard. The road (if it can be called a road) struggled and wriggled over the mountain by Agua Caliente and wormed its way through the desert to the little building which is known as Sentinel, Arizona. Trucks at the head of the convoy sent clouds of dust rolling back to the rear, blinding the drivers and covering the khaki of the passengers with a thick layer of grey-white sand. We passed down through dried river beds, up and over piles of sharp lava rocks. When we climbed out for a break at Sentinel after an hour of tortuous travelling the scenery seemed still to be moving although the trucks had stopped. We were glad of this opportunity to rest but we were always loaded and ready to go before the whistle sounded to "wind 'em up and let's take off!" Between us and Phoenix now lay 111 miles of good, hard surfaced roads.

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As soon as we hit the open highway the fellows began to look alive. We all became observant. We noticed everything and everything was beginning to please us. Take the big new Buick convertible which had come up behind us and then slowed down, content to follow our tail. It was a neat job. So was the little creature behind the wheel. She returned our smiles with a welcome display of friendship. "Hmmmm!" the same thought passed through every mind. "If all the Arizonans will be as friendly as this one I can see that I will like Phoenix."

By keeping our eyes on the billboards which advertised the various hotels, we were able to keep track of the distance we had come and the mileage yet to be covered. Now and then we ran up against dis-

senting billboards. The Westward Ho and the San Carlos Hotels, for one thing, both apparently in Phoenix, failed to agree upon the exact distance. In such cases we were content to make estimates. We passed through Palo Verde and then Buckeye. Theater-goers will remember Buckeye for its part in "Hellzapoppin." After leaving Buckeye behind us it became impossible to whistle at all the pretty girls we passed; they were becoming too numerous. We were drawing near the end of our journey. A uniformed man in white gloves standing beside a parked motorcycle suggested that we were almost there. What was he? Only a 77th Division MP. Five minutes later we rolled into the State Fair Grounds. We had reached the end of a long, dusty trail.

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The convoy officer, himself worn out from the long trip, made no effort to keep us in absolute order. He did not seem to care now how many arms and legs were broken in the mad scramble to get out of the trucks before the tail gates had been lowered. But we gave him little trouble. Eager to get off to our private affairs in town, we were willing to form quickly and march through the cool, dark stadium and through the gates to the center of the race track where a tent city began to spring up as though by magic.

One look at the hard, familiar ground was enough to make every man resolve to find another place to spend the night. What difference did it make that we had brought our field equipment with us? That we had taken the time and effort to pitch our pup-tents, although the ground was so hard that we almost splintered our tent pegs in driving them far enough to offer the appropriate support, did not matter. We would not sleep on the ground in our time off if there were any other place available for us.

A crowd gathered around the officer with the passes. There came from toneless lips a brief lecture about "harming neither man nor beast." As soon as each soldier got his pass he made a bee-line for the exit to fight for a seat on the little bus which was to take us into town. Some who were unable to find room on the crowded bus started walking, others headed across the street for a snack in "Ned's Restaurant." Soon the Fair Grounds were as vacant as before with only the trucks, the tents, and a few guards remaining behind as evidence that the men of the 305th had been there.

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Who can describe the wonderful feeling it was to drop a nickel into the box and ride the bus downtown? Stores, people, and traffic lights drew our attention. These were sights we had wanted to see. At the bus terminal we were confronted with a small conundrum. Which way to turn? That problem was easily solved; either direction would do.

Some went right, the thirsty members of our crowd who were eager to wash the dry dust from their throats. Some went left, those who wanted to be clean and cool above everything else. The Servicemen's Center was the first stop for this group.

The Center was in a class by itself. It wasn't just another USO. It was more than "free stationery, games, and information." It was the clearest expression of friendship that could be found anywhere. Donors and benefactors of the Center remained anonymous, but, representing the same generous spirit was a group of ladies who bustled all over the place in appreciated efforts to make us feel at home. They were, we supposed, the mothers of sons in other units of the service. Some of them reminded us of our own mothers. They answered our questions with a never-tiring smile, although those same questions must have been put to them thousands of times. More often than not these ladies helped us avoid the calamity of having to sleep on the ground that night. "Want a room, soldier?" they would ask, and they made it their job to find one for us.

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The other services of the Center made their appeal to us. There was a snack bar in the back, everything fresh, everything free. A cold Pepsi-Cola and a sandwich certainly hit the right spot. Seconds? Absolutely.

But the Servicemen's Center was just a momentary pause in a short weekend. A quick shower taken, we were on our way. At the door we met a formidable obstacle, a reinforced platoon of Indian, Mexican, and native shoe-shine boys. If a soldier was singled out by them as needing a shine, then that soldier had better get one. Otherwise he would be dogged all over town until he did. These shine-boys made more in tips in one day than a doughboy had in his pocket forty-eight hours after payday. We paid through the nose and listened with rapture at their flattering chatter about how much they preferred the Infantry to the Air Forces.

The restaurants became crowded with enormous walking appetites. The waiters and waitresses listened with amusement as we ordered double orders of thick, juicy steaks. Sometimes the cafés and cafeterias became so jammed that the proprietors had to lock the doors until more space became available. The price of a dinner was never taken into consideration. The important question was: "Am I too late for a steak, lady?"

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What made Phoenix rank among the best of the world's cities? There were probably thousands of distinct and different reasons for its charm, all of which can be summed in the city's ability to please everyone.

It didn't take us long to realize that those frank, breezy Westerners

had hearts as large as the Stetsons they wore. When a soldier would drop into a cocktail lounge he seldom had to pay for his own drink. A pleasant drawl would invite him to "have one on me, son." This one usually led to another. Before we had parted from our new friends we had an earful of accurate statistics on the number of steers on one man's ranch, the rise and fall of the prices of cotton, and any number of reasons why the OPA should stop meddling with cattlemen. In exchange for this information we generally put in a plug or two for our own home towns, which usually called for another round of drinks.

The hepcats and jitterbugs went into action. Back in camp they never seemed to have the energy to work the smallest detail but here they abounded with vim and vitality. Far into the night they would swing and sway to juke-box discords with some obliging young ladies, or prance vigorously at the Riverside or Center where the 77th Infantry Division Band (formerly our 305th band) held forth each Saturday night. They would forget the dust and the woes of camp as they danced, and vivid memories of certain dancing partners back home would fill their minds. Of course, every man's thoughts weren't of home. Wolves such as Jimmy were content to think only of that feminine bit of allure in his arms at the moment. It was not uncommon to hear a soldier whisper into the ear of a girl: "It's a good thing I cut in, baby. Maybe you didn't know it but you were just dancing with the biggest wolf in the 307th. From now on you stick to the 305th."

Bedtime finally arrived for some and arrived too soon for others. Hotels were generally crowded. Tourist cabins and boarding houses provided beds for many. Others had to be content with a bed in the dormitory at the YMCA or the Center. Some were out of luck unless some pals could manage to sneak them into their own rooms to join them in crowded bunks. Many unfortunate ones had to trudge back to the Fair Grounds. The velvety-green lawn which surrounded the City Hall did look inviting but the MPs had other ideas about soldiers sleeping there.

Sunday morning provided a luxury that one could not afford at Hyder. Sleeping until it could no longer be called morning was wonderful, especially to those men in air-conditioned hotel rooms. It was as if one were a general to awake and, by merely touching a bell, have the Sunday papers and ice water carried to his room. Men who had grown so accustomed to arising early that they could not sleep late found a type of excitement just to stroll up and down the city streets, seeing civilians and talking with them, stopping to enjoy a leisurely breakfast in a clean restaurant. Even a small breakfast of doughnuts and coffee was something to enjoy.

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There was another thing to remind us of home. No bugle announced Church Call, but we managed to know that it was time to devote ourselves to the Great General's guidance. We were, we confess, just a little envious of the couples and families among whose ranks we occupied the pews. We longed for that far off day when we could again attend the services of our choice with our families or our One and Only. Nevertheless, even though we were in a strange city, the spiritual peace an hour in church offered to a lonely GI was much the same.

Golf formed a pleasant Sunday diversion for us. It was nothing to see a man in khaki teamed up with one of the local bankers or business executives. With rented outfits we would make the rounds of the exclusive Country Club. Cadets from Luke Field and American, Canadian, and Chinese boys joined us, too. We learned much from them as we swapped rumors and experiences and boasted in a friendly, competitive manner about our outfits. It is highly improbable though that we convinced the men of the Air Forces that the Infantry was the most outstanding of all branches of the service.

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Then came theater time. Air-conditioned theaters with their comfortable, leather-back seats are far removed from post theaters which are usually either too hot or too cold and offer only rough benches to sit upon. We could have seen those same movies back in camp—yet they would not have been the same.

The zero hour came much too soon. Reluctantly we took that last drink, that last bite of civilian chow, then headed back for the bus terminal. It was as crowded as it had been on our arrival. We were no longer kings and generals as we had been only a few hours before. Once again we were soldiers—the little men. We pushed and shoved and were pushed and shoved and so made our way back to the Fair Grounds. It was behind us, for this weekend at any rate. "But," quoted Pete, "as MacArthur said: 'I shall return.'"

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Our first real test in desert maneuvers came shortly after our arrival in Hyder. Each platoon was to be taken into the desert plain that stretched south of the camp toward Yuma and placed strictly on its own. The problem lasted an entire week. Rations and water were distributed according to a prearranged plan. Operating without maps, the platoon was required to move given distances along definite azimuths at so many miles each day. If we paced correctly and steered a true course we found our rations waiting for us. An error of two or three degrees meant that there would be no precious water waiting at the end of our cross-country movement.

If a platoon leader was smart he moved his men by night, taking full advantage of the coolness of the desert air. But even then a fifteen-mile march worked up a powerful thirst in a fellow's throat. The old trick of sucking pebbles was tried to a minimum of satisfaction. It wasn't the actual distance travelled that bothered us so much. We had covered two and three times that distance in Louisiana. Our biggest headache was the rough terrain. Our previous conception of a desert was that it was flat. A great part of it was, but cutting irregular patterns through even the flattest plains lay the famous river beds of the West, famous because they are definitely and absolutely dry. Once upon a time, countless centuries ago streams had flowed through these now dry beds, but sometime in the past Nature had taken a decided whim to change the geographical structure of the West and now the river beds lay dry and the once fertile countryside which had flanked the rivers lay in desolate waste. These dry gullies made our movement difficult and unpleasant but, like the *wadis* of North Africa that confronted our troops abroad, they afforded ideal spots in which to camp. The few desert trees that we did see were always in the wadi or along its banks.

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When we sighted our rendezvous point, our steps quickened. Feet no longer dragged in the dust. Again it was the thought of water ahead which gave us life. Every pair of eyes counted the drops as a lieutenant personally filled our canteens. Every drop that was spilled evoked a chorus of groans.

Only after we had appeased our aching throats with a few swallows of water did we give a thought to food. Some men had the will power to save their portion of the precious liquid to heat a cup of tea or coffee. But thirst does funny things to men. Many of us raised our canteens to our lips intent upon taking only a swallow—and found that we couldn't lower them until a good half or more of our limited supply had been consumed. Thirst became a passion which only bitter experience and time mastered.

Every stopping point had to be defended against possible enemy attack so the platoon dug in and formed a perimeter. All likely approaches were covered with simulated machine-gun and mortar fire. Digging in became a part of our existence. The individual slit trench or foxhole, we were told, was the infantryman's best friend, his chief protection against tanks and artillery fire. Since there were no tanks running around in our sector, we looked upon digging in as a useless drudgery. No one needed to be taught how to dig, we argued hotly. When we went into battle we would dig with gusto. But our leaders were convinced that their duty lay in making human steam shovels of us, so we dug. The first six inches were easy enough. The last five feet

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drew "blood, sweat, and tears." We learned that the desert was not all sand. Hidden under the powdery top soil were layers of rock and gravel. In many cases digging seemed impossible; for every shovelful we threw out two more seemed to fall in. We would eye the leaders and complain about our troubles, but they were relentless. So we continued to sweat, groan, and dig until we could rest our shoulders on the parapet and see over the edge.

Time passed. We marched and dug in and marched some more. Sometimes we got lost and had to fan out in all directions to search out our cached food and water. We faced attacks by rattlesnakes, Gila monsters, and the "enemy." The rattlers, needless to say, aroused our greatest excitement. Their camouflage technique was so perfect that we never saw them until we were right on top of them. We hiked along with one eye on the ground and one eye on the lookout for the enemy. Some of the men weren't tough enough to stand the strain and had to be returned to camp as casualties. Heat exhaustion, sun stroke, swollen lips, and general weakness of the knees and liver were common ailments.

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Life at Hyder was not always field work. Every so often we would dig into our bags for our dirtiest suit of khaki. The occasion would not be a trip to Phoenix, but a retreat parade. A garrison soldier is not necessarily one who lives in garrison. He is merely a GI who specializes in parades and bunk inspections. In the Old Army, so we were told, the retreat parades were splendid affairs. The colonel would appear astride a handsome white horse and his staff would have coal-black mounts. Naturally the soldiers would be afoot. Seated in the shade of the trees at hand would be the audience, scores of attractive young girls. The cannon would be fired and all eyes would turn to see the Old Man's horse bolt. The band would strike up the National Anthem and the entire Regiment would come to a perfect Present Arms. But here at Hyder retreat parade was different. The colonel had to walk like the rest of us. There was no band and no pretty girls to thrill at the showing we made. There was no shade for them to sit in had they been here. Cacti bushes and sagebrush didn't fit into our notion of a parade ground, but they were there to hinder us. We could do one of three things: go around, go through, or go over. No matter which course we took the result was disastrous; the dress of the formation, company or battalion, just ceased to exist. Then followed the customary exercises in the manual of arms that the Old Man always put us through. Even our manual was a little on the rusty side after two months of neglecting it. Finally came the most inspiring part of the ritual: the retreat ceremony itself. Old soldiers never fail to experience that "funny

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feeling," that thrill that runs up and down their spines at the sounding of "To the Colors." But we, soldiers of only about eighteen months, did not experience that thrill of pride. We griped as usual. We cussed the general, the colonel, the cooks who did not have to march in this cursed heat. Yet, as we neared the reviewing officer, the gripes ceased, the lines became rigid, we tried as hard as West Pointers. The competitive spirit within us created the desire that our own individual company be the best marching unit in the Regiment.

Evenings at Camp Hyder were both a problem and a pleasure. A pleasure first of all because the sun was down. Cool breezes came from nowhere. It was the only time of the day when fatigue jackets were not wet with sweat. These same evenings were a problem because of our lack of recreation facilities. By nature, the GI tends to favor being entertained rather than entertaining himself. Those lucky ones with cash left from payday generally spent their evenings in games of friendly, yet costly poker, or in a circle around a pair of cubes known as "African dominoes." Long after Taps, groups of threes and fours would be huddled around a candle. More than mere cash was involved. The next trip to Phoenix would be either very elaborate or very quiet, depending upon whom those fickle cubes of ivory favored. Today Joe was rich; tomorrow he would borrow a five-spot. The money circulated from hand to hand. Now and then, though, some winner would get wise and make out a money order and send his latest winnings home. The fascination that gambling holds for the average GI is not easily explained. Deep within us there seems to be that urge to take a chance.

There was one particular bright spot in our entertainment world. Hyder was located on the main Southern Pacific line. Transcontinental trains bearing the toasts of Hollywood and New York passed right through our backyard. Each Saturday the Special Service Officer would flag down a passing USO show and commandeer their services. Certainly the artists must have been impressed by the distinction of being commanded to perform at the "Hyder Op'ry House." Actually, all we had to offer these stellar performers was a plain, wooden stage erected in the shadow of Hyder Mountain. As a concession to our guests, the quartermasters built a pyramidal tent alongside the platform to serve as a makeshift dressing room. It was hard to picture a $5000-a-week movie queen accepting a tent as a dressing room. In fact it was difficult to understand why they consented to get off the train in the first place. But they took the heat and the dust without our hearing a word of complaint from them. We learned to know what the expression "good troupers" meant and we appreciated them for it.

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The 305th saw more stars than the average sightseer would see in a thousand trips to Beverly Hills. Kay Francis, Linda Darnell, Martha Raye, Betty Grable, and Carole Landis were only a small group of the many bundles of feminine personality who offered us their talents. Nor had all of Hollywood's masculine popularity been signed up in the Air Forces. Jack Carson, Alan Jones, Akim Tamiroff, and other entertainers acted as masters of ceremonies for the shows. The better known performers and the then unknown, rising starlets gave us the best they had for the same price, merely our own appreciative applause. Never will Uncle Sam's armed forces be able to give these unselfish artists the thanks they so richly deserve.

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All this while furloughs were being granted. Those of us who had not received the opportunity to visit home while we were in Louisiana got their chance here. All the men in camp were calculating mileage and cost. Most of the men in the Division lived somewhere in the East and a majority hailed from New York. Elaborate plans were made in an effort to cut down the travelling time, but in the end it was the same. Hyder was 2453½ miles, 71 hours, and $69.50 removed from Pennsylvania Station, New York City.

The biggest obstacle was, as always, to lay hands on those furlough papers. Since only ten percent of each company could go at any one time, a method of apportioning furloughs had to be worked out. Each of us lined up what we thought were good reasons why our names had to be included among the first furloughees. If one's great-great-grandmother would obligingly accommodate by getting sick, it would help no end. However, not everyone had such help in obtaining an early furlough and had to await his turn. And eventually the bright day dawned.

"One ticket to the big city, mister."

"One way or round trip, son?"

"Hate to answer that question, but you had better make it a come-and-go affair. A lot of people would be disappointed if I didn't come back. And some of 'em would start a posse on my trail."

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The SP station at Hyder may have seemed picturesque to some people but in our opinion it was a miserable place to wait for a train. Every freight that came along brought us to our feet. Toward the end we were willing to share a cattle car. At last the train we were waiting for chugged into the station. Instead of pulling right out again as one would think that a train which was three hours late should do, it had to stop for water. There was the porter grinning a welcome for us.

What a wonderful feeling to have someone else carry our bags for a change!

Penn Station was practically a demobilization point for the 305th. Here little groups split up. Harry left us to investigate the fastest way of getting to Albany. Mike had to catch the 7:00 p. m. train to Boston. Singly we filed off for our homes. We had nine full days and nights to spend the way we wanted to spend it. No one to stand over us as a reminder that we should do things the GI way! We could eat as we pleased, go and come when we had the notion. This was the meaning of home.

Nine days, fifteen minutes, and about three seconds later the gang assembled at the same spot. Everybody was present, broke, and sorry to be returning to that hell-hole called Hyder. Someone suggested that we have the Chaplain punch our TS cards. A TS card is strictly GI. Father Donnelly, the always-grinning Catholic Chaplain from the Bronx, a five-foot-eleven-inch-tall pal of the soldiers, had distributed a type of card which bore the inscription to the effect that whenever the world, the flesh, and the devil ganged up on the bearer he could present his TS card to the nearest Chaplain and have it punched without charge.

There is one odd thing about furlough travelling. The train which takes us from camp is always late; the train to return us to our duties is ever on time and anxious to get us back to camp. We were all in favor of the Mississippi overflowing and leaving us stranded on the eastern bank. But luck was against us and as there were no decent Axis agents for miles around we made the trip in record time. Twelve hours in camp created the feeling that we had never been home, that our furloughs had been only a pleasant dream.

Dark rumors filled the air about the latter part of May. The latrine, always famed as a breeding ground for forecasts of future events, produced stories which, pieced with bits of information which came out of the medics, presented an inescapable truth. The outfit was going on another maneuver. Headquarters later confirmed it. We began packing to carry on our combat training against the 8th Division in the California desert. Remaining furloughs were cancelled.

Early one morning in June, the Regiment began its motor march to California. We were headed for the maneuver area near the headquarters of the Desert Training Center, Camp Young. Spirits were as high as could be expected. The Californians with whom we had come into contact at the Hyder Op'ry House were very nice indeed. Certainly, it couldn't be any worse than Hyder. We reminded ourselves to keep one eye peeled for Betty Grable.

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But as is usually the case, the infantry took the back road. All day long we rode with nary a movie star in view. The only thing on the highway seemed to be heavy cargo trucks and we soon grew tired of whistling at them. Sleep? We had far too many aches and pains for that luxury. The sun was too hot for anything. All we could do was sit there and take it. We saw nothing but bleak, barren mountains, except for an occasional desolate gas station with its attached tourist cabins, standing empty by the side of the road. Even the famous Colorado River disappointed us. There was no Grand Canyon to go with it. Just an ordinary river, not half as wide as the Hudson.

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Eventually, the trucks pulled to the side of the road. We piled out and threw up our temporary camp. Pete was on hand with his expected comment, "Is this California?" He surveyed his surroundings. "Looks like Hyder's twin brother to me."

The California maneuvers were much shorter, in the point of time, than the Louisiana maneuvers. The terrain was, of course, totally different. Tactically, the maneuver was built around Palen Pass. Ironically, when we overheard a Marine boast of his exploits on Guadalcanal, we'd point to our Good Conduct Ribbons and enlarge on our imaginary Battle of Palen Pass. With scorn in our voices, we'd attribute his ignorance of this crucial battle to the fact that at the time, he was stationed in that quiet corner of the South Pacific. This "line" is always good for an evening with the Navy, Marines or any chance acquaintance who doesn't subscribe to *Time*. But, back in June 1942, Palen Pass was no laughing matter. There was nothing simulated about the weather. Those were the days when the Army doughboy hiked with only one canteen on his belt, a quart of water to last him all day, even through the days we took our fifteen-mile hikes. Yes, just a continuation of our Hyder training in a different locale.

Everyone agreed that the best thing about the California maneuvers was the fact that they eventually ended. We counted the days, the hours and the minutes until the umpires rolled up their flags for good and left us in peace. For more than two weeks we had been kept on the ball by these strangers. They seemed to be everywhere. Each move we made was observed. We couldn't eat in groups or the umpire would gig us for bunching. We had to sink our foxholes chest high, just like the book prescribed, or else the umpire might pull out a tape measure and gig us for "improper and insufficient use of the entrenching shovel." The umpire, quite unknowingly, assumed the role of a bogey man. But we had other woes. We were sick of the dust that the armored attachments churned up and threw back in our faces. We cursed the

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airmen for their strafing attacks that made us hurl ourselves to the hot earth. Even here the rattlers seemed to be everywhere.

The day of the big critique arrived. Soon we were back on the road again, retracing our journey toward camp. The trip was every bit as rough and rugged as the one out had been. We sat on those unyielding wooden benches and suffered, much as a little boy does when he has had to take some bitter medicine.

By some miracle, we lived to see the trucks roll to a halt in Hyder. Stiff and numb, we stumbled out of the trucks, and trudged down the company street. Hyder looked like a ghost town. But we knew that there was a cot waiting for us. If only we could stretch out and sleep for a week!

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We rolled out next morning, stiff and tired, but glad to be able to eat breakfast in peace again. Same old powdered eggs and transparent milk, but somehow they seemed to us an improvement over maneuver chow. Our cooks had been experimenting in a commendable scientific way with additions and subtractions to our Army menu. They worked up 27 different ways to make powdered eggs, but we still couldn't eat them.

Hyder quickly reestablished her old routine over our lives: reveille, police call, chow, and sick call. The first week or so was spent in detail-stripping every piece of equipment we had. Desert sand has a way of finding entrance to even the very tightest recess. Every bolt and every screw had to be washed in gasoline and dried and oiled. Until that was done, the Old Man informed us, we need not even dream of a visit to Phoenix.

Shortly after our return from California, the Regiment was assembled in the theater area across from the 3d Battalion. The occasion was a critique from the new commanding general. Critiques are part of the established Army instruction system. Generals are very fond of giving critiques. So are sergeants. A conservative estimate maintains that critiques have prolonged the war some two years. So one can see that we went more to meet the new general than to listen to constructive or destructive remarks.

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Somebody sighted a jeep bearing two stars coming down Kitchen Road and the Regiment was called to attention. The band sounded "Hail to the Chief." Colonel Daniels gave the salute of welcome. There he was, Maj. Gen. Andrew D. Bruce, former commander of Camp Hood, Texas. The tall, heavy-set man with the determined jaw and closely cropped grey hair reached for the microphone. He appeared to mean business. A West Pointer! More of the field soldier type than the desk man.

We took advantage of his, "At ease, men," and squirmed around until we had found the least uncomfortable arrangement for body and limbs. We were confident that, like most other generals we had known, he would pat us on the back a little and chew us out a little, too. No one doubted that the compliments would outweigh the hell we would receive.

He took a quick survey of his audience and said: "Gentlemen, this is the worst-marching outfit I have ever seen in my Army career." To a man, our jaws dropped. We sat there stunned and practically shell-shocked. Slowly and doubtfully, we looked at each other, hardly daring to believe what our ears had told us. There was a definite stir among the men. Who was this upstart, this newcomer? Didn't he know that he was talking to an outfit that had hung up hiking records in Louisiana? Hadn't we walked as many as 56 miles at a time? And what about that 25-mile speed march back in Jackson?

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After the murmurs had quieted, the general explained why he thought we were so poor at marching. He conceded that it had been hot in California, that we had been up against some rugged terrain. But we had not pushed ourselves to the limit. He explained in detail his theory that sweat saves blood, that by marching five extra miles today we might save ourselves a ten-mile march tomorrow and many casualties in the bargain. What he told us made sense. But many of the lessons were lost upon us because of our injured pride. Instead of listening to the general we were arrayed against him. We sought exceptions to his statements where we might have profitably examined what he had to say. Had he reversed his speech, had he explained his theory and then pointed out our failures, it would not have been so bad. But right or wrong, we all began mumbling to ourselves: "What does a two-star general know about hiking? Has he ever marched that extra five miles except in a jeep?" He concluded his remarks, saluted, and left. There was no applause. Our Regimental commander made a few brief comments but no one paid much attention. We were too busy rehashing among ourselves what the general had said. When we recovered from the shock of his opening words, we began to realize that he had given us no hint, no indication, that we would soon leave the desert. In fact, if we were as inept at desert tactics as he implied, it seemed logical that we would stay right where we were until we had corrected our shortcomings. Immediately rumors took to the air. Wild estimates as to our stay in the desert ranged from six months to six years. Our return seemed as remote as "the duration and six months."

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It was shortly after the general's speech that the 305th changed commanding officers. Colonel Daniels was relieved because of ill health. The men will always remember "Smiling Jack" as a courteous officer and a gentleman. We had dubbed him "Smiling Jack" because he rarely smiled. But we liked him. With Colonel Daniels it was always, "Don't you think you might have buttoned that jacket, soldier?" If there was something to dish out, he did it with a liberal hand, but always to the officer in charge; never to the soldier. Needless to say, the men appreciated him for that.

The Regimental Executive Officer, Lt. Colonel Caddington, assumed command. The work of improving the area, the constant striving to remove the black mark went forward with greater momentum. Bit by bit, the new CO convinced us that we were good, that we shouldn't be content to merely show. We needed convincing in a way. The general's blast had started us wondering if we weren't still a bunch of rookies. Stealing a page from Knute Rockne, Colonel Caddington built up our confidence in ourselves. He convinced us and we began to convince the general. The 305th took a long series of firsts beginning with the general appearance of the area and extending to the short problems that were held in the training area out toward Turtleback Mountain. General Bruce returned and admitted that we had proved him wrong. The beginning of the Division's new teamwork was already made.

Shortly after the California maneuvers (GIs never use calendars to keep track of time; their mileposts consist of maneuvers, changes of station, and company beer parties) a new company was formed in the Division. Under ordinary circumstances the addition or subtraction of a company to the TO of the Division would not have caused any stir in the 305th. But these were not ordinary circumstances and this was no ordinary company. Organized under the grandiose and innocent name of Division Special Training Company, this unit pitched its tents in a desolate spot in the desert out toward Montezuma's Head. Theoretically, the idea was this: when men go over the hill or overstay their leave in Phoenix a few days or do any or all those things a model soldier shouldn't do, it was merely a deficiency—just like a vitamin deficiency! Something was lacking. In these cases it was obviously a lack of appropriate training. This was to be the cure. For the first offense the parent company was to straighten the victim's manners. But those whom the company commander felt could stand a little additional training were sent to the Division's Special Training Company. Obviously a select group of instructors had to be assembled to

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handle such men. If we were to believe the accounts that the first enrollees brought back from the company, a group of hardboiled, I-mean-business officers and NCOs were on the faculty. Of psychology they pretended to know little. Of GIs they claimed to know everything. Every day the offenders could look forward to a twenty-mile hike. On State holidays they only hiked eighteen miles. When they drilled, they drilled like West Pointers. Only perfection would satisfy their drill-masters. The fact that the duration of one's "intensified training" was partly dependent upon an estimate made by the company commander, inevitably led to the view that a week at the DSTC was a sentence. Higher headquarters indignantly reprimanded those who referred to the company as a punishment center, however. But each soldier continued to regard the new training unit as a streamlined version of the stockade. The stories that the first candidates brought back with them tended to strengthen this view, and, as these stories circulated, they took on additional details as all stories do. It became difficult to separate the contributions of the imagination from the truth. The effect on the Division was none the less real. Men who formerly had gladly remained three or four days extra in Phoenix in exchange for a summary court and a week or two at hard labor in the stockade now thought twice before they missed the Sunday night convoy. The AWOL rate dropped. None of us was eager to incur the wrath of the Old Man. In this sense, the Division Training Company was a success. Someone with more access to the facts will have to pass judgment on whether or not the methods used were justified.

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Washing water was almost as much of a problem as drinking water. Each company kept two trailers of water at the end of the company street for shaving, washing clothes, and bathing. But a helmet bath is not very satisfying or efficient. The Division showers (some 350 of them) were located almost three miles from the 305th area. Even though we might catch a ride on the water jeep, that dusty ride was a discouraging obstacle in the path of our frequenting the shower baths. Word finally reached Major Rockefeller at the Regimental S-4 office that an abandoned well lay only 600 yards north of camp and the major went into action. By some sort of magic known only to the clan of S-4s, he installed the necessary machinery and fixtures and within a few days the 305th had a private shower of its own. The morale of the outfit registered a ten-point climb. There was nothing in the world like a cool shower to hit the spot after a day's work in the hot sun. We almost felt like civilians again.

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Another morale-boosting event of the latter part of our sojourn at

Camp Hyder was the swimming pool at Agua Caliente. The building of the pool was more of a Division affair but we men of the 305th certainly did our share of the digging. The organization and collection of materials was in other hands. The land, the water, and the cement came through the generosity of the rancher who owned Agua Caliente. The machinery came from the 302d Engineers. But, when it came to digging, Pete and Joe and the rest of us found ourselves on one end of the shovels, and eventually the pool was opened for the admiration and pleasure of all. A schedule was swiftly put into effect; each regiment was assigned certain days for swimming. After all, ten thousand GIs couldn't all go swimming at once.

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So, as time passed, we grudgingly began to admit that Hyder wasn't such a bad place after all. If we stayed there long enough, we'd transform it into a second paradise.

By far the most important training that was scheduled next was our "Bulldog Training." General Bruce had been interested in the British Commando training for a long time. When he came to us, he planned to modify those tactics, fit them into the infantry methods, and apply them to this division. The first step in this direction was to experiment with a select group. The officers in the Division were elected to be the guinea pigs. These men reported to the Bulldog School commandant, Lt. Colonel Kimbrell, at the new training area north of camp in the shadow of Montezuma's Head. They found themselves double-timing from class to class. The emphasis was on top physical conditioning. At regular intervals the candidates would line up in two opposing ranks and charge each other. Every trick of wrestling, judo, and boxing—anything short of murder—was allowed, the theory being that, under battle conditions, the Marquis of Queensberry rules would be temporarily suspended. Our officers returned to us swearing by their instructors and nursing aching bones. They passed up invitations to rehash their experience at the new 305th Officers' Club. Their last words as they headed for their cots were: "Fort Benning was never like this!".

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The concrete results that followed from this training were obvious to everyone. Battalion training schedules began to incorporate classes in rough-and-tumble fighting, with the Bulldogs as instructors. This early success prompted an extension of the original course. Selected NCOs in the first three grades were sent to the school. Then it was decided to give every man in the Division the benefit of this pre-combat experience. This announcement was greeted by the GIs with some misgivings. Rumors as to how tough it was circulated from latrine to latrine. And the men who returned to us from the school were not

above magnifying the severity of the program. We set out for the long march to Montezuma's Head with the query in our minds: would we return in one piece?

Our course was necessarily a condensed and concentrated version of what the original officer and NCO groups had received. That could mean most anything. To hear the soldiers tell it, the easy classes had been eliminated, yet the early trainees insisted that the course was but a mere shadow of its former self.

The classes were interesting. We sat in the hot sun for hours and watched fascinating demonstrations. Our instructors taught us tricks and new methods in the use of our own weapons. We had thought we knew something about the light machine gun. Here was a man who fired it from the hip without the help of the bipod—and he peppered his target, too. To prove that a tommy gun didn't kick, one instructor fired it with the butt plate against his chin. As the classes progressed, we couldn't help but feel that we had something in common with our teachers. They taught us how to fire the M1 and the '03 from the hip, to sight by instinct, to shoot from a crouch, all of which made sense. It happened that the Bulldog training was more to our liking; it fell into our conception of what war was really like.

Rumors were always with us. No sooner had one been proven false than another sprang up to take its place. No one group could claim the honor and distinction of being the originating force, although the medics, the Personnel boys, and the Association of Latrine Orderlies, had each in turn put forth their claim. They dogged our footsteps with much the same persistency that our pack of friendly mongrels showed in sharing our desert home. Their power over us was well nigh universal. The great and the humble were always ready to listen to "what Joe's brother's friend" had to report on the probable future of the 77th. A thousand disappointments, a million false reports, had not dimmed our elemental inquisitiveness. "Of course, we knew it couldn't be so, but then again, there was always that long chance." Each of us had a gambler's streak. A rumor is only another evidence of the existence of this force within us. Sweepstake tickets are another indication. You can think of many more. We had lived with ourselves so long, had pampered this strange passion on so many different occasions that, at the first inkling of a sure-fire rumor, we would head for our best and closest source of information and demand: "What's cookin'?" And so in turn, we accepted as the gospel truth that the 305th was headed for a motor march to the Grand Canyon, that the 77th was slated to go to Camp Barkeley, Texas, etc. Many an officer had called the little lady in Phoenix and told her to start contacting real estate agents in the

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nearest town to Camp X. Silly? A hunch is never silly, except when proved wrong. "Rumors are merely the verbal expression of hunches." So easy to believe, so plausible! "They reclassified thirty more guys down at 302d Medics today." "And RSO just got in a shipment of new mosquito bars." "The boys at Personnel were warned to get their records in shape." "It's as clear as the nose on your face," we were inclined to hear, "we'll be leaving out of 'Frisco before the first of next month, headed for Guadalcanal. Now, take my brother's outfit in the Air Corps; that's what they did . . ."

And then dawned that momentous day. In just so many words the Old Man told us that we would have a chance to work our way out of the desert. IF during the forthcoming Regimental problems we impressed the Corps umpires with our prowess and *if* we sank our foxholes to GI depth we shouldn't be surprised to find ourselves on a troop-train pulling away from Hyder. Despite the ifs and buts that dotted the colonel's talk, we left for Fourth of July Butte with the feeling that here was the long-awaited chance. Each of us resolved to stay on the ball and to see personally that the next fellow did also. Even the perpetual goldbricks were glowing with a strange energy and the gripers were silent for a change. Never had a military unit had before its eyes such an attractive goal since the day back in 1917 when the famous 69th charged that wine factory.

Few of us recall the tactical setting of those Regimental problems out there north of the Bulldog School. The heat, the dust, the cactus needles, and the rattlers were as abundant as ever, but all we remember is how hard we worked to make it a success, how we sank our foxholes through layers of resisting rock and gravel, how we pulled our tricks at guard with amazing alertness. Often we had that panicky feeling that plagues the "Man on the Flying Trapeze:" would the other fellow do his job?

The problems ended. Our fate was in the laps of the gods and the umpires. If someone had failed to do his part—what? As we marched back to our assembly areas, we weren't quite sure. Exhausted from our efforts, we really didn't care any more.

Then the news spread that the general was going to speak to us again. The occasion was the demonstration of air support that had been scheduled to follow the Regimental problems. It was difficult to sit through and concentrate on demonstrations when we knew that our commanding general was going to announce our fate. At last he approached the microphone. In slow, deliberate words he praised us for our work. He commended us on our hiking. He knew only too well that we had tried our best. And we listened, hoping to hear some hint,

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some indication of what was in store for us. He was saying something about foxholes. They might have been deeper. The digging might have been rough, he admitted, but "we might have called for dynamite." Little did our general realize that he was giving us a phrase that was due to take a place in our traditions second only to Father Donnelly's TS cards. Months later in the mountains of West Virginia, in the sands of southern Maryland, in Oahu, and on Guam, squad leaders were to offer to GIs who complained of tough digging that same meager consolation:

"Why don't you call for dynamite?"

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At length, the general said all there was to say about foxholes. He confessed that certain rumors had reached his ears, to the effect that the 77th Infantry Division was due for a change of station. With those words he commanded the attention of every man in his audience. Being a firm disbeliever of rumors (practically the only one in the outfit) he thought he'd come to the point without further delay. "The 77th Division will move by train to . . ." He paused to make our destination clear even to those seated on the very top of that simmering mountainside. To a man, we caught and held our breaths. Never had any speaker had such perfect attention. ". . . Indiantown Gap!" A tremendous roar went up from the crowd. Indiantown Gap, Pennsylvania! Practically the garden spot of America! We turned to the nearest GI and, whether he was wearing stripes or bars, proceeded to pound him on the back in sheer joy. Our morale rose like a column of dust. Forgotten were the heat and sand and dust. There was room only in our minds for such half dimmed pleasures as passes to the home towns, cool delicious autumn breezes, bountiful helpings of A rations, and beautiful girls.

"Pete, you hail from Pennsy. How far's the Gap from—?" Pete was as busy as a chamber of commerce, the most popular man in the company. To him fell the pleasant task of elaborating on the glories of that part of his home state. Was it a garrison camp? As big as Fort Jackson? How long by train to New York? Any Wacs there?

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The last few days at Camp Hyder were busy ones. But there were plenty of eager, helping hands. Helping to pack and crate equipment became a distinct pleasure. Long hours were spent in preparing seating tables for the train trip. All the equipment had to be cleaned before being packed. The area had to be policed dozens of times. The Old Man was resolved to leave Hyder as clean as a whistle. We were too busy even to take note of the sun and the dust. It would have taken ten thousand dust storms to lower our morale. We were going home; the general had told us so.

At last the momentous day crept around. Late in September, just when the days were becoming like spring and the nights were cool, the Regiment loaded on its several trains. It hardly seemed possible that we were saying good-bye to Hyder. Now that we looked back it seemed only yesterday that we had alighted, and taken our first steps in the deep dust of the desert. We were, for the first time, aware that the Hyder that we had cursed for so long had come to occupy a particular spot in our hearts. Grudgingly, we were fond of the place. Perhaps this fondness came from pride in our achievements. No one could take from us the fact that we had built a model camp where before there had been only a barren desert.

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At last the whistle sounded, the GI way of saying, "All Aboard!" We piled to our seats to the tune of "Beer Barrel Polka." The 77th Division Band was on hand, as it had been when we arrived. The porter was there too, with a broad grin and a helping hand.

"Who's got a deck of cards? Porter, how about bringing us a table? Deal me in, Pete . . ." Not everyone was in the mood for cards. Some of us wanted that last look. We left with our noses pressed against the windows, for all the world like a bunch of kids on a Sunday School picnic. As the train slowly chugged its way out of the station, the last thing we saw was the MP gate with its two stone pillars. A blue-and-gold sign announced to the Southern Pacific passengers and to the world in general that here had been the home of the 77th Infantry Division.

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Chapter 4: Indiantown Gap

September 26 had crept around. The commanding officer had issued the welcome order for us to pack our bags and be ready to shake the dust of Hyder from our shoes. That was the best news we had heard since our induction into the Army. The saying has it that no matter where one is located or how long one remains in one place, there is always a pang of regret on departure. This old adage had not exactly held true to any of us. We had looked forward toward our trip with much eagerness and anticipation of better things to come. At least, we couldn't see how our lives could be more wretched than they had been throughout these past several months.

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At 1130 we had entrained at the railroad siding of Camp Hyder ready to roll eastward. As this was our third train movement of any importance, we were confident that we would find it an easier affair than our journey from Louisiana to Arizona had been. Experience in a train movement means a lot and we now had that experience.

Some of us whiled away the time en route by playing checkers or cards. There were the wolves of the crowd, too, who crouched at the windows in search of pretty girls to whom they might wave or whistle. All of us tried to talk at the same time and none of us cared much what was being said. As we passed through Phoenix various establishments and landmarks were commented on as places of interest to be retained in our memories.

At night we settled down to sleep out what nobody expected to be a very comfortable night. Troop trains are never comfortable. They are always cramped and dirty. Each night of the journey was much the same, but, toward the last, sheer exhaustion did command us to get some sleep, even though it might be only a little. Each morning we would try to check the distance we had travelled during the night. We could not possibly make the speed we were all eager to make. The East still seemed a long way to go.

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City after city and state after state rolled under the wheels of the train. It seemed that the nearer we approached our destination, the slower the train seemed to travel. El Paso and Abilene, Texas, passed by our eyes. Little Rock, Arkansas, was another milestone on our road eastward. After we had ridden about three days and travelled approximately eighteen hundred miles, it was decided that we should drag our carcasses from the train and execute a little close-order drill and some calisthenics. We detrained at Evansville for about thirty minutes and

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A spot of bridge whiles away the hours on the long trip from Hyder to Indiantown Gap. (LIFE photo by Myron Davis)

went through the motions, much to the amusement of a civilian audience.

Several times while en route an officer would come through the train taking a head count. This counting always seems to be an important factor in any train movement. To the GI it seems to be only so much wasted effort for they never have lost any of us; we always manage to wind up at the same place.

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Four and one-half days of riding passed for us without any unusual hitch. New cities and states had been added to our list of travel accomplishments. From Chicago onward our hearts beat high. Each city brought us nearer and nearer to our coveted goal. The closer we approached to our destination the more restless we became. We struggled

There was no dining-car service on the run to Indiantown Gap. KP was the same old job, in private cars. (LIFE photo by Myron Davis)

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through a final meal in the upper panhandle of West Virginia; our appetites were poor because of our eagerness.

Now we were becoming worried. Midafternoon found us at the town of Guinea which was not located too far from A. P. Hill Military Reservation. Had there been a mistake? Were we going to Hill for more training or were we really going to Indiantown Gap? We were all hoping for the Gap. A slight rainfall had started which did not add to our spirits. Higher authorities must have sensed our discomforting worries, for they sent back word to us that we were headed for the Gap as previously planned. We would be loaded into trucks and driven back to the camp. We were now satisfied with the way the Army was being run.

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"I knew we were going to the Gap all the time," a voice remarked. "The general said we were before we left Hyder. Whatever else the general might do which we won't like, the Old Boy won't lie to us. You can trust him." Which was absolutely right.

For the better part of the night we rode in the discomfort of the trucks. There was a little griping; there always is. But we were more than satisfied. About three in the morning we reached our destination. Tired and weary we piled into our barracks. Barracks buildings for the first time in nine months! And real beds! Comforts that we had almost

forgotten. Our weariness soon vanished. Now we could enjoy the comforts of garrison life. There was hot or cold running water at our disposal. Drinking fountains from which flowed cool water free from the taste of too much chlorine tended to make our thirst a pleasure. We found individual washbowls and mirrors to comb our hair and shave by. A latrine orderly was now promoted to the attendant of gleaming, white, enamel fixtures. He could be king of his own domain. He could even lock the door to keep visitors out while he cleaned his "office" with leisure and in comfort.

Nor was it any less pleasant to find ourselves once more dining in a messhall furnished with real tables and a roof to cover us while we consumed our food. There was no contest between the soldier and the flies and ants who, in Hyder, had fought bitterly over each morsel of chow. Real chinaware also had its part in making each meal take on the appearance of dinner at home. Eating picnic style may have its good points, but too much of dust and insects can become both annoying and disgusting.

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Indiantown Gap was our Utopia. Life there was easy. The natives were friendly; they were our own type of people. Lebanon, Harrisburg, Philadelphia, and New York were easy to reach when we had a week-end pass or wanted to telephone home. The civilian camp staff also seemed eager to please us. No longer were we insufferable riff-raff caught in the mesh of war as some of the people with whom we had come into contact seemed to think we were. The Pennsylvanians recognized us as human beings, in uniform only because we had a job to do, and they respected us as such. It could never be said that we did not appreciate the courteous efforts and the friendliness of these people.

The program consisted chiefly of range firing and the customary details one usually encounters on an Army post. We would leave camp early in the morning after having eaten a hearty breakfast, fire the various weapons in the field, have a hot lunch there, and return to our respective company areas early in the afternoon to have the remainder of the day at our own disposal. We could look forward to a good, hot meal and a clean shower after each day of training. Who could complain about that? On days when we had to train in wet or damp weather we at least were able to change into dry clothing in the evening, and we did not have to turn into our sacks with the fear that we would contract pneumonia during the night.

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We fired all the weapons for the qualification records. We had some specialized training such as close combat fighting and the various battle courses. Under Secretary of War Patterson, a former member of the


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Major General A. D. Bruce, Division Commander, shows Under Secretary of War Patterson a complicated phase of the regimental attack on a fortified position.

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Problem of regimental attack on a fortified position at Indiantown Gap. Smoke is laid down by artillery and mortars prior to the assault.

77th during World War I, paid us a visit and we honored him with a demonstration of our newly learned abilities. He commented upon how modern warfare and our weapons had changed since he was in uniform and he stressed the opinion that we would uphold the honorable record of the old 77th. It was the usual line one would expect from an old soldier, full of unwarranted praise, but it did us good to listen to such flattery.

Passes were given most generously and we used them to full advantage. Never mind the hardships of the other camps in which we had been quartered or would be in the days yet to come. Our morale soared as never before.

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A visit to New York, the "big town" as we called it, was a big event in our lives. A three-day pass became a three-day spree. The New Yorkers seemed to think that any man who wore a Statue of Liberty insignia was a man upon whom special favors should be bestowed. They seemed to regard us as the personal liquidators of the Germans and the Japs, although they well knew that we had yet to enter combat. In many cases barroom and lounge managers provided for us bottles of spirits free of charge. Members of the feminine sex,

Colonel Vincent J. Tanzola, Regimental Commander, and Lieutenant Colonel Lyman O. Williams, Executive Officer.

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creatures whom we had come to regard as being all but totally extinct during the past nine months, began to look upon us as something glamorous . . . a home-town boy who had made good . . . their own personal protector. We basked in false glory . . . we literally soaked up this glory with little embarrassment and no shame. We began to feel as though we deserved all this attention; we were reaping the harvest of long fought battles of training and were enjoying the rewards.

Although the streets were crowded with civilians who were in the dough we still got the best of service. People seemed to want to do their best for us. It was not uncommon to enter a bar with only thirty-five cents, enough for one highball in one's pocket, and come out later with a full load under the belt and that same thirty-five cents still intact. Again it was the same story: one would meet at the bar some middle-aged man who would say, "So you are in the 77th. I was too, long ago. Let me buy you a drink while I tell you about some of my own experiences."

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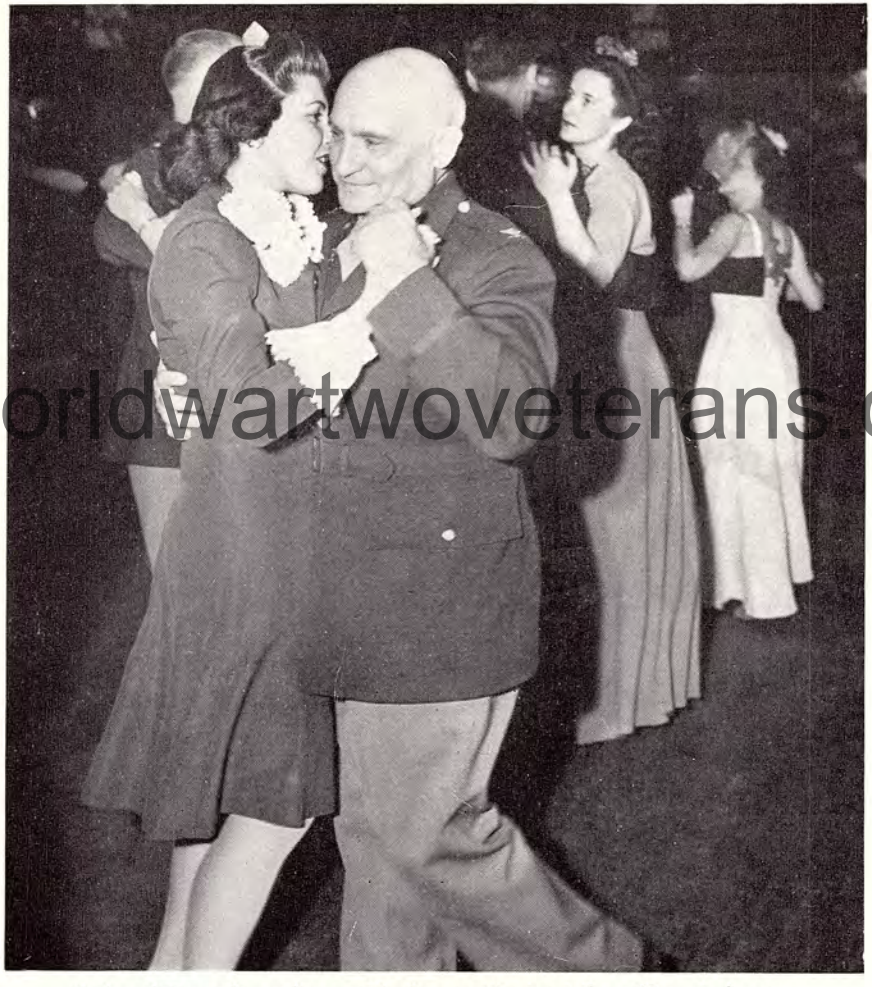
Every man was given another furlough, fifteen more days of our Army life to come and go as we wished. Somehow a man always gets a certain feeling of self importance when he walks down the streets



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Colonel Tanzola waltzes with the prettiest, at the officers' dance.

of his home town with the uniform that signifies that he is now in the service of his country. At home too, he is the most important fellow in the world. He is asked what he wants to eat and when he wants to have his meals. He is given an opportunity to let his hair down and complain bitterly of Army hardships without fear of being told to "see your Chaplain and have your card punched." Yes, we had learned to appreciate the comforts and conveniences of home. We had now come to appreciate a good many things.

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In September we gained a new regimental commander, Col. Vincent J. Tanzola. He had come in the Army as a second lieutenant in the 9th

Division, during the last war. He immediately began to make his presence felt. He took over his job as the personal friend of each enlisted man, and he never lost sight of the enlisted man's viewpoint. He was for us first, last, and always. He was not one to be befuddled by "red tape." He was the type who would call a spade a spade. He never hesitated to listen to our troubles. His addition to our unit was undoubtedly the outfit's special gain. We will always remember our colonel with a type of reverence; his thoughtfulness and his leadership can never be forgotten.

Throughout our stay at the Gap groups of us would be shuttled out from time to time for specialized training at one camp or another. Machine gunners, antiaircraft, and other heavy weapons men were sent to A. P. Hill for practice firing and demonstrations. They distinguished themselves with flying colors as had been expected.

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Our Sunday services were not forgotten. Each Sabbath those of the Catholic, Protestant, or Jewish faiths attended their services en masse. We had a beautiful mission building where the men could worship in quiet and peace. Let us not sell our chaplains short. Anyone who has ever held the idea that a chaplain's life was a leisurely one has been grossly misinformed. They had eaten, slept, and walked with us throughout our training. In no way had they tried to spare themselves the personal hardships of our programs, although they could have. The old adage, "Take it to the chaplain," may have been a joke to some, but to others they were words to be heeded and many a lonesome, homesick, weary soldier did "tell it to the chaplain" and came away with a lighter heart.

Our time at the Gap rapidly dwindled away. After six weeks of rest we were once more in good mental and physical condition. We had enjoyed the numerous recreational facilities the post had offered. We were not eager to be on the move again. But all things must come to an end, the good things along with the bad. We were scheduled for another movement, not a long one, to West Virginia. We had learned to wade swamps and to trudge through desert sands. Now we were to learn the skill of mountain climbing.

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The advance party moved out November 15. The same day our Regimental S-3, Major Jacob Henry Woodward, was killed in a traffic accident on the Pennsylvania Turnpike while leading the convoy. He was the first of the Regiment's officers to be killed in line of duty.

On November 18 the remainder of the Regiment departed toward its new adventure. We had had the rest our past performances had earned for us. We were again ready to go to work.

Chapter 5: The West Virginia Hills

November 18, 1943, the men of the 305th entrucked for Elkins, West Virginia, for mountain training. The convoy pulled out of the Gap about 0400. It was miserably cold and riding seemed to make it still colder. We had bundled ourselves into all the clothing we could get on and had wrapped our blankets around us as a windbreak against the fierce north wind. We were a restless bunch and the trip seemed endless.

At noon the convoy pulled to a stop and we unloaded to "chow down." Our appetites were sharp; we hadn't eaten since 0300 that morning. Hot food and coffee never seemed more palatable. The chow, coffee, exercise, and the rising warmth of a now high sun brought a brighter outlook upon life. There were, to be sure, the expected gripes thrown at the mess sergeant about the coffee and chow; too hot, too cold, not enough, too much, too weak, too strong. It was the same story which GIs always use to keep the cooks happy. If one of us ever ate a meal without some sort of comment we would have had a team of very disgruntled and unhappy cooks on our hands. We soon reloaded into the trucks to continue, anxious to see the end of the trip.

We arrived late in the afternoon, our morale at low tide. We regarded mountain training in November, with the month's blustering winds, anything but a pleasant outlook. We did not enjoy our thoughts but we were anxious to get this unpleasant phase of training over. Before we had eaten supper darkness had fallen and it was impossible to determine what sort of area we were now to inhabit. The night was so dark one could stretch forth a hand and literally grasp fingerfuls of blackness. It was impossible to distinguish one squad from another. We were just a bunch of guys wrapped in the inkiness of a night so devoid of light that the Regiment, even the Army, seemed very puny and insignificant. Here and there small campfires began to cast their small rays of light into the black thickness and we found ourselves surrounding them in search of a little warmth and a chance to discuss the next issue of our lives. The past was gone; the present was at hand and had to be dealt with in accordance with circumstances. We were well aware that the Army would take care of the future in a manner which we might or might not like. Our problem was to adjust ourselves to the Army's system as we most comfortably could.

We went to bed that night only from force of habit. The weather was too cold for us to sleep, so we lay there all night thinking of the nice warm barracks we had enjoyed only the night before. In the grey

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dawn of morning we crept from our pup-tents, stiff and very sleepy, hoping that we would find before us a more pleasant day.

The maneuver area was located some twenty miles from Elkins. It presented varied stages of weather ravages. In the lowlands where Service Company was quartered was a quagmire of mud. Along the mountain sides where the battalions held forth the cold winds swept furiously up and down the slopes. Higher up the snow-capped peaks could be seen and there, we had an idea, our maneuvers would take place. We knew from experience that our first duties would be the cleaning up process which is known as "policing the area," but, good soldiers that we were, we waited until we were ordered to begin our work. Later in the day special mountain clothing was issued to us. The new apparel consisted of heavy outer garments, special socks and shoes, and woolen gloves with heavy leather shells to fit over them. The shoes were wool-lined and built especially for mountain climbing. In addition we were each issued a sleeping bag and a rucksack. This rucksack replaced our pack and better enabled us to scale precipitous slopes while carrying a heavy load, the weight being better balanced upon our backs. The sleeping bag was a waterproof affair, lined with duck feathers. It was light in weight and easy to carry and we later found it be to both comfortable and warm at night when we had to sleep on cold, damp ground. Our new equipment changed the complexion of our predicament.

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Training started promptly; the training center lost no time or motion in getting things under way. A group of particularly fit officers and enlisted men was sent to the school of assault mountain climbing at Seneca, a school which consisted mainly of instruction in the technique of advanced mountain climbing. They spent ten days of actual climbing and related problems. The sites chosen for the practice were Seneca Rock, famous in West Virginia as a landmark, and a solid rock of granite about six hundred feet high called Blue Rock. They were taught to scale seemingly impassable cliffs with the aid of ropes, pullies, and pitons, first as individuals and then in groups of two or three men. At the close of their schooling they were well capable of instructing the rest of us the art of working steep surfaces and high places. The rest of us were brought through a more gradual training program.

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Our first week consisted of classes and small problems. We began our training in small units and worked our way to company operations. Special training for the cannon and antitank units were conducted on specially constructed ranges. We did all right in these exercises and the small problems went well. We were beginning to take to this

brand of soldiering with ease and some of the boys professed to actually enjoy it in spite of the coldness of the altitude.

There were two highlights of the entire phase. One was our Thanksgiving dinner. As much as we hate to admit it, the cooks went to a lot of trouble to prepare this meal. They made arrangements in Elkins with the various churches and civic centers. Two cooks from each company went into town the day before and prepared the turkey, gravy, dressing, and pastries. The remainder of the meal was cooked in the field on our own field ranges. We continued with our problem until noon of the holiday but we had the afternoon off to recuperate from our over-indulgence (for soldiers are inclined to overindulge whenever the opportunity arises). At 1230 the meal was ready and waiting for us. There was a concerted rush for the chow line which proved that we were all veterans at the art of being first. We found it to be a sumptuous repast, well cooked, and we double-timed through the entire course in an endeavor to be in on the dishing out of seconds. But when we had completed our share of everything from the appetizer to the pie we found that we had no available room beneath our belts for another turn in the chow line. It was a fine meal and for once we could find no criticism to pass on to the cooks.

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The following morning the problem got under way again. We pepped up the gait to prepare for the final event. The things we had learned from our instructors were now to be put into practice. Formerly we had been operating in smaller units, now we began maneuvering on a larger scale, battalions pitted against each other. This phase of the training called for more ruggedness in each man. We walked up and down the mountainsides in all sorts of weather, sleeping at night wherever darkness caught us. The bitter cold was always with us. Some nights the problems were tactical, so we turned in without the benefit of fires to warm ourselves by. Smoking was prohibited after dark. Our K and C rations did not help our appetites much, although some of us would manage to find some farmhouse occasionally where we could beg a cup of hot coffee or a civilian meal. We all dreaded guard duty, which most of us caught at one time or another. Crawling out of a warm sleeping sack into cold, wet weather to stand a couple of hours' guard duty doesn't help one's morale any. The sleeping sacks were life savers. At night when one was cold and stiff he could zip this bag around him and in a short while be as warm and comfortable as though he had a bed in a heated room.

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The line of communication and supplies was not an easy task to keep up. Lines had to be strung over what seemed an impassable route. There was only one small road and the only way to get off this road

was to go afoot, which made the handling of supplies a problem. They were brought as far as possible by truck, then they had to be transported by hand to the troops. Winches were used to haul them up and down the mountains, then we had to carry them on packboards the remainder of the distance. By the time one got them to their destination, he almost wished he did not have the habit of eating. The boys in the transportation department did their share of the work. It was tough for us all.

We had propelling and repelling, dropping from mountainous heights so much that we dreamed about it at night. A lot of us became proficient in the art, but naturally there were a few of us who couldn't walk over anything but level ground without taking a spill.

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We found that maneuvering against a battalion was much more difficult than it had been against smaller groups. Contact with our own troops and supplies was a constant reminder of what real combat would be like. Some of us learned this valuable lesson after having been lost from our units for about twelve hours without anything to eat.

The problem was nearing its final stages and it had been proven a worthwhile tactical adventure. Both sides did exceedingly well and we learned our lessons rapidly. To us, the doughboys, it was just a matter of carrying out directions as we had long before been taught to do.

November 30 we withdrew from Red Creek where we had been operating to Point Mountain and there we set up a defense. This was practically the end of the battalion combat teams' problems. We had marched through mud and cold weather for five nights with heavy packs on our backs and we were now more than willing to defend our positions rather than to be on the offensive.

The critique was attended by both officers and noncoms. The mistakes we had made were pointed out to them and an explanation was given concerning how they should be corrected. Following the criticism our good points were elaborated upon. We would have been disappointed had there been no compliments paid us; previous good work that we had been praised for had worked us into the habit of always expecting praise. Nonetheless, in spite of our egotism we were an outfit which could profit from its mistakes.

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We were informed that the good work we had done overshadowed our mistakes. We received the highest commendation in the Division and won the recommendation of "excellent." We had moved faster, were more disciplined, and had a better knowledge of the task at hand than had any of the other combat teams. We had relished the job and had come out on top. Once again special praise was given to our communications section and our motor maintenance, the latter having set up a record that the judges termed incredible.

We were even better than we thought we were. Outwardly we kidded one another, called our buddies "mountain goats." But deep down within us we were proud of the record we had made. It was just more proof to us that we still had a right to retain our motto: "Second to None!"

During our final problem one of the battalions sought permission to cross some private property. Colonel Kimbrell went to the door of the poverty-stamped shack and knocked, and a woman replied to his summons. She was small, frail, and the ravages of illness showed plainly upon her. Behind her tattered skirts hovered a small group of children. The officer quickly spotted the circumstances and the illness and requested permission to have one of our doctors visit her family. She consented, gratefully. Captain Patrizio, after examining her, reported that she was suffering from pneumonia and all the children had the croupe. The two officers revisited the family several times and the captain himself saw the family well on the road to health before we left the area. Compensation for this kindness was not asked for nor expected. The pride of the men of the 305th in their regiment was payment enough for any officer.

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Some of us visited the city of Elkins. The methods we used for this forbidden excursion will have to remain a military secret among the men themselves. It was quite a city and, though none of us got there often enough to know it well, a few of us found our ways to the showers at the Y and knew the password at the Legion Club. The club was the only place in town where spirits could be served and one had to wear a uniform to gain admittance. One cook who went to town the day before Thanksgiving is rumored to have visited the club so often they began to recognize him as a member. When the time came for him to dress the turkeys he didn't know whether he was stuffing a bird or picking cotton. The feathers we found in the dressing the next day proved that he had been dressing a turkey.

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Our going had been tough most of the way. We complained frequently but we did our jobs efficiently. It was an unpleasant task which had to be done, but we came through it all in fine physical condition, now quite hardened soldiers. The three weeks had given us a ruggedness that we had not imagined could be achieved in so short a time.

December 4, about 0400, we were ready to move on to another camp, another destination. What would we find at Camp Pickett? As we moved out of the maneuver area the only thought we carried was, "Just another job completed and another one coming up."

Always another one coming up!

Chapter 6: Camp Pickett

The cold, grey shadow of approaching darkness was beginning to cast its reflection over Camp Pickett, Virginia, as our motor convoy rolled into camp. We had been travelling for the better part of the day and most of us were worn and tired from the strain of the 245-mile trip from our mountain training. Such a convoy as ours always has the ability to take every ounce of pep out of a man and this particular trip had been made with but one solitary stop-over, during which break we consumed our noon-day meal.

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There was very little of the camp which could be seen before morning; by this time total darkness had fallen upon us. We were directed to the double-story barracks buildings, each of which was so large it would house almost a complete company.

As we walked in every eye took in the features of our new home with unconcealed interest. The first impression wasn't exactly pleasant. The floors, walls, and window-panes were filthy and the double bunks were spaced too close together. Oh, well! We resigned ourselves to the fact that it was nevertheless an improvement over sleeping on the ground in the open. This was not the first place we had had to police up to make livable and there was no reason for us to think that it would be the last. A roof over the heads of the men of the 305th was a luxury which we had not often been able to enjoy.

The next morning, after we had spent a most restful night, we were marched to a nice, hot meal of bacon, eggs, and coffee; as soon as our appetites were satisfied we tackled the job of cleaning our barracks. The only items of equipment we needed for the renovating of the unit's area in Camp Pickett were GI soap, brushes, brooms, mops, hot water, and elbow grease—plenty of elbow grease. Undershirts and other personal accessories were put to good use in scrubbing the windows. Within a couple of hours, the floors which had only the night before looked like the back alley of one of our larger cities became clean and fresh from the vigorous massaging of skilled hands. The picture of Pickett had previously been presented to us in dismal tones, and the place lived up to the picture. Besides being crowded into the barracks we were also crowded into too small an area. Off the main camp roads we found evidence of a sea of mud whenever it rained. The PXs were terrible, offering scant satisfaction for the needs and desires of each soldier.

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Movies, however, were up to par and the Special Service shows did their best to give us what we wanted. We weren't exactly pleased with our conditions but there was very little we could do about it. Looking

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Battalion commanders of the regiment. Lieutenant Colonel James E. Landrum, Jr., 1st Battalion; Lieutenant Colonel James F. Doyle, 2d Battalion; and Lieutenant Colonel Edward Chalgren, Jr., 3d Battalion.

back on history, what reader and lover of historical events will ever forget the gallant charge of Pickett's men at Gettysburg when the North and the South were locked in civil struggle? And who of us of the 305th will ever forget our own struggles at the camp which was named for this great Confederate hero? Camp Pickett, one must admit, had some good points, few though they were.

There was plenty of beer at this post. The only fault there was that we had to drink it from our canteen cups. The boys who drew the beer apparently were working on a commission basis for there was more head than beer. We corrected that in short order. By trial and error some ingenious GI in our midst worked out a system whereby we were soon to drink all beer and no head, to the astonishment of the bartenders. By spreading a thin layer of butter or fat over the inner surface of the cups, the foam disappeared. It did leave the taste of the beverage somewhat flat but the desired results were accomplished much more quickly.

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The work and training at Pickett was first centered on preparations for the amphibious training we were later to receive at Camp Bradford. Hour after hour we would sit in class and listen to some orientation officer as he explained the method of climbing a rope ladder correctly. The hands and feet would be spaced well apart. We would take short steps with the hands holding to the vertical ropes while ascending or descending the net. We later found that this was very valuable information and we used it to good advantage. After having learned something from oral lessons, we worked from simulated landing craft,

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Regimental review

and, with full field equipment climbed from thirty-foot towers. We marched to the top of the craft in columns of twos and went over the top in small groups. We quickly learned that if the equipment and rifle were not properly adjusted, the man directly beneath a careless individual might catch an M1 in the eye or some other sensitive spot. Our hands and feet soon became coordinated to this type of training and complete companies could go through the drill without a slip or mishap.

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The weather was still cold and, as usual, we caught the district's rainy season. One cannot think of rain and Camp Pickett without at the same time remembering the night infiltration course. It had rained all the night and the day before and the ground was soft and soggy. We marched out of camp for about a mile where we awaited our turns to crawl under the barbed wire and through the various obstacles. We were warned before going through that we must keep low as there would be machine guns sending out a string of bullets not more than eighteen inches over our heads. We didn't exactly need this advice; we weren't blind. We could see the routes followed by the bullets as

at Camp Pickett

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now and then a tracer split the darkness. Dampness and cold, coupled with our own anxiety, made our lot a most uncomfortable one. The art of crossing a barbed-wire obstacle, rolling over logs that were strewn in our paths, was not too difficult although we did find it most unpleasant. Pete claims that he was about to crawl under one particular stretch of wire when he suddenly discovered that this particular obstacle was circular instead of crossing the field in a straight line as it should have done. So he stopped to investigate. Suddenly there was a terrific noise and a shower of mud went up into the air from the center of the wire encirclement and Pete was covered from head to foot in all spots where he was not already covered. He had almost crawled into the nitro-starch pit.

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We were also instructed in the proper method of crossing over a barbed-wire entanglement when going under it might prove more of a handicap than a help. Rolls of chicken wire would be brought up and unrolled over the obstacle and each man would rush at full speed over the top of the path the chicken wire had made. This manner, so we were informed, required lots and lots of training as it must be done

with rapidity and precision. It was easy to understand why; one must hurry to cross obstacles when an eager foe is firing in his direction with every intention of killing.

We also had lectures on booby traps and minefields, such lectures being conducted by the mine platoon of the antitank unit. Mines were planted and it was our job to locate them, which we did by the probing method. Each man was given a lane to follow. His lane coordinated with the lane of another man on his right and on his left, a method which insured our covering every inch of ground. Every soldier would get down on his hands and knees and, with his bayonet, move forward at the command of his squad leader. It was a tedious method and took every ounce of patience we possessed, but we realized fully that it must be done. In combat only one mistake could be made.

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Then came the physical fitness tests and later the opportunity to try to win the prized Expert Infantryman Badge. We all wanted the right to wear this award, although some of us adopted an air of indifference whenever it was mentioned. "I'll buy mine after the war," said Joe. "It isn't worth the effort." Yet, when it came time for the tests the 305th to a man put into their performance every ounce of intestinal fortitude they had, Joe included. It was no easy test; it required all our combat training to even make a showing. The 25-mile march, the bayonet assault course, the day and night compass course, running obstacles, the ability to do a certain number of push-ups, and our skill at first aid made it difficult, and any one of the phases of the tests would have proved disastrous to an untrained man. The purpose was to examine the coordination between the soldier's mind and body. Only a few of us ended with the right to wear the long, blue pin with the musket in its center.

Two- and three-day passes as well as furloughs were granted at every opportunity. The Army seems to give time away as though it were as valuable as radium so each GI always tried to make the most of each leave. The bus service to and from Pickett was atrocious. None of our efforts to have this system remedied was of any avail. The civilian workers were discourteous and provoked us considerably without reason. We grouped ourselves together in a resolution to some day demand an investigation of conditions at Pickett when the war ended. Our colonel made special efforts in our behalf. We enjoyed short visits to Richmond, Alexandria, Petersburg, Roanoke, and other places, but we found prices there so high that they were almost beyond our reach. The GI, like the proverbial fool, and his money are soon parted.

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We who went on furloughs felt vastly different than we had upon

our first visits home. We seemed to think that this would be our last for some time to come. The first furlough had found us feeling like veterans when we were still only recruits. Now we had proved ourselves veterans in every sense of the word, but with the knowledge that our days in the good old United States of America were limited we were inclined to wonder if we might not still be rookies after all. We stayed somewhat closer to home than we had on our last visit. We knew well what our families and our home meant to us. Even our little brothers and sisters didn't seem to bother us so much. The fellows who were married kept up a brave front and tried not to think of the fateful day when they would return to Army duties. We all enjoyed to the utmost the brief vacation at home and we returned to camp with sadness in our hearts but proud because we knew that we were about to do that which we had been trained almost three years to do.

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Troops were shuttled out practically every day while we were in Pickett for advanced amphibious training. These groups later proved helpful when the time for the Regiment's operations in Chesapeake Bay were at hand. Their studies mostly concerned landing craft and the procedure of loading and unloading men and equipment. It was while we were engaged in this training that Christmas descended with full force upon us. Some of us were fortunate to be at home at the time; those who remained in camp had a fine repast and observed the day with the fitting religious services. The 305th could always be depended upon to have a fitting and excellent meal on Christmas and Thanksgiving days.

The day after Christmas and the following few days were used by the Regiment's getting ready to move to Camp Bradford. We were to carry with us all equipment. Our morale, which seemed important in the Army's eyes, was good. The training had been thoroughly planned and systematically promoted. We had a full understanding of the importance of the type of training we had undergone. We had come a long way since our days of basic training in Jackson. Some of us had made the grade with flying colors; some of our buddies had not. Unable to make the grade, they had been culled out as we progressed along the road upward. Those of us who were left were supposed to be the cream of the crop. Now we were to enter into the last lap of our training cycle. Each of us was confident that we would all come through with the same finesse which had made the 305th the "best damned combat team in the world."

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On December 28, 1943, we moved by motor convoy to Camp Bradford. In a few days or perhaps weeks, we might return.

Chapter 7: Training at Camp Bradford

The city of Norfolk, Virginia, had long had the reputation of being a sailors' city, and Camp Bradford, lying a few scant miles from Norfolk, was a sailors' camp. We arrived there on December 28 after having travelled a distance of 137 miles, in order that we might complete our amphibious training. At Pickett we had done much preliminary work in landing operations, as much as could be done on dry land. We were through with dry-running, a statement that could be taken either literally or figuratively, and were ready for the real test.

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Our stay at Bradford was to be brief but our spirits did not rise too high for we knew that maneuvering in the Atlantic Ocean and Chesapeake Bay during December and January was nothing to be passed over lightly. The weather was particularly brisk and cold. We had snow but not in large amounts. It took the better part of the day to complete the trip from Camp Pickett to Camp Bradford.

Our new but temporary home was like no other camp we had ever seen. From the start we could see that it was run with precision and perfect timing. The personnel had a definite duty to perform and a strict schedule to adhere to, and that was done with clock-like regularity. The personnel lived under Navy control and supervision and the area was policed by Marines. It was a large, flat area run with all the precision and neatness of which the Navy, or any other branch of the service for that matter, was capable. Our area was given entirely to the use of soldiers and we lived in "hutments," something we had never before encountered. The semi-cylindrical buildings housed about twenty men each. They were neat and had obviously been well cared for. Not only were they built as a place for us to store our equipment and to sleep in; they were well insulated and we found them exceedingly comfortable.

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The PX, or Ship's Store (as we learned to call it here) offered us good service. Each PX was under naval supervision, but no favoritism among the three branches of the service, Army, Navy, or Marine Corps, was shown. We were able to supply all our needs, since the PXs were well stocked and the prices were reasonable. Unlike the post exchanges under Army control, the ships' stores did not sell beer. Instead, it was handled entirely by huge beer gardens and was served to us not from bottles but in glasses or steins. There seemed to be a good supply on hand. As seems to be the soldier's way, some of us tried to drink it all at once but, regardless of how much Joe or his friend Pete drank, more was always available for the next fellow.

The theaters were comfortable. It was while we were here that we saw some of the first and finest war pictures, many of which had not yet been released to the public. The naval personnel who operated the movie houses were most courteous to us and very little conflict between soldiers and sailors took place here.

The Navy also took charge of the food situation, and food was served on the same to-the-minute schedule. The messhall was a tremendously large building, capable of handling the entire Army working detachment. Kitchen police duty was vastly different than anything we had ever encountered before. Large groups of us served as KPs and each of us had his own job to do. There were always enough men employed to get the jobs to which we had been assigned done quickly. We therefore were able to find time to take occasional breaks when we felt fatigue—or laziness—overtaking us. It is no military secret that the soldier enjoys, next to passes and furloughs, breaks more than any other training in the Army.

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We all agreed that the food was the finest we had yet received in the Army, and it was tastily prepared. It was strictly A rations with all the trimmings, plenty of it, and we had a comfortable place in which we could enjoy its consumption. That appealed to our ravenous appetites. This messhall was truly the answer to a soldier's prayer.

The work and training at Camp Bradford was by no means easy. All of the amphibious background we had previously acquired now had to be put into practical operation. Landing craft of various types and sizes were used for that purpose. There was a hull of a ship, the *Yak,* an old Italian galleon, about two hundred yards out in the ocean, from which we operated. We debarked from this craft into our landing barges by the use of rope nets, hour after hour of essential training. It was back-breaking and physically exhausting climbing down these nets and making landings and we cursed and swore about the Army's forcing us to do it. Much later we were glad that we had received this important schooling. After dropping into our landing craft, we would circle about in the water until it was time for us to approach the shore. Then the ramp of the craft we chanced to be in would be lowered and we would wade to land to establish a beachhead. Oh, but the water was cold! Our instructors stressed speed and efficiency. It had to be done both quickly and properly. We soon got the hang of it when we were taught the correct method of debarking from the landing craft and dispersing promptly upon reaching the beach. The program proceeded in high gear all through the training cycle. We worked hard and in accordance with Navy regulations. We always ended work at a reasonable hour.

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There weren't many details for the soldiers after the scheduled training hours, for the sailors and the Marines took complete charge of the administration and upkeep. In the afternoons we could come in and clean up, take a shower if we so desired, and, after having consumed our midday chow, we could depend upon having a few leisure hours to ourselves.

New Year's day came and went with very little change from the course of the usual day. It was another day of duty to us, which naturally brought forth our howls of consternation and displeasure. Nevertheless, we had come to know that holidays did not mean days of rest to us, nor was our money for the day's work increased to time-and-a-half. Perhaps that is one good reason why we found cause to be jealous of the civilian workers throughout the country.

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During our stay at Bradford we were granted passes to Norfolk and to Virginia Beach. As this was a naval base, our buddies in blue already had the feminine populace pretty well under control. To be sure, Pete's friend Jimmy who was in the next company to ours was seen on the streets once or twice with a lovely young lady clinging possessively to his arm. But we had known all along that Jimmy was a ladies' man; he could find a pretty girl where none seemed to exist at all. As it was, most of us spent our passes stag, which we might consider as a phase of our training, rehearsing us for the many days and nights yet to come when we would be overseas without a sight of a woman for months. Yet some of our Casanovas insisted hotly that if we were granted a little more time in Norfolk or Virginia Beach this situation could be reversed considerably. Perhaps the attitude displayed between the two branches of Uncle Sam's service might need clearing in the minds of those countrymen of ours who have been fortunate enough to have stayed out of uniform. There might be some individuals who do not understand the rivalry between the two forces. For their benefit it might be well to explain that our rivalry was nothing more than a friendly competition. Such competition is inherent in the nature of most Americans. Competition has built America up to the power it is today. We in the Army bore no dislike for those in the Navy. In later days of combat we learned to fight in coordination with them with a greater purpose in view than we had ever displayed when we fought against them. It was the same in our relations with the Marine Corps. We one day came to realize the valuation of their comradeship, and it was with perfect alliance between all branches of the service that we won the war.

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To return to our leisure moments at Camp Bradford, since there was a scarcity of feminine companionship at this base, the movies, the re-

freshment centers, and the various cafés and coffee shops drew our attention. Here again we were hounded by the rapidly rising prices, a situation which seemed to follow us wherever we went. It seemed to us that merchants and retailers thought we were overpaid and were doing their utmost to get their shares of our fifty dollars per month. On the whole, though, we did enjoy our visits to the city and we even received a commendation on our being the most orderly regiment that had so far been in Norfolk during the war.

As time progressed we progressed along with it. We began to feel confident of our abilities in this field. It was our nature always to have confidence in ourselves. Our instructors were well versed in the arts which we had been studying; all we had to do was to carry out orders. However, every bit of this training was leading toward the day when we would board a transport and put this knowledge to use.

On January 6, 1944 we left Bradford for the Norfolk Navy Pier, arriving about 0800. We had brought along our complete personal equipment. All of us were eager to put into practical application the skill we had gained throughout those long, hard days of dry-land training and later instructions in landing craft.

By 1000 we had completed our embarkation. The ships remained docked during the day awaiting sailing orders. There were four large transports in the convoy: the flagship *Fremont,* the *Chilton,* the *Henrico,* and the *Samuel Chase.* In days, even weeks, yet to come, we learned to know those four vessels very well. In a way, we might even have learned to care greatly for them. They carried us through a lot of war time danger and to a lot of danger. A huge 250-foot LST also made up our convoy. The Regiment was scattered among these ships and was accompanied by the destroyers *Roper* and *Tattnall* and the *Bayfield.*

On January 7 we pulled away from the pier, only to anchor about two miles out where we spent the remainder of the day in abandon-ship practice. The next day we upped anchor and headed up the Chesapeake Bay into the waters off Maryland, landing sometime during the night. Transports were a strange thing to us and we passed a large portion of our time browsing about in an endeavor to learn what made them tick, making friends with the young sailors who manned them as we asked many questions, both of a foolish and sensible nature.

We were anchored off Solomons Island in the bay. It was here that we made our first landing operation, quite an easy affair and not measured against time. But enough of our training was to show in it to make it worthwhile. It was on a Sunday afternoon. The sea wasn't too bad, yet we found that climbing over the rail and down the side

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while bearing our full equipment, to a small boat bouncing and bobbing on the waves below, was a lot different than doing the same thing in a dry run back at Pickett. There were a few minor accidents, but we had come to expect them.

The landing craft themselves furnished us our most uncomfortable minutes. We were to go in by combat waves and we spent two or three hours in seemingly endless circling about the water. The weather was cold and the spray which swept over us soon had us drenched to the skin. The problem was tactical, which meant that we had to follow a certain set of rules. We had to keep ourselves low in the barge, which we found to be a sure way of cramping one's muscles into almost a paralyzing numbness. Nor were we allowed to relieve our taut nerves by indulging in a small drag from a cigarette. But we could not be robbed of our right to gripe about our discomfort. Griping is a soldier's privilege which even the General, had he so desired, could not destroy. So we griped and complained and anxiously awaited our turn to make the beach landing. Yes, the landing was slow, but when we hit the beach our training as infantrymen returned to us and we went through the tasks of establishing a beachhead without running into a single hitch. Our officers and instructors agreed that it was a satisfactory landing. We returned to the ships late in the afternoon in order to get some rest before we repeated the maneuver again in the morning.

The second day found the sea a little more rough and the weather just a little bit colder, which made us considerably more uncomfortable. The same procedure as the day before was to be rehearsed, only this time the speed was to be pepped up. We made the landing easily without delay, but our success of the day before had caused us to become overconfident. We became careless when we hit the beach and needlessly slowed down. Naturally, we were told about our carelessness in strong language and were reminded that this was but a rehearsal, that the big event was yet to come, and when it did come we could not afford to be so lax.

Few can conceive the great coordination necessary for a complete landing operation, but our officers solved their problems well. After each of these landings the troops had to be reorganized. We embarked in the same craft in which we had made the landing and returned to our transports. As it was a lengthy procedure only one landing was made each day, for which kindness on the part of our superiors we were most thankful. It was always a blessing to go back aboard ship where we could change to dry clothing, eat a hot meal, relax and thaw the ice out of our veins.

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The day of the big event came. The landing was set for 0200, an ungodly hour, but we were ready. It was the sea which did not respond, being far too rough to consider putting out boats. The Navy tried valiantly but could not succeed. The natives later informed us that it was the roughest water and weather they had seen for more than twenty-five years. It seems that bad weather produces such problems as shifting sand bars and too high waves. The time was postponed until 0800, and still the sea remained too rough. The weather men and the ship and the troop commanders got together to thresh out the problem and decided to make another attempt at 1100. The sea was still reacting most unfavorably, but by this time we and everybody else concerned were tired of waiting. The landing movement was begun.

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The barges were lowered into the water and we began disembarking. It was a fine piece of synchronized work; all men and each ship worked as a perfect team. The landing craft were forming circles all around us ready to take us off for the dash to shore. "Boat team No. 5 form at Station 3," came the boatswain's loud voice over the speaker. That was our signal. The boat commanders were worried. The waves were too high. The small craft were bobbing about like corks. Climbing down the nets we were having a tough time. Every time one of us landed in the bottom of a barge, a steel helmet would fly in one direction, a rifle in another, and the soldier's heart seemed to rise up into his throat. But somehow we managed to get loaded.

The weather would not cooperate. Huge waves broke all about us. The small boats were tossed high into the air to return with a loud, jarring smack. It was all we could do to hold to our equipment and keep from being bounced out of the vessels ourselves. The wind bit deep into our flesh and we were constantly doused by waves leaping over the gunwales upon us.

The shore had been set up with land mines, traps, barbed wire, and every other obstacle which the devil himself must have invented, and we had to work our way through every inch of it. Yet the entire 305th Infantry Regiment pushed through without any undue delay. The problem took us a few miles inland. After having cleared the mine-fields, we made a concentrated push using the natural terrain and brush as concealment and cover. We made this push at a rapid pace and gained our objective much sooner than was expected. The Navy did not believe it possible for a landing team to move so far in such a short time, especially under the conditions through which we had to move. A few who doubted came up in a jeep to witness the extent of our advance and went away believing. Were we really that good? Or were

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we perhaps just lucky this day? Later combat experience was to furnish the correct answer.

After we had reached our objective we put out security and dug in for the night. We defended our positions and the following morning we withdrew to the beach. The communications, wire sections, supplies, vehicles, and machinery, had made their landings in conjunction with us. Theirs was no easy task either, but they came through in fine style. By the time we had reached shore and worked through to our position the artillery was already set up. They cleared the way for us by laying down barrages as we advanced.

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Conditions had indeed been difficult but our work had been done with a maximum of speed and precision. We were rather proud of our achievement. It had been a trying time for us all. We had to operate through severe weather over frozen ground. We slept in sub-zero cold, crouched low in our foxholes to break as much of the wind as possible. Since it was a tactical problem no fires were allowed, and after darkness had fallen we could not enjoy even a brief smoke. Nor did cold K and C rations add to our morale. We complained bitterly throughout the problem, but we got no sympathy and actually did not expect any. When we were finished we thought that our operations had been successful and the critique later proved them to be immensely so.

The critique was not attended by the enlisted men, although a few of us did manage to slip in just to be sure that we would later get the straight dope. It was attended by our officers, the operations staff, and other administrative personnel as well as visiting observers. One could write a complete book on the observers. They truly fitted the old, worn description, brasshats. We had observers from Canada, England, China, New Zealand, and a couple from Free France. The critique was a plain, unvarnished statement and evaluation of the entire problem. The 305th again covered itself with glory. It was getting to be a habit with us to achieve such glory—a pleasant habit. Particular praise was given to our transportation, communication, and the speedy unloading of transports. However, the chief thing that caught their eyes was our marching ability. They claimed that we pushed ahead at an incredible rate of speed, neglecting nothing that might be in our way. We, the men under discussion, absorbed this praise with much gusto, although many overheard Joe remark at various occasions that he ". . . knew it all the time."

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With the maneuver completed so was this phase of our training ended. Some of the troops returned to Pickett by motor convoy. The remainder of us reboarded the transports and returned to Norfolk to entrain the following morning for Camp Pickett. All of us were glad to see the end of amphibious training. It had been a hard, miserable,

uncomfortable period. It had been a sort of interlude which no one seemed to have fully grasped while going through it. We dreaded the exacting moments that we knew would some day come. Each day, toward the end of the cycle, was bad enough, but we were always expecting something worse. It was in this manner that we had completed the task at hand to learn later that the worst had come and passed us by.

We had come a long way since our earlier days at Fort Jackson. Our chain of training was now nearly forged. We knew that we had a strong chain which good training, guidance, and thought had strung together. Our basic at Jackson, the strict schedule of the swamps of Louisiana, the dust bowl of Arizona, and the mountains of West Virginia had developed us into good, dependable soldiers. Now we had completed the amphibious training. What more did we need?

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Chapter 8: Camp Pickett: Second Phase

January 16 we returned to Pickett, arriving about dusk. The movement from Norfolk by train was a slow, tedious affair and we were in anything but a fresh, alert condition when we reached the end of our journey. Army trucks met us at the station and transported us back to our own area. We were thankful for that. Since we were infantrymen, there were some of us who had been afraid that we might have had to walk. There were no friends to meet us, no band, but we were not discouraged; we were glad to be back. The barracks looked good even at Pickett, after our tough session with the Atlantic Ocean and with Chesapeake Bay.

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The definite idea behind our second phase at Camp Pickett was our processing. But that did not mean that we were to have an easy life while we were here. We followed a regular training schedule which consisted of a general review and summary of all the previous training we had undergone. We proceeded with the firing of all types of weapons on all sorts of ranges. The ranges were located about two miles from our quarters and each morning that we were to fire we would hike to them, do our shooting, hike back for our noon meal, return on foot after chow, continue firing, and return to camp in the evening in the same manner. This way we had our physical conditioning along with our training. The weather was cold and disagreeable. It is more difficult to qualify with heavy clothing impeding the muscular reaction, or when one is shivering and shaking from cold. In spite of this, we cleared up our firing records and each of us had an opportunity to test our individual weapons.

We also continued our work on the Expert Infantryman Badge. Some of us had already started the tests and were permitted to continue them while others who had not yet begun their exams were given an opportunity to do so. We did not greet the tests with enthusiasm as two hikes of nine and twenty-five miles, respectively, were necessary for our qualifying as Expert Infantrymen. But the medal did look good and later there was a wage increase of five dollars for its wearer.

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Before we left Pickett the medics were informed that they would have to learn to shoot. Indications now showed that some day we would be called upon to engage in battle with the Japs instead of the Germans. There were still rumormongers at work and they raised a lot of questions in our curious minds: Would the 77th go into combat or not? What about our so-called political pull? How about the ages and physical conditions of some of the members of our unit? Hot arguments

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The Division's orchestra plays for a regimental dance.

would arise which were never settled, but we little expected them to be anyhow. The GI must have his rumors and bull sessions; they are almost as necessary to the morale of the men as the training programs. And our morale was high, very high. We were in fine spirits, and deep within us we knew that the 305th was ready. The old joke that we were maneuver-happy persisted but we knew that our next maneuver might be the real thing, with real, live targets and an actual enemy fighting back at us.

The 31st Division, which shared the camp with us, was preparing for the move to a POE. We anxiously awaited our turn. The medical and dental clinics were kept busy as men were being prepared to meet the coming physical tests. There came a flock of exams, inspections, and showdowns. The medics looked us over so often that, it was claimed, they could recognize a man as easily by looking at his feet as they could have by looking at his face.

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We were putting in as much time with the fair sex as we possibly could. The Colonel was most generous in dealing out passes and we were taking full advantage of them—when we could borrow the money. There were lectures on sex education and warnings that a lot of women were looking at a man and seeing his insurance money instead of him. We were reminded that allotments also looked good to certain women, but such warnings were not always heeded. The old adage, "You can't

take it with you," prevailed among a lot of us. The result was that a last-minute rush was made on the part of both enlisted men and officers to get married.

Despite the fact that it was only late February, our woolens were turned in and summer clothing was issued. This, too, gave us a hint that we were probably going to a warmer climate. We had all taken advantage of our furloughs. The air was becoming tense as we waited expectantly each day for the orders to ". . . prepare your equipment, pack your bags, and be ready to move." The day finally came. Passes were cancelled. Telephone calls were censored.

With all our baggage, we moved to the railroad station where we boarded the trains which would take us once again across the country to our POE in California. Another chapter in our story was being written. There would be another long train ride, but we had by now become more or less adapted to them. Many of the things we were experiencing were no longer new to us.

We regarded this moving day as our payoff—our reward for having done a good job.

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Chapter 9: Camp Stoneman: POE

After having travelled six days and rolled over 3,297 miles of track, we reached Camp Stoneman, California, about 0930, March 14, 1944. We detrained at the railroad siding carrying light packs and arms. We were train-sore, stiff, weary, and eager to get our feet on the ground once more. The beautiful, warm sunshine of California was a welcome sight to us who had trained all winter in the open and the cold weather.

The commanding officer soon had us lined up in a semblance of a straight line along the railroad tracks. We began to look around to see what sort of place they had got us into this time and we were well satisfied with the first impression. Directly in front of us was Camp Stoneman, its greyish-brown barracks silhouetted against gently sloping, green hills. The green trees and greener grass reminded us of spring back home. On our left was a long, rambling black building which was used as a processing station for incoming troops. We were told to drop packs and arms in rank and march through this building for our physical. Upon our entering the building we were given barracks bags and told to put our clothing in them and keep them with us until we came to the other end of the line. This was one line where we did not have to wait. The doctors must have been exceptionally good for we were sent through the line from one doctor to another so rapidly that we might have thought we were on a merry-go-round. We must have been rugged specimens after having been bounced around for two years, for not one of us failed to pass this exam. As each man emerged from the building he would shout gleefully, "I made it!"

The physical over, there followed a long hike into the loveliest camp we had ever seen. Stoneman was a combination of a staging area and a POE. It lay on slowly rising ground that ran clear back to the mountains, a spot where a man could soldier forever without one bit of inconvenience to himself. The languid, tranquil breeze brought back the vigor and vitality of life. As we marched along we could see an abundance of PXs, movies, and service clubs. Without being told so we knew that we were going to like this place. The section which had been chosen for us took us completely through the camp and we had an opportunity to get a complete view of the site. There seemed to be an abundance of soldiers here who did nothing except loll around in the warm sunshine. They were representative of many different outfits, but an air of secrecy hung over them all so we did not learn the names of their units.

We found our barracks to be large, roomy buildings filled with rows

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of double bunks. The buildings were modern in every respect. It was a relief to move into a place already constructed and waiting for us.

Immediately on arrival we were put under restrictions. The remainder of the day was spent in getting our new home cleaned up and taking much-needed hot showers. The PX directly across the company street also got quite a play from us. A soldier will spend and spend, providing he has the means of spending and spending.

The next day we were given a new address: c/o Postmaster, San Francisco. This to us meant the payoff. It would not be long now before we could try out our skill as soldiers. The hard, rigorous training over all types of terrain, through all types of weather, was soon to be put to test. Psychologically we all felt about the same. The face of each man was grim, and on each face was a purposeful look. We realized that there was a job to be done. We were giving up our liberty for a period of time that in the end we might gain liberty. We were to meet and fight an enemy who had been taught that his was a superior race. It was our job to convince this enemy that theirs was an unfair belief; that there is no superiority in races; that all men are equal although some may be stronger than others. We were not egotistical enough to believe that the job would be an easy one; we knew that it would be plenty tough. We had been taught all through our training not to underestimate the enemy although we had been thoroughly convinced that we would be able to take care of ourselves. However, we refused to let such thoughts mar our stay in Stoneman. We enjoyed ourselves.

Life here was a vacation to us. A minimum of training with hours of relaxation makes the heart of any soldier happy, and this we had in abundance. We were given passes to nearby Pittsburg and a few of us managed to get 24-hour passes to San Francisco, where we visited everything from Nob Hill to Chinatown. During most days we listened to lectures on various points on which we needed instruction. Records were checked and many of us found cause to increase our family allotments. It was the easiest life we had had since our induction into the Army, and, knowing full well that it could not last forever, we made the most of it. When we were not on pass at night, we could be found at one of the movie theaters, or drinking beer at a PX, or eating at the service club, or merely shooting the bull in some comfortable spot. We didn't exactly care for the food served in Stoneman, but we seldom do in any Army camp so we didn't gripe too much about it. After all, we could always replenish our ravenous appetites at the PX.

We experienced our first real case of censorship during our stay here. The first few days we were in this port of embarkation about all we

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dared to write home was: "Dear Folks, I am fine. Love, Johnny." We didn't understand much about the restrictions of censorship and we weren't taking any chances. Some of the letters to the girl friends probably weren't as amorous as before. It was no easy matter to pour out one's heart to his sweetheart knowing that some hard-hearted censor would soon be examining each tender phrase for code violations. This was soon overcome by the thought that even a censor might be enlightened on the well known subject of love.

The clothing check was almost an every-day affair. Here the supply sergeant really earned his money. We were either receiving clothing or it was being taken away. Woolens were being substituted for cotton. All white clothing and towels were turned in to be dyed, to be returned to us the next day, tossed into the center of the floor in one huge pile . . . resembling nothing we had ever seen before. The color was supposed to be olive-drab. Well, they were drab. The olive color was between a sickly green and the hue of a stale cup of coffee. What we expected when we got them back we weren't quite certain, but definitely not this. And the method of getting one's clothing back was a grab-bag affair. Each man made a rushing dive to be the first to receive his garments. The dye had left the clothes in a sad state. All personal markings were gone. Those who were fortunate enough to have grabbed first got a fair bargain, but a few of us got tangled up in the rush and had to take what was left. The drawers were worn so badly that the only difference between the front and the back was that the front had buttons, or, at least, a place where buttons should have been. The undershirts were either so small that one couldn't get into them or so large that one couldn't be found after having dropped one of them over his head. The towels and handkerchiefs had long since disappeared and were by now nestling in the bottoms of various barracks bags. However, this situation was soon cleared up. We, being good soldiers, borrowed these articles from our buddies, being sure that our buddies were not present while we did so.

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New replacements came to us practically every day and we, the oldtimers, broke them in. To us veterans they were classed as rookies, their Army careers having consisted of only about seventeen weeks. The first words they heard were: "You should have been with us out in the desert!" or, "It sure was cold during our mountain maneuvers." After we had zeroed them in properly on what a rugged outfit they were in we adopted them as permanent members of our units and treated them as such.

Our time was growing short. As far as the 305th was concerned, this

was just a stopping-off place which we had enjoyed immensely. We were nearing pay dirt and that fact kept us hoping for an early movement out. We had seen such cities as Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, Indianapolis, Chicago, St. Louis, Des Moines, Denver, Ogden, and Sacramento on our trip across the nation. Now we were ready to add the titles of foreign metropolises to our ever-bulging list.

Two days before we left, restrictions and censorship became even more rigid. Now we were quarantined to our individual company areas. Secrecy hung heavily over us and we realized the importance of it.

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On the afternoon of March 24 we were ordered to get our equipment ready and our barracks bags packed in preparation for our departure the following morning. Whatever personal property we had not yet sent home and could find no room to carry in our already crammed bags we left behind. A last grand rush was made for the PX to get that last bar of candy, a final malted milk or a bottle of Coca-Cola, for as usual the GI's stomach could not be forgotten, even amid this new excitement which swept over us. That night, after the lights went out, one of the boys yelled to his buddy who slept in the opposite end of the barracks, "Say, Joe, this outfit will never go overseas." But a shower of shoes soon quieted him.

After our morning chow, we began to load our bags into trucks. About 1000 we were marched to what appeared to be a large parade ground where the units assembled before moving out. And here we had to wait. The Army had a pretty good system; if they kept a man standing long enough in one spot, as they always do, he became willing, even eager, to make the move even if it was for the worse. We had to stand in formation for almost three hours. We made the customary, griping comment, "Why couldn't they have left us at the barracks until we were ready to go?" Nobody has ever bothered to answer that question. After a score of crap games had got under way and groups of bored soldiers here and there had begun games of poker we heard the order to take our equipment and prepare to move. Those sweating out the games are possibly still wondering if Joe would have made his point or did Pete really have a good hand or was he bluffing.

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So, on March 25, 1944, we marched out of Camp Stoneman in much the same manner as we had marched in. We were hungry; we had missed our noon meal. We hiked for two and one-half miles while other soldiers stood aside and looked on and wondered how long it would be before they, too, began their trip. Our heads were high, our hearts beat rapidly with anticipation, our morale was excellent. We were now well trained combat dogfaces—and we knew it.

The morning of Saturday, March 25, found Camp Stoneman bathed in warm California sunshine, while a cooling breeze swept in intermittently from the broad waters of the Pacific. There was but little outward bustle to hint that this was the day for which we had waited two long years. Inwardly each of us was bursting with varied emotions.

The Regiment had been astir long before the sun had ushered in the dawn. Myriad tasks awaited us: duffel bags to pack, breakfast to consume, barracks to be scoured, the area to be policed before commencing our final preparations. It could never be said that the 305th ever left an area in a worse condition than it had been before our arrival. Finally came the lining-up process, the roll call, the placing of bags and luggage in a neat row of piles, and then that endless wait in place for a few hours.

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Then came the whistle and with a speedy but orderly advance we began to move. We were wearing our o.d. woolens, leggings, combat packs, gas masks and steel helmets, and our rifles were slung over our shoulders. Slowly but proudly the column swung down the hill toward the railroad station. Crossing the tracks we left camp and headed through the town of Pittsburg, California. On the other side of the town a large bay boat awaited us. The march was some four miles in length, the day was hot and our load heavy, but we were too excited now to gripe about those insignificant unpleasantries. At the dock a band was blaring forth a variety of airs. Emblazoned in huge letters over a large portal we all read the inscription:

"Through these gates pass the best damn soldiers in the world!"

The boat we boarded was a ferry. A few of us feared at first that we might be intended to sail all the way across the ocean in this tub but other men more acquainted with the facts were soon to point out that the vessel was to carry us only as far as San Francisco where we would be transferred to a larger and more comfortable transport ship. The boat was jammed with some four thousand men of our combat team. Then began the voyage of thirty-four miles to the Golden Gate city. Mark Twain once wrote of the lazy river boats which could balk even when going downstream. Ours was such a boat. Three hours elapsed before we docked at the pier in San Francisco Bay.

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On the dock from which we were to embark was a huge shed of modern steel construction. It was closely guarded by MPs. Once again we lined up for another call of the roster and to claim our duffel bags. Ladies of the Red Cross flitted among us passing out coffee, doughnuts, tomato juice, and cookies. It was a welcome interlude and a good deal

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On the high seas, Hawaii-bound.

of friendly banter was exchanged among the men as we held our places in line. Our stay here was brief, not more than half an hour. Our transport, the *General William M. Black*, was tied alongside and soon we were boarding her, struggling up the gangplank under the weight of too heavily loaded duffel bags.

There is always a tumult aboard a troopship when the soldiers seek out their own holds and berths; on this ship it was kept to a minimum. The *Black* was a 600-foot affair of some 15,000 tons. It was fast enough to make the long trip to our destination without a convoy. Again a band played on the pier while we boarded and overhead a Navy blimp and a fleet of planes maintained a constant vigil.

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At 0700 on Sunday morning we put to sea. Until the following Sunday, April 1, our lives necessarily were confined to the limitations of the ship. Life on a troopship is something which never will be forgotten. Although the GI adapts himself to it readily and manages to live in comparative comfort and pleasantness, it is still a drastic change from his every-day life. There were many activities aboard to keep the soldier occupied. Religious services were held regularly and well attended.

Each vessel had a library at the disposal of the literary minded. The Red Cross gave each man a package which contained small gifts, and free cigarettes were donated by the Special Services. Some of us drew details aboard the ship as we had done in Stateside Army posts. There was the usual KP and guard duty. Men with clerical abilities became a part of the office force to aid in the work on the ship. A group of soldiers published the ship's newspaper, which filled a very definite need for news on shipboard. The news for the sheet came over the radio in code. The newspaper was only a two-sided sheet, a mimeographed affair, but it was a tremendous success.

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The main deck was devoted to the enlisted men who could roam about it day or night almost at will. The only times during the day when we were not permitted the freedom of the deck were such times when the toneless voice came over the squawk box, saying: "All troops will return to their holds while the cleaning detail will clean the decks fore and aft. Sweepers, man your brooms!" Some of us slept on deck when the holds got hot and stuffy. The piano aboard was kept in constant use and we learned for the first time that we had men among us of musical talent.

There were three things we encountered which tended to mar the pleasantness of our voyage. Two of them were the abandon-ship drills and the General Quarters periods of the mornings and evenings when we were compelled to stand in silence beside our berths for a solid hour each. As these had the aspects of being both important and necessary our complaints about them were practically nonexistent.

The third and most outstanding unpleasantness was seasickness. Most of us suffered from this ailment which one of our officers had said was purely mental and could be avoided by merely not thinking about it. Later we saw this same officer, a greenish hue playing about his jowls, making a hurried dash for the rail so we took his advice with a grain of salt. It became impossible for a man amidships to see the rails of either the port or starboard sides; they were lined with men drooping over them in positions quite unbecoming to soldiers of the United States Army. We learned that there were two important sides to the ship bearing other names than "port and starboard." They were the leeward side and the windward side. The seasick individual who managed to find an open spot on the leeward side was indeed lucky; the one who cast his lot windward was apt to get his secondhand chow back in his face. Men carried their steel helmets wherever they went for use as buckets. Said Pete, half in jest and half in earnest, "This is the first time I ever found any practical use for this helmet."

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We did not consider our cramped quarters as an unpleasantness. We regarded them as a joke. Each hold had berths for about five hundred men. They were separated by no more than two-foot aisles for us to walk between them, and each bunk was separated from the one above or below by no more than eighteen inches. They ran in tiers of four, five and six according to the space between the two decks. On one occasion Pete, the comedian, sought out his friend Joe and stated that he had just seen a school of sardines. Joe replied that he did not believe there were sardines in the Pacific.

"There surely are," Pete insisted, "and they spoke English."

"Baloney!" said Joe.

Pete was undaunted. "The professor of this particular school of sardines said: 'Children, beware of human beings or you will find yourselves in a can as crowded as American soldiers.' "

"Suffering hemlock!" Joe ejaculated and strode away, leaving Pete to chuckle over his own joke.

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We were not many days at sea before our destination was announced over the speaker. The *Black* would put in at a pier in Honolulu on the Island of Oahu in the Hawaiian or Sandwich Island group. This was welcome news. Few of us had ever held hopes of visiting the Paradise of the Pacific. We had feared an immediate sailing to some one of the battle zones.

Saturday, April Fool's Day, dawned in all the glory of Pacific beauty. We were all excited and hastened topside. Today we were to land and each of us looked forward to seeing that touch of green rise above the hazy blue horizon. About 0800 the commotion started. Word quickly spread among us that land was sighted and each of us made a disorderly dash for the rail where we could get a glimpse of *terra firma* once more. We had only been at sea six days but they were very long days. Many of us were expressing ourselves in a poem which one of the boys had created:

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Once I thought I should like the sea
But now I know it's not for me.
The waves are high; the waves are thick;
The whole darned ocean makes me sick.

One could hardly describe the beauty of that growing strip of land we saw as we approached. Perhaps it only appeared more than beautiful because we were so tired of looking at the vast, endless expanse of water, but to us the colors of the setting were magnificent in their perfect blending. The ocean was the deepest blue imaginable, that color broken

occasionally by a rolling white-cap. Toward the shore line this color lightened to an azure blue, thence to aquamarine and finally into a light green shade. At the base of the emerald green mountains lay a strip of white and golden sand over which the white breakers rolled like a necklace of sparkling diamonds. Even the least poetic of us saw the natural beauty of this place in the same spirit of awe as the greatest painter must have first seen it.

We passed the famous Diamond Head crater. We steamed slowly by Waikiki Beach which we identified by the Royal Hawaiian Hotel which stood out in sharp contrast to the coco palms. We saw the world renowned rollers breaking upon the beach and a surf rider on his board skimming over the water with amazing skill and speed. We vowed, with the usual optimism of the American, to try that sport on our first passes into town.

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We entered a channel marked by buoys. A tug opened the anti-submarine net placed across the narrow inlet to the bay. We saw some shore defense guns so well camouflaged that they were hard to pick up with the naked eye. The serene beauty slowly gave way to the defense measures which had been taken as insurance against a recurrence of the infamous Pearl Harbor incident. Moving into the harbor we got glimpses of many ships of all types anchored in the Bay or moored to the wharves, and, for the first time, we began to understand just for what our War Bond money was being used. It was an unforgettable picture.

Our ship docked at the base of the Aloha Tower which was beautiful in spite of its ugly war paint. A band was playing the soft strains of "Aloha Oe," the traditional welcoming song to all *malehines* or newcomers. In the background the splendid city of Honolulu nestled in the valleys near the slopes of the Koolau Mountains. On the pier waiting for us with many wisecracks were the members of our advance detachment. More than one of us found ourselves thinking, "Those lucky dogs probably have all the girls lined up by now." Later we were to learn more about that. About 1000 we started ashore. With grins that seemed to split our faces from ear to ear we marched down the gangplank; we were more than happy to be ashore, on firm ground again. General Bruce was among the first men we saw. We crossed the pier to a wide flight of stairs which led to the street and our waiting trucks.

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On the trip to camp, we passed through downtown Honolulu which was mostly made up of business places and Army supply dumps. We passed Kodak, Hawaiian Ltd., a modernistically styled building, typical of the buildings and homes in Hawaii. Our route took us past Kaukau

Corners, the crossroads of the Pacific. We were to pass this spot many times during our short stay on Oahu. We drove past a lovely golf course and many parks. The next point of particular interest was Koku Head where Doris Duke Cromwell had her Hawaiian Paradise. On we went around hairpin turns along the base of the same mountains we had beheld earlier in the morning. At times the road was cut out of the cliff and the waves were breaking directly beneath us. There were a couple of light showers which fell upon us as we made our way but it was explained to us that they were a daily occurrence so we paid little or no attention to them. Two hours from the time we left the wharf we arrived at our new camp.

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Camp Pali was so named because it was located at the foot of the Nuuanu Pali Pass. Honolulu lay just eight miles over the pass; we had taken the long way around because our busses and trucks would not have been able to make all the sharp turns along that narrow roadway which wound its way down the mountainside. The pass rose a sheer two thousand feet above us and the road was cut out of solid stone, doubling back upon itself many times. We later found it to be a breath-taking ride up and over the pass to get an air view of the camp, the hills beyond, and a glimpse of the sea which was now quite familiar to us. On some days, however, this lookout was not too clear for the top of Pali was often hidden in clouds.

The camp itself was a tent city with the well known GI pyramidal tents of dark green and tan colors. We knew from our first sight of them that we would soon have the unnecessary job of putting all the tents of one color in one area and the other color in another.

Due to unusually heavy rainfall the camp site was covered with the reddest and stickiest mud we had ever seen. It was over everything. Our first few days were spent in getting our equipment in shape and digging drainage ditches. No matter where the 305th had gone, except for the desert of Arizona, it seemed that heavy rainfall followed us. It continued that way all through the months to follow when we were in combat and serving as a unit of occupation in Japan. In that manner, our hardships back in Camp Hyder were a waste of time.

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Our clean-up campaign was so intense that we nicknamed ourselves the "305th Landscapers, the grass-cutting outfit." We used machetes, trench knives, bayonets, and every other sharp instrument upon which we could get our hands to remove the tall grass and the brush around our area. This was a small part of the mosquito-control program.

At the end of the first week we again got into the swing of our training program. Initially, it was a conditioning program to harden us for

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The regimental staff on Oahu. Standing left to right: Colonel Tanzola; Major Winthrop Rockefeller, S-4; Captain Lawrence S. Kennan, S-3; Captain Clesson M. Duke, Personnel; Captain Eugene H. Rennick, S-1. Kneeling: Lieutenant Robert D. Dreyer, Assistant S-3; CWO Charles J. Reaves; Lieutenant Harry Haley; Lieutenant Henry S. Lufler, Assistant S-2.

dreaded days yet to come. We began taking numerous hikes through jungle terrain. We had an obstacle course which was a lulu. It took us over ravines by means of rope ladders and horizontal ladders. It tired us out and raised blisters on our hands but it served its purpose by hardening our muscles. We practiced maneuvering through jungle growth so thick that sometimes we had to travel fifteen or even twenty feet above the ground. Interspersed with this general instruction was some specialized training which later stood us in good stead. The most enjoyable of this training was the swimming class. It is true that the five-mile hike to and from the beach wasn't appreciated, but at the beach we found many things to please us. While small groups would be going through the swimming instructions other groups of us engaged in such sports as volleyball, baseball, and such childish games as leapfrog and tag. We used the USO beach at Kailua and at noontime we would flock around the snack bar as an appreciated diversion from Army chow. We enjoyed the ice cream bar and the sodas which were plentiful and we

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spent much time listening to the radio in the reading room of the Club house.

Other outfits on the island soon came to refer to us as the LLL unit. This came about because of the 77th's custom of training in "liners, leggings, and light packs." We did not mind; we knew that we both looked and acted like soldiers.

The big question in our minds was, "When do we get to see Honolulu?" Our first three days on the island were spent in quarantine. Then a pass policy was set up. With us were units which had been attached to the Regiment. They were the 242d Engineer Battalion; the 7th AAA (AW) Battalion; Company A, 302d Engineers; Company A, 302d Medical Battalion; the 305th Field Artillery Battalion, and later shore-fire gun-support and the air-ground liaison parties. We had grown since leaving Camp Pickett. At first we had considered these units as strangers but later we began to proudly hail them as truly a part of the 305th, "Second to None." All of us, attached units as well, had to have the same opportunity to go on pass, so these came few and far between. A system was adopted whereby an entire company or like unit went on pass at the same time. This system proceeded in rotation until each unit had been to Honolulu, then the same sequence was begun all over again. We were furnished 2½-ton trucks for transportation.

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Each morning the lucky unit whose turn it was to visit the city would form a column and march to the motor pool. Trucks would be waiting. No more than six vehicles at a time were allowed to go over the pass so groups were dispatched at regular intervals. In Honolulu the trucks re-formed in convoy and, under MP escort, we arrived at our detrucking point, Kapiolani Park.

The ride over Pali was one never to be forgotten. The road was concrete and not more than two trucks wide. It followed every notch and gully and had more curves than a scenic railway. One curve was so sharp that it had to be built out from the side of the mountain to allow the trucks and busses to get around it. In some places we could look over the side of the trucks to a steep drop of the entire two thousand feet. Finally the trucks groaned over the top and into the pass proper. This place was appropriately called Windy Hill. The natives say that some days the wind is so strong there that it could easily stop a car.

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A number of references have been made to Pali so one might guess that there is a certain significance attached to it. There is to the Hawaiians and perhaps indirectly to us. It was through this pass that King Kamehameha drove the last of the enemies who resisted his plan of unifying the Hawaiian Islands. Since there was no road or pathway down this steep cliff at that time, we soldiers regarded his achievement

as an ingenious way of liquidating his enemies. More recently a far more treacherous foe used this pass in their sneak attack against Pearl Harbor on the fateful December 7. Japanese fifth columnists had observers and radio stations hidden in the clouds as an aid in directing their planes through.

After crossing the Pali, we drove past the Honolulu water reserve which was beautifully landscaped. It was along here that we beheld another interesting spectacle, a waterfall that presented the illusion of falling upward. A strong wind blowing up underneath and causing spray to fly gave it that appearance.

As we drove out of a grove of trees we again saw the Nuuanu Valley and the city of Honolulu spreading outward along the shore, the harbor with its many ships, and the magnificent view of the Pacific. It was a breath-taking sight.

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Nuuanu Avenue took us down a beautiful street that was flanked by velvety lawns shaded by large, spreading mango trees. The houses were of varied styles of architecture; some were old-fashioned, gabled homes while others were of the rambling, English colonial style. It was pointed out to us that, with real estate so high here, one could hardly afford to keep one of these places on his Army pay.

The merchants were ready for us. Shops and stores were crowded with servicemen in all types of uniforms buying grass skirts and other souvenirs at more than three times their value. We with little cash on hand moved on in search of cheaper entertainment. Every theater, restaurant, and dancehall was crowded. In fact, the entire city was jammed with soldiers, sailors, and marines, not to mention the many defense workers who were here to rebuild Pearl Harbor. The sidewalks were filled with people of all races.

Oahu is the most commercialized of all the islands and has the greatest variety of races represented. The Japanese predominate and the Chinese rank next. Then come the mixed nationalities of Hawaiian plus English, German, or Portuguese, dating back to the days of the early explorers. We were told that only a very few full-blooded Hawaiians are left on the island. Honolulu is the capital of the entire group of islands.

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It was not as we had feared when we first arrived that our advance unit had tied up the women before we got there. That matter had been well taken care of long before they arrived. There was a woman shortage, caused by the influx of so many servicemen and civilian workers long before our arrival. The Navy once again had got there before us, and they had the few white girls on the island already preferring blue uniforms to khaki. The best we could do was to stop at one of

the many photographic studios and have our picture made with a professional model so that we could later show it to our friends and boast that "There was a pretty girl I knew in Hawaii."

Much time was spent in improving our areas. Naturally all this building and improving required a good deal of lumber. Lumber prices were high; very little was for sale. Therefore we had to salvage most of our materials.

We might better be described as scavengers than salvagers. A detail of men would go out with trucks on a scouting party of a sort and return later with the necessary lumber, wire, and other commodities necessary for our work, which they would find at some ruined building or abandoned camp site. Finally this method began to reach alarming proportions and we began to discuss the possibilities of people returning home from an excursion to find that the roofs over their heads had been "procured" away. One officer in the 1st Battalion chanced to contact an MP with whom he had quite a lengthy discussion before the suspicious military policeman was finally convinced that the material in the back of the officer's jeep wasn't stolen but was being reconverted to military use.

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In the meantime, the USO and other service units offered numerous shows for our entertainment. Outstanding to us, because of their novelty, were the hula dancers which we agreed to a man were something to see. Such rhythm, such grace—such wolves! One was supposed to watch the hands of the dancers to obtain the gist of the story each dance presented, but very few of us were interested in the story. Every man knows what a hula is: a twist of the wrist below the waist.

Like every other people, the Hawaiians have many intriguing, fanciful, and beautiful stories about their past. The Hawaiian language is very beautiful and easy to master. One simply lets the words flow out with no particular emphasis on syllables. Hawaiian music needs no description since Bing Crosby has made the world acquainted with it *á la* Hollywood.

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When we first arrived on Oahu the islands were under martial law, which was later relaxed. There was little rationing and everyone was allowed ten gallons of gasoline per week. Tires, on the other hand, were an item quite hard to obtain.

Our first passes to town were devoted to searching out places of amusement. Later visits found us enjoying the various sites and landmarks for which Honolulu is noted. We visited such places as the civic center where we saw the capitol buildings of the territory. In front of

the government buildings stands the gilded statute of King Kamehameha. Across King Street from these buildings and the statue of Iolani Palace which is now used for an office building. The throne room of the palace with its red carpet, red and gold tapestries and trimmings has been unchanged since the days of the last local rulers of the islands. In the main corridor and in the throne room one is offered the opportunity of seeing the oil paintings of kings and queens of past decades.

One would not have been a true soldier had he not taken advantage of the YMCA and its various facilities, its pool, its showers, its gameroom, and its lunchroom. We visited the beautiful Mormon Church and the University of Hawaii. On Sunday afternoons we usually went to the stadium to see baseball games, and it was with unusual luck that we saw such stars as Joe DiMaggio, Walter Judnick, Mike McCormick, Brancato, and many others play ball in the good old American way.

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From the first day we entered Camp Stoneman our mail had been censored as a precaution against our divulging military information thoughtlessly. Some of the boys had worked out codes which managed to slip by the censors, but, after a short time, codes became unnecessary for we were permitted to state the fact that we were on Oahu. Some of the codes which had been attempted, however, did not get by the close-seeing censor and on one occasion a sergeant's carelessness got him reduced to private. There is also the story which has spread all over the United States and is now an old joke but which is supposed to have had its origin in the 305th. One soldier's wife wrote to him saying that all except the date, heading, salutation, and signature of the letter had been cut out. On the margin the censor had scribbled the note: "Your husband loves you, but he talks too damned much!"

About the middle of June we started getting new equipment and clothing. Frequent and thorough inspections were made, inspections which always precede a unit's movement. Boxes were supplied for packing our equipment. Boat teams were assigned for an amphibious landing. "Pack this. Pack that." Quite suddenly even the dullest of us began to realize that the moving day was drawing near, and we all had many conflicting ideas about where we would next find ourselves. "Say, Joe," Jimmy would be overheard to say, "I hear that the bunch who left here a couple of weeks ago landed on Saipan. Lay you ten that that is where we are going."

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"I'll take you on that," agreed Joe. "I'm picking the Marianas group

in the vicinity of Guam." Joe was always pretty clever at hitting the nail on the head with his speculations.

We were proud of our achievements here at Camp Pali. We felt the same when we left any camp behind us in our continuous movement forward. We were the landscapers and our work was always an improvement over the old. We left behind us neat rows of tents, an area totally devoid of weeds and brush. The soggy mud had been cleverly drained away. So it was that we left Camp Pali and its beautiful tropical splendor and sailed once again out into the blue Pacific—destination unknown!

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Chapter 11: The Battle of Guam

For two weeks we had been alerted as participants in an operation but where and when our activities were to commence we were not informed for reasons of security. On the first day of July we were herded into our transports to set sail for some island of the South Pacific where we would soon meet and engage the enemy for our first time.

Once we were away from the islands the announcement for which we were waiting came clearly over the loudspeaker: "Attention, all Army personnel. This is the troop commander. Our destination is Guam. I repeat, our destination is Guam."

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For a moment there was a deep and thoughtful silence as each man began to realize that he was soon to go into combat. Then, all at once, each of us broke into chatter with our buddies. What was Guam like? How many men did one suppose the Japs had on the island? Did our buddies think our chances were good? Since each man was bothered with identical queries of his own, no one could answer those questions. We could only hope for the best. We were half afraid, yet, beneath our fears, we were quite confident of our abilities. Our confidence was one of our greatest assets.

We did not sail immediately for Guam; we headed for the atoll of Eniwetok where the commanding officers were given detailed facts and preferred plans. Our trip was smooth and comparatively uneventful. Because the waters through which we travelled were not entirely safe we had abandon-ship and boat drills daily. On one occasion radar actually picked up one submarine, which gave us cause for a little uneasiness, but we never did sight it and it was not heard from again.

Putting in at the lagoon of Eniwetok, Colonel Tanzola and his staff went ashore for conferences. We remained aboard ship repeating boat-team loading drills and listening to orientation talks on the impending operation. None of this was very thrilling but we all had a determination to carry out our parts with perfection; everything which lay ahead of us depended on our team work and our coordination. The company, platoon, and squad orientations were absorbed with intense concentration. To a man we wanted to know exactly what the terrain was to be, the size and strength of the enemy, and what advantages or disadvantages the island had to offer us.

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We left Eniwetok on the 17th, now bound straight for our rendezvous with destiny. As we neared our destination our test firing of weapons, issuance of ammunition, and unit leaders' conferences were stepped

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At sea, a ship receives a message from her escort.

up in tempo. We were zeroed in on the Preferred Plan of Operation, orders of which had been radioed to us to be carried out on schedule.

Guam was reached very early in the morning of the 21st. The transports and cargo ships drew into their positions two miles off shore. We were either too nervous to sleep or we wanted to see all that was going on. Who could blame us? This was to be our first operation. The flashes of the salvos were continuous in the dark hours of the morning indicating the destruction that was being hurled upon the Japs. We moved restlessly about the deck constantly to find a more advantageous position to watch the Navy's bombardment of the island. Through the light of the infiltrating dawn we watched the Marine units pound the beaches and known Japanese strong installations. As each successive wave went over, our silent prayers went with them that their aim be true and their targets destroyed. Pete, his face pale with anxiety, offered a quiet comment with no touch of his usual humor: "When I think of all the uncomplimentary things I have said about the Navy and the Marine Corps I feel ashamed. What they are doing now may save my life."

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At 0830 the initial assault was made. We did not go ashore with

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Killed in action: one Jap.

this group. We knew that we would have made good, but, after all, this was our first operation and the Central Pacific command wanted to take no chances, so the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade, the unified command of the former Marine Raider battalions, was the first combat team ashore.

At 1030 the 2d Battalion landing team lowered to the bobbing craft. The loudspeaker maintained a constant stream of orders. "All troops lay below to your compartments. Boat team No. 1 proceed to landing station No. 7. Boat team No. 5 proceed to landing station No. 3. On the double, boat team No. 6. Please hurry to your landing craft . . ." There was no confusion. We had been well instructed in what to do and we did it. Into the LCVPs and off to the rendezvous area we went. There we had to circle and await the arrival of the other LCVPs of our particular wave. When the order came to move in, we took one last look at our transports and friends. We wished we might have had just a little more time for farewells with friends whom each of us feared we might never see again. Many of us who had never had much experience at prayer now found ourselves experts in requesting Him who looked after us from above not to relax His vigilance but to grant us His favor so that we could do the job to the best of our ability.

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We hit the beach in relative security. There were snipers about that had not yet been flushed out but most of the fighting was being done by this time in the plain and at the foot of Mt. Alifan. The first sight that greeted us at White Beach 1 was three dead Japs. Pete had regained some of his composure. "Remind me to give the Marines my thanks the next time I see them," he shouted to a companion. Each of

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A view of the shell-torn beach from a hill back of Agana.

us felt a surge of curiosity but we continued to push on inland. We knew that there would be more enemy dead for us to inspect later when we had more time on our hands. We moved into brigade reserve to await the assignment of a combat area and mission.

The assault did not proceed perfectly. The 1st Battalion had orders to land at 1400, but through contradictory orders by the beach control officer and the brigade headquarters this phase of our landing was delayed until 1800. The 3d Battalion and the remainder of the special units got ashore late that night and the following morning.

No man will ever forget his first night in combat. It was an experience never to be paralleled. We had little time to dig in. The fighting had not proceeded to a stage where it was advantageous to set up a perimeter for the night until darkness had already begun to settle upon us. But the fighting had never ceased enough to give us the opportunity to dig our foxholes to the desired depth. At darkness all movement had to cease within the perimeter unless one was actually in danger and at close quarters with the enemy. This meant that our slit trenches were only as deep as time permitted. Most of them were less than a foot.

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From somewhere in the darkness came a whisper: "Hey, Joe."

"That you, Pete?"

"Yeah. What do you think?"

"You know damned well what I think."

"Sure. Say, y'know, Joe, a guy could get hurt around here."

Our morale was none too high, but on this night it is doubtful that anyone expected it would be. We had heard many tales about the famed Banzai night attacks. None of us could sleep. When we weren't pulling our turn at guard we lay in our shallow holes trying vainly to relax but listening for the slightest noise that indicated the presence of the enemy. Nor was that wait in vain for all of us. About 0130 the 2d Battalion received the flank of a counterattack. We sent out enough fire power to change the Japs' interest in our position. In the morning we were able to account for six known dead with no serious casualties for us.

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This morning we began our first operation as a regimental combat team in full strength. We moved through the 4th Marine Regiment at what was termed the O-1 line with the 1st Battalion clearing Mt. Alifan, the hot-box of the previous night, the 3d Battalion on its left and the 2d Battalion in reserve. The orders were to attack and secure the O-A line, the area for the coming night's perimeter. The opposition we met was enough to keep all units on line as scheduled.

We had proved ourselves strong, aggressive, and willing. This commendation was not of our own back-patting. Association with the Marines on line and all the way back to the beaches where we drew our supplies had earned us a nickname which we were proud to accept and wear. Our speed, push, and hell-bent-for-election attitude the first time in battle was so completely unexpected that the Marine Raiders called us the "305th Marines." Everywhere we went, no matter what we wanted, whether we went through the proper channels to get it or not, the Marines would demand the name of our outfit before giving us what we had requested. All we would have to reply was, "We're from the 305th."

"305th, huh! It's yours. Take it away. Anything else?"

For once the Army was functioning with the Marines in a style the Devil Dogs understood. We had quickly and effectively proven our right to bear the motto "Second to None."

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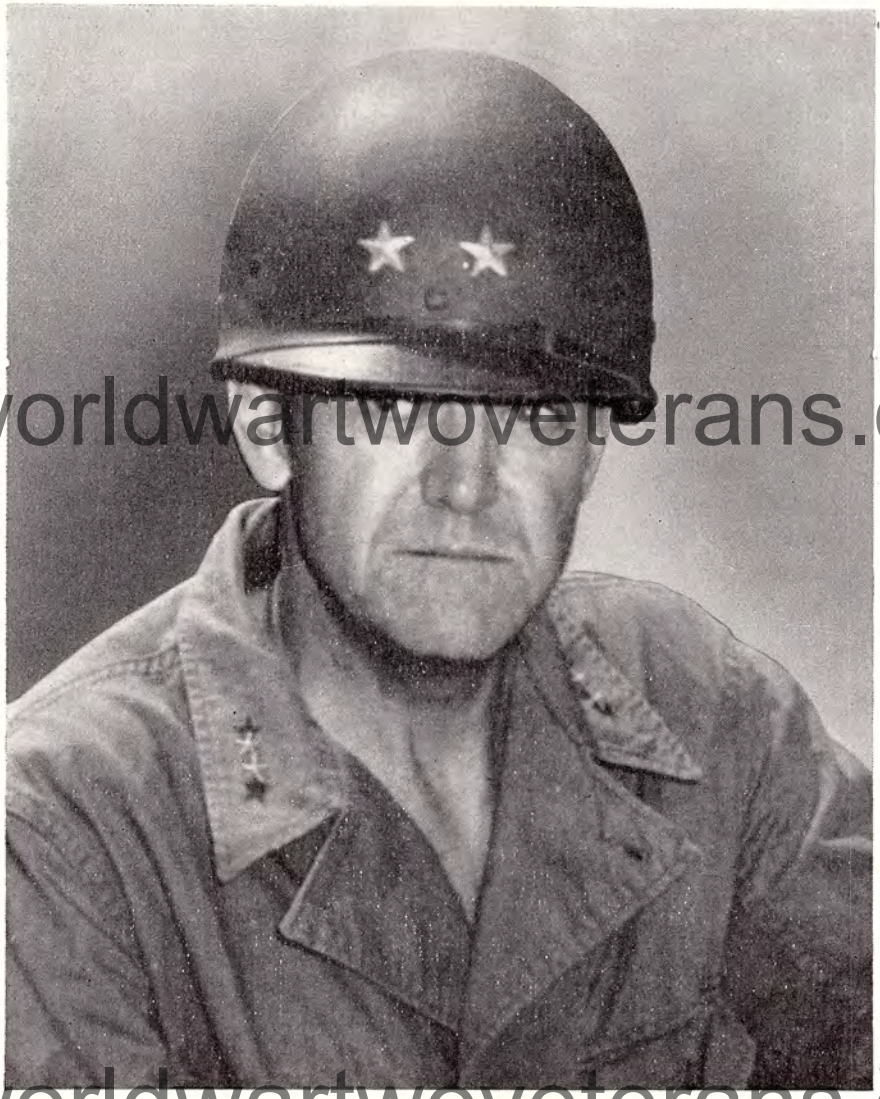
The primary mission of our combat team during the first phase of the Guam campaign was to secure and hold against all enemy opposition the high ground overlooking Orote Peninsula. On the morning of the 23d we moved out to complete the mission by nightfall. Elements of the 3d Battalion reached the O-2 line, operating against scattered patrols, by 0930. The 1st Battalion moved into its assigned area about noon. The entire combat team then pushed forward in a northerly ad-



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Major General Andrew D. Bruce, Commanding General of the 77th Infantry Division.

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vance from Harmon Road and Maanot Ridge with all elements of communication and transportation under control. At 1700 we dug in for the night.

Digging in had a much greater significance than just those two words would indicate. It meant coming into an area as the evening sun settled beyond the horizon, covered with sweat and grime, tired of everything but living. It meant digging a hole which wasn't a hole at all but

merely a rectangular depression long enough for one to lie in and deep enough to prevent one's being seen. This unique and vital excavation was done with a shovel just large enough to plant one's feet upon and a pick with a handle so short one almost had to be either a midget or a contortionist to swing it.

Moving out in the morning on schedule was equally as misleading as digging in. It meant arising tired and dirty from sleeping on the cold ground, often as not during a full night's rain, to eat again, to wash if one was lucky enough to have any water left in his canteen, to draw the day's supply of ammunition, the noon ration, to clean the weapons so that they would function properly, to don one's pack, and to be ready for another day's battle in an hour's time or less. Many heroes were made during those first few days of combat, many men whose names will never be known to the adoring public. Take the case of Willie. Few of us had known him although he had been with us since our earlier days at the induction center. Those of us who had made his acquaintance described him as an unassuming little fellow, shy and quiet, one of the most homesick of us. There were many like him. No one fought more bravely or with more gusto than he. His fighting may not have been the turning point of the war but no one can deny its importance. Willie will never leave Guam. For Willie lies there—dead.

During the night of the 23d all our battalion fronts were subjected to counterattacks, none of which were successful. On the following day we sent out extensive patrols to clear the areas of all Japanese. One patrol from F Company returned bearing an important document which listed the strength of the enemy troops, their commanders, and a map showing all the main installations of defense on the island. The day's activities proved so completely successful that the morale of the Combat Team became officially "excellent."

Patrolling was the key word for the next four days. Lines were strengthened and supply routes improved in preparation for the coming movement across the island. On the 28th we made a large push which, to our surprise, met no opposition. Mt. Tenjo now became ours. We had complete control of the high ground in our zone of action. By this movement we had closed all gaps through which the enemy might infiltrate or withdraw in case there were few or scattered patrols within our lines. July 31 saw the island completely cut in half as elements of our 3d Battalion made contact with the 307th Infantry, which was operating with the 3d Marine Division. They had moved down from the north, completely surrounding the peninsula and diverting enemy resistance.

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This picture was developed from the film in a captured Japanese camera.

The advance continued on August 1 as the last phase of the campaign began. We moved rapidly but cautiously across the island. As we progressed we ran into denser terrain which had, by nightfall, tied up all vehicles and supporting elements of Cannon and Antitank Companies. Resistance increased as we neared the town of Yona.

The next day we turned north, and in the vicinity of Barrigada we ran into the bulk of the enemy's remaining forces. Initial resistance was light but it gradually increased in fury. The 3d Battalion hit the enemy's main line of defense and took the brunt of the intense enemy fire. Several installations of automatic weapons were arrayed against them. They requested the help of the artillery, but that was impractical. The 307th lay on our left flank; artillery would endanger elements of that combat team. A skirmish line was established and the use of mortars and heavy machine guns was attempted, but the Japanese defenses never faltered. The battle might have become a stalemate had it not been for a platoon of tanks from the 706th Tank Battalion which was attached to the Regiment. Under a constant cover of overhead fire and with the protection of this tank platoon we were able to move forward and dislodge the enemy from his positions. Under adverse conditions of supply and maneuverability, we dug in for the night at a newly designated Division line.

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The Combat Team was ordered to proceed forward to meet the 3d Marine Division forces at the base of Mt. Santa Rosa. The terrain proved to be a greater foe than the Japs as we hacked our way through the jungle. Trails were nonexistent. The going was rough. The ground was mostly shale and defensive positions for the night were difficult to prepare.

During the night of August 6 two Jap medium tanks, reinforced by approximately one platoon of infantry, broke into the 1st Battalion bivouac area and inflicted severe casualties. The enemy infantrymen were annihilated, but the two tanks escaped. The last the 1st Battalion saw of them they were moving swiftly up a jungle trail. At dawn these same two tanks, which had been badly damaged by the 1st Battalion, opened fire on the 2d Battalion, which came upon them as they were trying to effect repairs, but they were able to cause only slight damage before they were destroyed. This was the only night attack of major success that the Japs made during our whole Guam campaign.

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We moved toward our final objective through a jungle so dense that tanks and bulldozers had to be employed to clear the way. On one occasion a bomb from a Marine plane landed among our leading elements which had mistakenly been identified as a Japanese column moving toward Mt. Santa Rosa. We reached the objective August 9. From what scarce information we were able to gather and acting largely from pre-invasion reports, our final drive was made to coordinate with the 3d Marine Division to concentrate the remaining Japanese on Santa Rosa. All day of the 9th the Air Forces and the artillery bombarded Mt. Santa Rosa, the planes also moving in at times to strafe any visible enemy.

Reconnaissance early that evening reported that no enemy resistance was met nor were there any known fortifications or installations being manned in the pocket. Other patrols confirmed this report.

On that same day orders came through that we withdraw to Barrigada. Our mission was complete. The island of Guam was secured.

We were a happy bunch of men. Combat weariness fazed us only a little, for we had taken part in battle which was the turning point of the Pacific War. Guam was the first American territory to be retaken from those little men who called themselves the Sons of Heaven.

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It was a long trek back to Mt. Barrigada. We followed a trail that had been hacked through the jungle by our tanks during the advance. It had been our Burma Road, our lifeline. Over it our drivers had wrestled their jeeps, bringing us supplies from the rear. Their wheels had dug deep, and the rain had settled in the ruts, making a number of large mud holes in the trail. From time to time, we could smell decaying flesh, and along the trail lay the bloated bodies of several Japanese soldiers and carcasses of cows and dogs. Scattered supplies, our own and Nipponese, lay along the route of march.

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Finally we came to a halt, and set up our perimeter in the fields of several abandoned native farms. Although the campaign was officially over, the danger of a few stray Japs infiltrating into our area still existed.

We spent five or six days here, cleaning up as best we could during the daytime, and sleeping in our slit trenches at night. Our first bath in over three weeks was probably the most enjoyable bath of our lives, although it was taken in a steel helmet. We had learned to use our "steel" for everything from washing socks to making soup. The helmet was a very practical, though unappreciated, part of our equipment. Then we washed our fatigues and hung them up to dry in the hot baking sun. Many of us lined our slit trenches with coconut palms for greater comfort.

Native chickens and pigs were running loose around the area, so—most of us had fresh meat. Others found some native yams and cooked them in native skillets taken from nearby shacks. We lived chiefly on Ten-in-One rations, however, cooked on small gasoline burners which were issued at this time.

Souvenir hunting became more popular than ever. Abandoned native shacks nearby were searched. A Jap warehouse was found, and soon everyone had a pair of Jap shoes, having an extra section for the big toe. An order was given, however, which made us turn in or take back all the Jap shoes and native souvenirs. Pete claimed that order was issued because the officers arrived too late to get their share.

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After staying about a week, we began to move back to our permanent bivouac area east of Mt. Alifan. We shuttled, a company at a time, in Service Company's trucks. We were greatly relieved when we learned that we would not have to walk. The route took us through the remains of the largest town on the island, Agaña. Our bombs and shells had left the place a mass of stone and concrete rubble.

The trucks stopped on the side of a barren hill, and out we climbed.

The Regimental chapel on Guam.

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This was to be our bivouac area—not a shady tree in sight. Water from frequent rainstorms collected in ruts and furrows on the side of the hill. A welcome sight, though, was our duffel bags stacked near the road. The first thought that came to our minds was, "Is mine there, and is it in good shape?" Some bags were missing, others were soaked with salt water, and most of them were covered, inside and out, with mildew.

We immediately put ourselves to the task of setting up a suitable and livable bivouac area. Each man paired off with a buddy and put up his tent. When it rained the first night, nearly everyone found himself lying in a puddle of water. But the next day we dug deep trenches . . . something like locking the stable door after the horse has been stolen. A shelter to keep the rain from hitting one from above was a real luxury. As time went by our living quarters grew more elaborate. Bamboo poles were cut into strips and were laid side by side to make a bed that was off the ground. Some of us learned from the natives the art of weaving coconut branches. We used these to make the sides for our huts. The pup tent was then placed on top as a roof. A table or a chair taken from an abandoned native hut made the place more livable. A poncho stretched out over the front of the hut kept the rain out and gave us a shady porch in which to sit.

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A group of native workers was hired to construct native-type, grass-shack orderly rooms for each company. We erected a grass chapel under the direction of several natives. We were fortunate to have a stream with a rock bottom running through our area, and we erected showers at several spots along it. This stream also provided a convenient place for washing clothes.

Mother Nature certainly deserves a place in this book, for she played

an important part in our life on Guam. No one will ever forget the enormous amount of rain that poured down on us. A half dozen rainstorms in a day was not uncommon. Many a chow line was rained out, and it never failed that just when we were ready to step from the showers and dry off, a cloud would burst from directly above. Nor will any of us forget sliding around in the mud that the rain caused. The roads and jeep trails became impassable after a downpour. A familiar sight was a truck halfway up a hill spinning its wheels in the mud, until they were sunk to the hubs, and then sliding back down the hill. When the roads were closed, it became necessary to carry our rations and water long distances, sometimes sinking to our ankles in that ever present muck. One night several companies spent a large part of the night carrying rations for the regiment halfway up Harmon Road to the Maanot Reservoir. It wasn't long before the site was named "Camp Misery."

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In addition to the rain and mud, there were the flies, millions of them. They constantly swarmed over our shirtless arms and backs. We squirmed and turned and waved our arms frantically in the air trying to beat them off.

Another bold pest that tried to—and did—share our tents with us was a species of small lizards. No one minded them much, however, and we spared them because they ate flies. The biggest, fattest, and best-fed toads we ever saw were encountered in great numbers on Guam. They ate flies, too, and so they flourished and grew to giant stature. Last, but not least, among the uninvited guests were the ants. We emptied bottles of "scat" in our tents, we poured gallons of gasoline around them. We sprayed them with insect bombs. But, still they came back in long crawling streams. We'll never forget, although we'd like to, our life on the South Sea Island of Guam.

At first our cooks had only C and K rations and an occasional Ten-in-One with which to prepare our meals. We sent out several scavenger patrols that returned with field corn from deserted native fields. Our cooks prepared fresh corn on the cob. They brought back native bananas with which to make banana cream pie. We had millionaire's salad (costing $7.50 a dish in the States) which came from the heart of a coconut tree. When the flour came in, our baker went right to work and made the first bread we had eaten in over a month. After much speculation and anxious waiting on our part, the B rations began to arrive.

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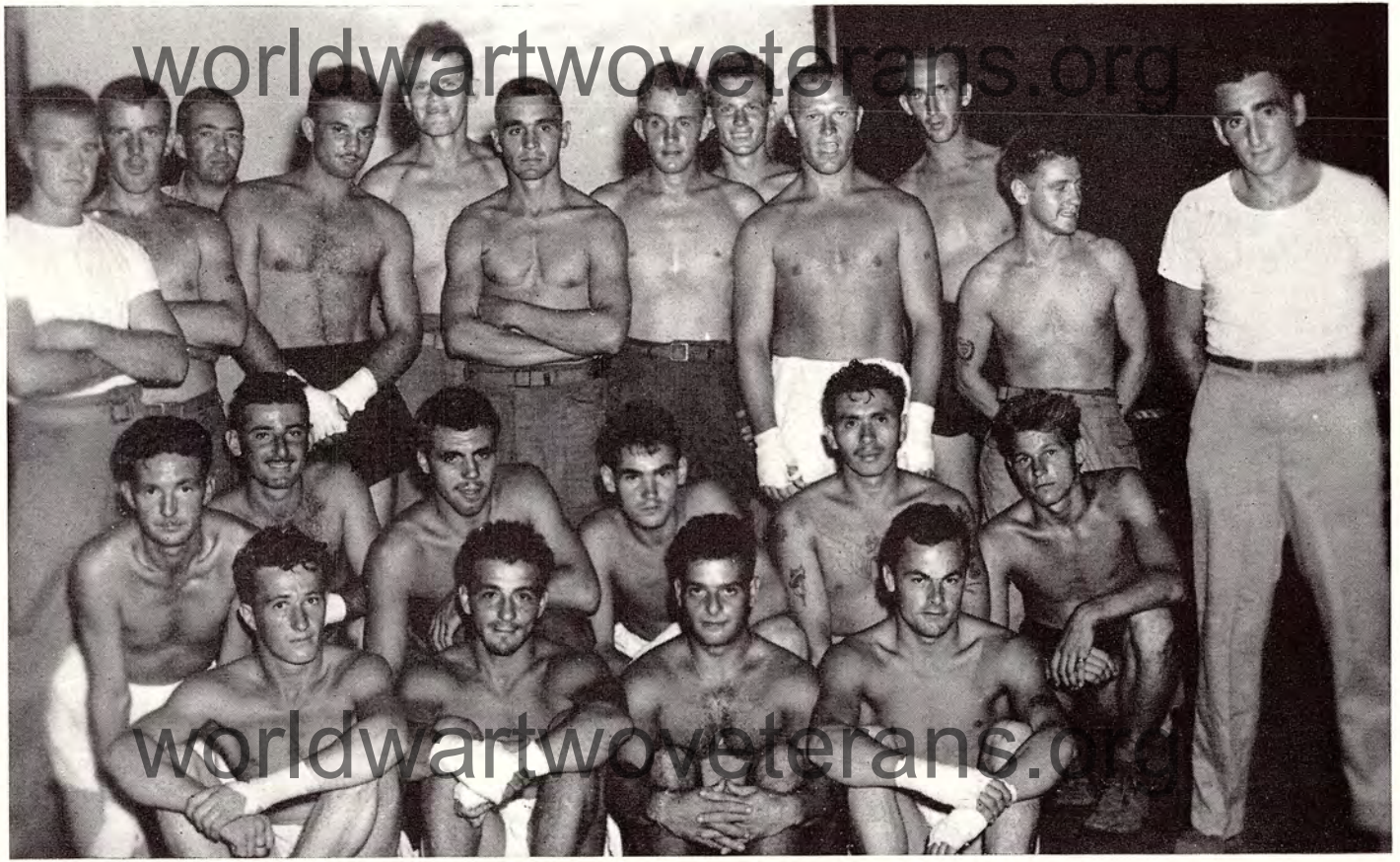
Since there were still a few Japs on the prowl it was necessary to establish an interior guard during the night. Very few of them came near us in this area, so there was but little excitement for the guards.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The Regimental boxing team on Guam.

One night, however, a toad jumped against the leg of a sentry standing near a jeep. He sprang into the vehicle, pointed his rifle barrel under it, and shouted: "Come on out. I've got you covered."

Most of us suffered from dengue fever, a tropical disease which causes one's eyes, bones, and joints to ache. The majority of cases were mild and most of us recovered in less than a week.

Our recreational facilities up on the hill were rather limited. A few ragged Ellery Queen mystery novels and some copies of *Readers' Digest* that were at least three years old were circulated throughout the outfit. They were regarded as priceless documents and they had a long waiting list that followed them from hand to hand.

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We owe a vote of thanks to Major Rockefeller for his foresight and generosity in bringing to this island, for our use, an electric generator and a motion-picture projector. A screen was set up on the bank of the stream. The Navy and the Marines loaned us films. The movies we saw were not of the latest issue by far but they were the greatest morale booster we had at this time.

Chaplains Donnelly, Kerr, and Saucier conducted inspiring Sunday and daily services which were well attended. They used tropical ferns and flowers to garnish their grass chapel.

Most of the companies bought short-wave radio sets just before going overseas, and we brought them along with us. They proved on Guam to be a worthwhile investment. We were usually able to pick up about three stations; Radio Saipan, San Francisco, Radio Tokyo, and occasionally a program from Australia. The most novel of these to us was Radio Tokyo, and the famed Tokyo Rose, a female news commentator with a New Jersey accent, who broadcast the Japanese version of the news, in English, for American servicemen in the Pacific. While we were resting in our bivouac area after the campaign, she was telling us over the radio how the Japs were putting up stiff resistance and had effected a successful counterlanding on Guam. From Radio Saipan, operated by American forces, we got authentic news from American sources, rebroadcasts of the radio programs of the week, and popular music. From San Francisco came the Philippine Program, broadcast to Americans in the Philippines. It consisted of a summary of the news and martial music.

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We were scheduled to take part in another operation about six weeks after the Guam campaign ended, and it was rumored that from there we would go to a rest camp on New Caledonia. So, we were shuttled down to Orote Peninsula in trucks, taking advantage of dry spells in the weather when the roads were passable. This was in preparation for

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Colonel Tanzola gets a kiss from Betty Hutton for bracelets presented to her on Guam.

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At left, Betty during a moment of relaxation. The show commences (right).

loading and boarding ship at Sumay. We were glad, too, to get out of the hills and down where things were going on.

We moved in on Orote and set up camp all over again. Our camp site was covered with dense brush and bushes, with a few scattered palm trees overhead. We wasted no time in reducing the underbrush with our machetes. This part of the island had received the most intensive bombardment. The remains of Jap soldiers lay a few hundred yards from our area. The ground was pocked with shell holes, and shell fragments lay all around. The coconut trees had been torn to shreds by the flying fragments and the branches dangled limply from the tree trunks. The ground was littered with pieces of broken pottery, and debris lay all around.

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Using our own engineering tools and elbow grease, plus several bulldozers, we cleared the area and developed a better camp than we had had back on the hill. We hauled truckloads of clean, white coral and spread it on the ground around our kitchens.

The movement to Orote raised our morale for several reasons. We were nearer to the center of things on the island, and we could see what was going on. We were only a few hundred yards from the airstrip, and we watched a steady stream of planes take off and land all day long. We watched eagerly for the arrival of large Army transports bringing in our mail. We watched the industrious Seabees transform

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Left to right: Major Robert J. M. Fyfe, Major Winthrop Rockefeller, Betty Hutton, Colonel Tanzola, Lieutenant Colonel Thomas B. Manuel, and Major George H. Pratt.

narrow trails running through jungles and swamps into broad American roads. They laid pipelines and expanded the airfield. We watched stacks of supplies and equipment grow and multiply. Americans were here this time to stay.

A number of wrecked Japanese planes were lying scattered around the peninsula. The men collected pieces of aluminum tubing and bits of plastic windshields from them. Airplane wings were used as floors in our pup tents. A favorite pastime was the making of aluminum bracelets and wrist-watch bands. We made rings from the aluminum tubing and knife handles from the plastic. Our souvenir hunting during and just after the campaign, while there were still souvenirs lying around, paid big dividends at this time. We had collected Japanese coins, bills, calling cards, photos, sabers, rifles and pistols. The Seabees and other Navy personnel who came after the battle had ended and all the souvenirs had been picked up, seemed to have an insatiable desire to obtain all the souvenirs they could. While most of us sent ours home, the more practical ones sold theirs or traded with the Navy. It was said that they would pay one hundred and fifty bucks for a Jap rifle, a hundred more for a pistol. A Jap sword with an ivory handle was rumored to have brought as much as one thousand dollars. American

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money was useless, but the GIs used Jap money to buy beer, cigars, and candy from the Navy men, who seemed to be better supplied than we were.

Life on Guam had not been too difficult. It is true that we had made a radical change from our garrison life back in the States and our brief pause-over on Oahu. It is also true that Sherman's statement that "war is hell" proved that the old boy knew what he was talking about. But we had learned much and had enjoyed ourselves as much as we could have under the circumstances. We had seen a part of the world that only wealthy Americans could have afforded a few years back. We were also provided with ample entertainment.

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The highlight of this entertainment and, incidentally the liveliest show any of us could remember having seen, was the Betty Hutton act. We did not attend the performance merely to hear the music or to see the jugglers at work, although they were both very good. We attended with eyes and ears all for Betty who had become a symbol of the life and fun we had left behind in the States. For more than an hour we sat entranced by her every movement (and she made many of them) as she sang for us and joked with us. Colonel Tanzola, always one to keep abreast of the situation, keyed the tempo at the end with his full co-operation as Betty kissed him soundly for the bracelets we had given to her as a token of our appreciation.

Finally came action on the rumor that we were to go to New Caledonia for a much-needed rest. We never got there. We ended up on Leyte in another campaign.

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Chapter 13: Leyte: Ormoc To Victory

We left Guam with only a partial combat load so we knew that we could expect a comparatively peaceful landing upon the Philippine Island of Leyte.

November 5, 1944, we landed at Tarragona, having to wade ashore in knee-deep water. But that made no great difference to us; we would have got wet anyhow as a heavy rain was falling. Nor did we waste time in an attempt to dry ourselves or our clothing but set to work right away pitching our pup tents in the mud and getting our makeshift kitchens ready to prepare the customary field rations for the best-fed army in the world. Our new quarters may not have been the most comfortable in the world but to the men of the 305th they were normal. We were once again at home.

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The campaign on the island was slowly reaching a stalemate. The combat strength of the enemy was not too great for the American forces, but the rugged terrain was certainly holding them to a standstill. The order soon came down from a higher command for the Division to go into action. We were to establish a beachhead at Ormoc, behind the forward defense positions of the enemy and break that stalemate.

Moving from Tarragona in landing craft and amphtracs, we hit the beaches. The 307th was on our left and the 306th was in reserve. The landing was completed against scattered resistance. We were lucky. The Jap's prepared defenses were well constructed, but at the time, the enemy lacked the manpower to hold them. They were bringing up reinforcements at the time of our landing, for, twenty minutes later, twenty thousand troops sailed into Ormoc Bay. Our naval escort took them by surprise and destroyed the better part of them. The remaining troops were easily wiped out as they forced their way to the beach. There could be no doubt that, had they landed before our arrival, our expedition would have been disastrous.

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From the 8th until the 11th we consolidated our new positions. We sent out reconnaissance and combat patrols while we awaited the arrival of the 184th Infantry, 7th Division, from the south. Our combat team was of sufficient strength to continue the advance, but we could not effectively push on and hold Ormoc at the same time. On the 11th we moved north from Ormoc to consolidate the lines and prepare for battle. The plan was to break the island's main line of defense along Highway 2.

By the next day a strong, desperately defended enemy position had been developed at Cogon, on the northern edge of Ormoc. This posi-

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Debris along the beach near Ormoc, after we had made the landing on Leyte.

tion was admirably chosen for it was organized for defense against attack from any direction. Dominating the swampy surroundings and having been placed squarely across Highway 2, the vital and only road running north from Ormoc to Libungao, it effectively prevented the movement of any but foot troops and thus limited our supply and equipment. We were in a jam. No vehicular by-pass existed and a rapid construction of one was impossible. The position was consequently the key to Ormoc Valley, the Valencia airfield, the enemy reserves, and a junction with friendly troops which were driving south from Carigara Bay. Every man of us realized fully that the longer the Japs retained it, the longer the completion of the Leyte campaign would have been delayed.

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Cogon was located on a promontory covered with dense jungle growth, it was protected by the shallow but wide Antilao River and supplemented by several hundred yards of rice paddies to the east and to the south and southwest. The river flowed south into Ormoc Bay through a winding, jungle-filled gorge. The highway bridge over the Antilao, directly south of the positions, had been destroyed. A half-mile span of waist-deep rice paddies also extended to the west, and to the

north and northwest lay open fields of coconut groves. In all directions the lie of the land offered the defenders perfect fields of fire for automatic weapons and excellent opportunity for concealment and observation. Overlooking all was a centrally located, three-story, reinforced concrete structure, the citadel of its defense. Keenly aware of the natural strength of the position, the Japs had expended considerable time and effort to augment its resistance potential.

Using the narrow bottleneck road as an exit, they had built a concentric series of strong defensive bands. Pillboxes were commanding, well dispersed, sturdily constructed and difficult to destroy. Great numbers of auxiliary weapons were individually located in circular, six- to eight-foot-deep emplacements in order that they might better support the pillboxes. These emplacements were undercut at the forward bottom for protection against our artillery. Each had trapdoors. The Japs dug dual foxholes, and those with multiple occupants had underground sleeping compartments with tunnels leading to firing bays. All man-made defenses were so well concealed by foliage and camouflage that they could seldom be detected more than a few yards away.

To make our job even more difficult the Japs had, as an added precaution against encirclement or envelopment, developed a strongpoint on a precipitous hill some six hundred yards to the northeast. Featured was a large, parapetted command post, centered in a double line of encircling entrenchments. This location, overlooking Cogon and all its approaches, left no advantage for the attacker. It provided the defender with superior observation of all movement and action. It created a positive counterattack threat to any force attempting the seizure of Cogon. It denied the use of the highway to the north. The troops manning these defenses were some of the best in the Japanese Army. They approximated an infantry regiment with plenty of available reinforcements and myriad automatic weapons. They were all well equipped soldiers, cunningly skillful, fanatically disciplined, and vigorously led. Apparently under instructions to hold at all costs, their stubborn, determined defense persisted to the death of the last man.

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On the morning of December 13 the 305th, less the 1st Battalion, began the attack. Feinting frontally, it passed the bulk of two battalions through elements of the 306th and 307th Regiments and maneuvered into favorable departure positions for a double envelopment. The objectives were Cogon and the high, covering hill. Cogon was pounded with light and medium artillery, chemical mortars, and supporting infantry weapons. Under these protective fires, the 2d Battalion, minus Company E, advanced several hundred yards to exposed ground on the

Antiaircraft observation tower near the pier at Ormoc.

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west flank of the position. There they received withering enemy machine-gun and rifle fire, coupled with mortars from concealed positions. All attempts to advance or extend the flank met increasingly stiff resistance. We increased pressure in the center, but our exertion seemed useless. Slowly we began to realize the enemy's numerical supremacy and the ruggedness of his position.

Due to our lack of shipping, the supporting power of self-propelled M8 guns and tanks was not then available. We badly needed additional assault troops and armor. With a mixture of relief and regret we suspended attack efforts until the following morning. It was a relief to us because we were exhausted. We regretted it because we wanted to get the whole affair over with as soon as possible.

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On the east flank, the 3d Battalion, less Company L, changed tactics, and swung widely to the east where it had before been engaging in a frontal attack. It laid down a heavy smoke screen to cover its approach to its objective, the steep hill. It closely followed the preparatory fires by assaulting and quickly seizing the enemy's entrenchments, and had hardly consolidated its gains before the enemy began a series of coordinated counterattacks. Before dark the battalion had bravely and bloodily repulsed five desperate enemy efforts to retake the position in ferocious hand-to-hand fighting. Such combat is probably the most dreaded, the most terrifying, the infantryman ever has to face, but not

a solitary member of the 305th Combat Team has reason to be ashamed of his reactions in this engagement. Rather he has reason to be proud. It is true that facing a cold, ruthless foe who is approaching with bayonet pointed squarely at one's throat does cause chills of fear to play up and down one's spine. But we faced them with that same, ruthless determination. Grim testimony of the savagery with which we had fought was found in the immediate vicinity: 415 enemy dead.

Though the battalion was seriously depleted by battle casualties and its men were physically exhausted, still it held the hill and denied its advantages to the enemy for three days and nights while the remainder of the Regiment systematically reduced Cogon. Late that afternoon the 1st Battalion, which had been protecting the rear of the Division at Camp Downes, returned to the Regiment at Ormoc. It began a wide envelopment, wading through waist-deep jungle swamp and rice paddies to secretly close a gap existing between the 305th and the regiment on the left, and made preparations to attack the enemy's rear from the west the next morning. It made the juncture just before dark and organized for the night three hundred yards to the west of the enemy's right rear, where it began to play havoc with the Japs' supplies and evacuation. Throughout the night the Regiment tenaciously held its ground, defending against numerous attackers who desperately attempted to infiltrate and to disorganize and destroy regimental and battalion dispositions and installations.

Except for the highway, the approach to the position was impassable for armor. Its extensive use was inadvisable before our seizure of the firm ground surrounding the reinforced concrete structure. In preparation for the use of promised armor support, E and L Companies joined under a provisional commander and, on December 14, attacked frontally to seize this area. The attack was preceded by an intense artillery and mortar barrage which seemed to smother the position. However, as the infantry approached the enemy resisted fiercely from well hidden covered entrenchments. Our advance was painfully slow. A supporting M10 tank destroyer traversed the front, spotting positions for the infantry by fire. It moved with its escape hatch open and dropped hand grenades into exposed emplacements. An armored bulldozer which had been committed to the fight literally tore apart strongly defended pillboxes and foxholes. In some cases Japs were buried alive; in others they were exposed to our rifle fire. The companies moved doggedly forward. By the use of fire power, flamethrowers, grenades, bayonets, knives, and whatever else we could find to fight with, we completed the destruction, and after a desperate melee which lasted for six hours captured the citadel.

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The assault on Cogon is supported by M10 tank destroyers.

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The 2d Battalion, on the west flank, pressed its attack to obtain a sufficient toehold for future armor support. The 1st Battalion struck east, quickly seized a vital road junction north of Cogon and cut off the enemy from any major reinforcements and bulk supplies.

December 15 was spent in the reduction of the encircled garrison. Their determination to resist was overcome only by the stubbornness of the attackers. On this day tanks and tank destroyers, M8 self-propelled guns, and antitank guns became available and were brought forward for the infantry's support. Thousands of shells from this new aid, in addition to those from our already supporting artillery and chemical and infantry mortars, riddled the position ahead of our advance. Again the final uprooting fell to the lot of the foot soldiers. It is always the lot of the dogface to be in at the kill. In vicious hand-to-hand fighting, supplemented by all the fighting tools at our disposal, we combed the area and tightened the ring, relentlessly killing the defiant enemy in our path. No, this is not a boast of our bloodthirstiness. It is simply a testimony of our realization that we had a job to do—and we were determined to see it done. The scourge ended in the late afternoon with only the dead remaining in the position. The Regiment

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The blockhouse is ours after three days of hard fighting.

then consolidated its gains and by nightfall it presented a continuous front to the enemy. In this action 2,153 of the enemy were killed and 5 prisoners were taken. The 305th stood a loss of 82 dead and 296 wounded. The evacuation of casualties during these three days of action was seriously pressing because of long-distance carries over exposed and difficult terrain, enemy harassment of approach routes by heavy mortar fire and small-arms sniping, and our own excessive losses of combat and medical personnel. The supply of ammunition, food, and water was also acute. There was a dire need for men to fill front-line gaps. Ammunition and supplies had to be carried forward by hand by all available personnel of support and service elements of the Regiment. After completing their deliveries, the same parties assisted as litter bearers in evacuating the wounded. It was a superhuman team effort to gain victory if ever there was such a thing, and it made us on the front lines proud to have such men backing us. Many individual deeds of heroism were performed in the carrying out of these tasks. Not nearly enough medals for gallantry were given to these men; their chief reward was the thanks we felt in our hearts for them and their own knowledge that they had done the job to the best of their ability.

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Though it was short of rations, water, and ammunition and sorely needed rest, the Regiment proceeded to strike north in the early morning of December 16, where it immediately encountered another strong Japanese position in an area covered by high grass, bamboo thickets, and other jungle growth. It might not have been as extensive as other

positions we had formerly met and taken, but the defense pattern was much the same: well concealed, surrounded by the usual supporting entrenchments, and heavily backed by mortars and automatic weapons. The 1st Battalion met desperate and determined defenders. We must give the Japs credit for the bravery they displayed. Bent upon stopping our advance, they counterattacked three times, and three times they were beaten back with heavy losses. To clear the area it was again necessary for us to slash through in close combat in conjunction with our armor support.

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On the 17th the attack was again renewed astride Highway 2 to the north, the 1st Battalion on the left, the 3d on the right, and the 2d Battalion close behind in reserve. Only sporadic firing was encountered until the road junction at Tambuco was sighted. Both battalions there met stiff resistance over a wide front and received considerable concentrated fire. Again we called forth all our weapons and fought determinedly and assaulted desperately until dusk when Tambuco finally crumbled.

On the 18th only minor action ensued in the move northward to Dayhagan, but we did capture a large enemy dump with vast stores. At Dayhagan we made juncture with friendly forces and the next day the 305th entered Valencia and organized to defend the airfield, remaining on this mission for only three days—three short days of comparative rest and quiet. On the 22d the 2d and 3d Battalions moved by truck again to the north to the Pagsangahan River, where we detrucked to attack in column along the Palompon road to the west. Meanwhile the 1st Battalion prepared for an amphibious assault on Palompon. The overland attack proceeded against negligible enemy resistance, but we did have considerable difficulty with the terrain. It was a one-way road across miles of rice paddies. The rivers were numerous, steep-banked, and mud-bottomed. All bridges had been destroyed. The 2d Battalion entered Matagob late on the 23d and was subjected to the direct fire of two 75s, which we silenced and followed up by killing the supporting infantry unit. That night the enemy made two attacks in force but again they were repulsed with heavy losses.

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The next day the attack progressed to the foothills of a nearby mountain range. Three field pieces were captured on the way. At the foothills we enveloped a strong enemy position astride the road and commanding the mountain pass. The defenders, approximately an infantry battalion, were well dug into the steep hills and jungle ravines,

Men of the 305th take a ten-minute break on Leyte.

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under houses in a nearby village and along the tortuous road. They were supported by mortars and machine guns concealed in caves.

On the 25th the 1st Battalion began a daring amphibious leap around the southern tip of Leyte, a distance of about 45 miles. It traveled in amphtracs without naval support. Early in the morning it assaulted a beach a mile north of Palompon and quickly seized the port and all its approaches, thus denying the enemy the use of his last main port.

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Our successes were beginning to count. A summary of action to date showed that during the action from December 7, 1944, to and including the 25th, our 305th Regimental Combat Team had killed 4,381 enemy troops and had captured 12. Our own losses were heavy, but they seemed minute when they were compared to the Japanese losses. We suffered 112 men killed in action, 43 died of wounds, and 385 wounded. Great stocks of enemy equipment and supplies were captured or destroyed during this period. It included 15 trucks, 5 tanks,

a scout car, 15 heavy and 62 light machine guns, thirteen 75mm guns, eight 70mm guns, four 40mm guns, three 20mm antiaircraft guns, eight 81mm mortars, two trench mortars, a flamethrower, three radios, two switchboards and several telephones, a large quantity of medical supplies, and approximately 300 tons of assorted ammunition. We had done very well indeed, but the job was not yet finished.

The end of the year found us in hot pursuit of a routed and disorganized enemy. We had secured and were holding the Palompon Road. The 3d Battalion had advanced toward the city, while the 2d Battalion, having made a landing behind the 1st, had advanced to the east. The junction of the two battalions opened the east-west road from Palompon to Matagob and Ormoc.

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On the morning of January 1, 1945, the Regiment began to move to an assembly area in the vicinity of Look. Our morale was high. To us tired, battle-worn infantrymen this movement indicated that there was a well deserved rest in store for us. The location selected was ideal. The battalion areas were on the grassy slopes of a rolling valley and plenty of water was available for washing and bathing. We had come to regard bathing as a luxury. We recalled that when we had been civilians we had taken our customary baths without considering it as something wonderful. But here a good, leisurely bath was a reward for our having done good work and having fought a good fight.

However, all of our time was not spent in resting and bathing. There were still Japs on Leyte. With this in mind we began patrolling in force the northwestern peninsula. The 1st Battalion executed several small assault landings at the west coast to mop up small enemy held villages, sometimes against desperate resistance. From the 2d until the 11th of the month reinforced patrols of company strength were used to clear the areas around Villaba, Cambamtoy, Matagob, Rizal, Halas, Cunbab, Himarco, Tagbong River, Tabinan, and San Pedro. The number of enemy killed during this period indicated that the remnants of the Japanese forces on Leyte had withdrawn to the mountainous country of this peninsula in sufficient numbers to require our use of larger forces than our patrols of company strength to complete the liberation of the island.

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In preparation for a mop-up campaign, the 2d Battalion was moved to Villaba on January 5 to relieve C Company which had served as the outpost in that area. Patrols were sent out to locate the main pockets of Japs. Artillery liaison parties accompanied many of these patrols

and on many occasions gave them effective support. Incoming reports indicated that the remaining enemy forces had concentrated their strength on the dense slopes of the hills east of Villaba. Preparations were next completed to utilize a large striking force to exterminate all the resistance remaining in the area.

From the 11th until the 15th the entire Regiment was employed to eliminate the pocket of resistance located some three thousand yards inland from Abijao. The 1st Battalion attacked north from Palompon and then east while the 3d moved north from Look and the 2d pushed southeast from Villaba.

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On the 11th the 1st Battalion encountered what was believed to be the command post of the Japanese 1st Division about fifteen hundred yards north of Tubuan. It was cunningly defended by four machine guns and well placed infantrymen. However, our forces occupied the position for the night with ten dead Japanese soldiers for companions.

The next day found the 1st and 3d Battalions moving over dense and mountainous terrain. In the course of doing a day's work the men of the 1st Battalion killed 150 Japs during their advance, while the 3d Battalion knocked out a light and a heavy machine gun. Elements of the 2d Battalion, in their southeastern push, met a strongpoint near Baliti. The enemy was protected on both flanks and was defending in depth, but was not powerful enough to stop us. We pushed on leaving 43 dead Japanese and taking with us 5 captured machine guns.

On the 13th Companies A and G coordinated their attacks and freed Abijao. Company A had come up from Tubuan to make a landing just north of the village and immediately began to push southward. G Company had moved south from Villaba. The 3d Battalion in an attack toward Butnga met scattered, poorly equipped Japs, and in conjunction with artillery fire destroyed 125 enemy troops. In the late afternoon of the same day elements of the 1st Battalion wiped out twenty-one more of the now almost beaten enemy along a creek bed east of Abijao.

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The 1st Battalion on the following day again attacked the high ground east of Abijao. Company A encountered a strongly defended point and expended a unit of fire but failed to reduce the position. Company B maneuvered widely around the right flank, but was stopped short when it met a center of resistance five hundred yards inland from A Company. It would have been foolhardy to attempt contact between the two companies, so both were withdrawn under cover of darkness.

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Captured Japanese weapons at Abijao.

However, when the next day arrived, the battalion concentrated its efforts and reduced both positions at a cost of two hundred dead Japanese. The battalion then returned to its area at Look.

In the meantime, at 0430 of that same morning, the 2d Battalion was attacked in its bivouac area by two battalions of Japs and their supporting artillery and mortar fire. It was apparent to us that the Japs were determined to wipe out the Villaba force. The fighting was fierce. It was shortly after noon that the attacking force was driven off leaving 265 of their dead on the battlefield. Companies B and K arrived at 1400 to reinforce the garrison.

An hour afterward on the same day the Japs struck at another spot. The armor supported supply convoy, crossing the mountains from Matagob to Palompon, was ambushed one and one-half miles from its starting point. We lost three 2½-ton trucks and several of our men.

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The Japs, still determined to remove our men at Villaba, attacked again at dawn on January 16 and again were repulsed. We counted 132 more Japanese dead. We were beginning to wonder how much more of it the enemy could or would take before they began to understand that we were licking the pants off them. As Pete and Joe were wont to remark: "They are just too stupid to know that we have their number. Why don't they just quit so we can all go home?"

The two attacks on Villaba were the writhing efforts of a vanquished enemy to strike a telling blow at our forces operating from this base.

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Forward scouts move across a clearing on Leyte.

The few remaining enemy now withdrew to the hills. There, amidst densely covering foliage, they lay in wait to ambush our patrols using the trails through those hills.

Company size patrols began operating throughout the peninsula to track down scattered groups of Japs. We encountered many bands varying in numbers—from twenty to sixty men daily. They still retained enough automatic weapons to make strong stands along the roads and trails, and the density of the foliage made it difficult for us to maneuver against these points. We pounded them heavily with mortar and artillery fire and eventually reduced them all.

A typical patrol consisting of a reinforced company moved on the 24th from Villaba toward Silad and Pinarut. At a point only about eight hundred yards north of our area, it received 53 rounds of artillery. Excellent work was done by our 305th Field Artillery observers who soon spotted the gun—and silenced it. Our patrol continued to move toward the north and east where it met a strong defensive position of several automatic weapons and riflemen. The ensuing fighting was intense for the remainder of the day and the position was successfully destroyed only after a strong patrol returned the following day to complete its destruction.

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During the period from the 17th to the 27th of January such patrols killed 223 Japs, destroyed two artillery pieces, and captured a light ma-

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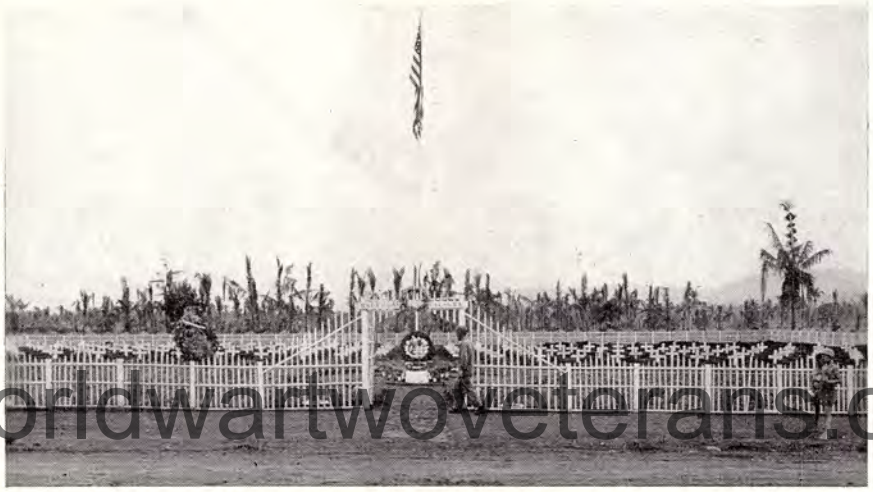
Dedication services at the Division Cemetery at Valencia.



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A view of the entrance to the 77th Division Cemetery at Valencia.

chine gun and a 20mm gun with a supply of ammo. Despite this excellent record, it became increasingly clear that another mop-up campaign was necessary. Too many Japs were infiltrating into the peninsula while attempting to escape the other American forces operating on the island. To prepare for this campaign the 1st Battalion was moved by amphtrac from Look to Villaba on January 26.

On the morning of the 27th another coordinated attack got under way. The 1st and 2d Battalions of the 305th Infantry made up the Villaba force. The 2d Battalion of the 307th began pushing from Matagob across the mountains toward the seacoast at Abijao. The 3d Battalion of our Regiment started a push from Tubuan northeast to engage the Japs in or about Abijao, Butnga, and the asphalt mine area. The 1st Battalion swept the area between Villaba and Silad, killing ten of the enemy. The 2d Battalion, holding the area around Villaba, had little action. The 3d, after seizing Tubuan and blowing up an ammunition dump, encountered a murderous cross fire from two .50 caliber machine guns, rifles, and mortars. Two reinforced platoons were sent out to overcome the resistance but they only managed to return the fire and scatter the Japs into the dense growth.

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The following morning the 1st Battalion cleared the area from Silad to Olin, leaving thirty dead Japs in their path. At the same time the 2d Battalion moved southward, sweeping the area between Villaba and Baliti. The 3d Battalion, at 0800, worked toward Hubasan. Its only obstacle was one LMG which it captured en route.

At left is the 3d Battalion's chapel near Palompon. Memorial services (right) on Leyte.

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Moving southward on the 29th, the 1st Battalion drove from Olin, encountering only small-arms and meager machine-gun fire on the way. While elements of this battalion were clearing away these pockets of resistance, the remainder of the unit busied itself by successfully clearing the area around Baliti, Silad, Ginabuyan, Olin, and Toag. The 3d Battalion attacked from the sea and secured Abijao, killing nine Japanese soldiers in the process. Company L moved inland from Hubasan and captured the high ground overlooking the entire area. Throughout the day a total of 99 Japs was killed.

On the morning of the 30th the 1st Battalion began an advance in the direction of San Vicente, but about 1515 our men encountered a strong volley of machine-gun, mortar, and small-arms fire. By this time, however, we were a group of organized systematic killers. Fighting furiously, we overwhelmed the opposition and soon reached the objective. The 3d Battalion, patrolling to Baliti, Silad, and three thousand yards inland from Villaba, wiped out all strongpoints found in that area. One hundred Japs were sighted by an artillery observation post. They were moving southwest in two groups east of Abijao. The artillery opened fire and scored several direct hits on the group. It was estimated that they were completely annihilated.

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The Villaba force struck south on January 31, encountering a well organized, strongly defended position to the west of Bugabuga. With the same systematic method the remainder of our Combat Team successfully employed, and aided by strong artillery support, the force overcame this nuisance and moved on to Bugabuga. Fifty-six more Japanese dead were left behind them. In the meantime, the 3d Battalion mopped up the remnants of the scattered enemy in its sector.

The Americal Division was beginning to relieve elements of the 305th Regimental Combat Team. As this relief became effective, the Regiment began moving to a bivouac area on Tarragona beach. Our work here was finished. Once again we had done a good job. And once again we found further work ahead of us. By the 7th of the following month the Second to None unit was completely assembled and preparations for the forthcoming Operation Iceberg in the Ryukyus were begun.

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Chapter 14: The Kerama Retto Operation

The 305th Combat Team reassembled at Tarragona on February 9, 1945. We had done a good job on the Japs around the Palompon–Villaba area and some 3,500 sons of Heaven had joined their honorable ancestors.

We had thought that by this time we had earned some kind of a rest but we apparently had not. Weapons, clothing, and all missing equipment were replaced. All personnel were issued a pair of new combat boots to replace the old shoes and leggins. Some of us had previously got our boots. But feet and boots didn't seem to get along together, so as much as possible we clung to the low-cuts. Three new M18 tank destroyers replaced the earlier M10 model and all radios were overhauled. We were pretty certain something was on the fire.

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Soon the TQMs were hard at work, and the planning for the Ryukyus was under way. Plans were laid out, photos were studied and preparatory orders were sent to the unit commanders.

By the 26th the combat loading was begun. The plans prepared by the TQMs were completed and the vehicles, which had already been numbered, were lined up in the regimental area near the beach. The first ship to enter the harbor was the USS *Draw,* which the 3d Battalion immediately took over together with all the detached units that were assigned to that particular ship. Loading was completed the night of the 28th, which wasn't bad time considering all that had to be done.

Other ships to arrive later were the USS *Henrico, Rixey, Tate,* and the *Chase.* The *Henrico* and the *Chase* were old friends of ours. They had been with us back in Chesapeake Bay in our amphibious training days. They were soon loaded and all was in readiness for the practice landings that were to take place prior to shoving off. The *Chase,* although she was called the "Lucky Chase" from ETO days, had some trouble, tearing a hole in her bottom. The 2d Battalion was forced to transfer bags and cargo to the USS *Pitt* and the *LST 990.* As it turned out maybe she was lucky after all to miss one of the toughest campaigns the 77th Division had ever been in.

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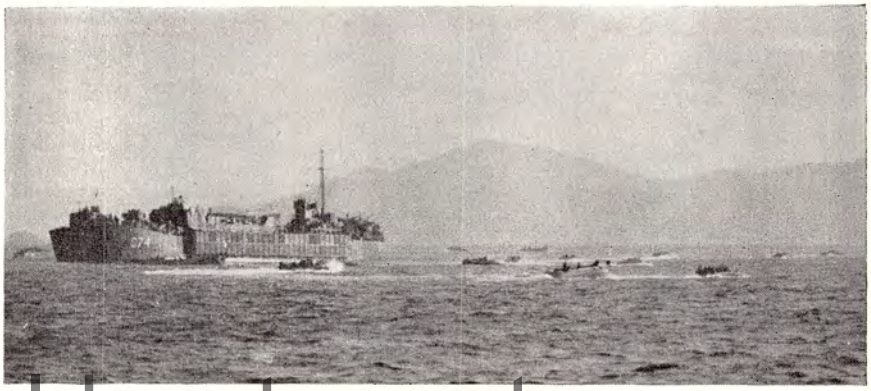
Life was much the same as it had been on any other ship movement we had made. Booklets of the islands of the Nansei Shoto were given out. Top-secret information was posted in all conspicuous places. Orientation and battle plans were given to us in the order of the islands we were to hit. The usual drills for debarkation, abandon ship, and air protection were again stressed to the utmost. There was reason to believe that there would be plenty of air action, but we all had complete con-



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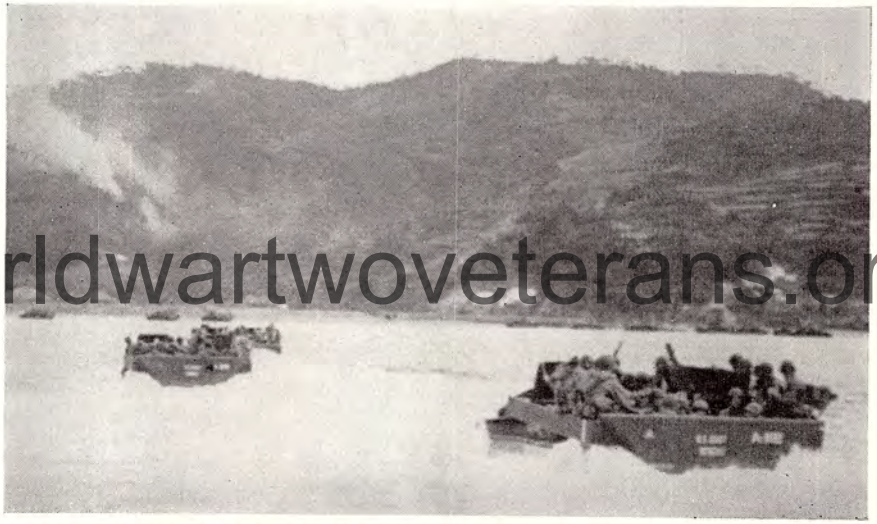

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Top: Landing craft circling before the initial assault on the Keramas. Center: The first wave prepares to strike at Aka Shima; Lower: The 1st Battalion's second wave moves in on Zamami Shima.

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A view of the town of Zamami and the landing beach.

fidence in our fly boys so, for the most part, we put such thoughts out of mind.

On March 26 we got our first look at the "Dragon's Tail," as the Ryukyus are known because of the continuous string of islands running from Japan proper to Formosa. The naval guns were already raking the beaches and installations of the various islands we were to hit.

The 3d Battalion assaulted Gold Beach 1, the island of Aka Shima, being the first troops of the RCT to engage the enemy. This campaign opened six days before D-day of the Ryukyus campaign, and was the third and most spectacular operation of the 3d Battalion in World War II. They landed near the village of Aka on a beach fringed by heavy reefs, opposed by slight enemy opposition which consisted of scattered sniper action and occasional mortar fire.

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Assault companies advanced rapidly inland, securing the battered village and using naval gunfire support plus their own supporting weapons on spot targets in place of the 305th Field Artillery, which as yet had not been able to land on Geruma Shima. It was much the same story with a bit of a different twist. By noon we had fought our way inland some twelve hundred yards, which was not bad.

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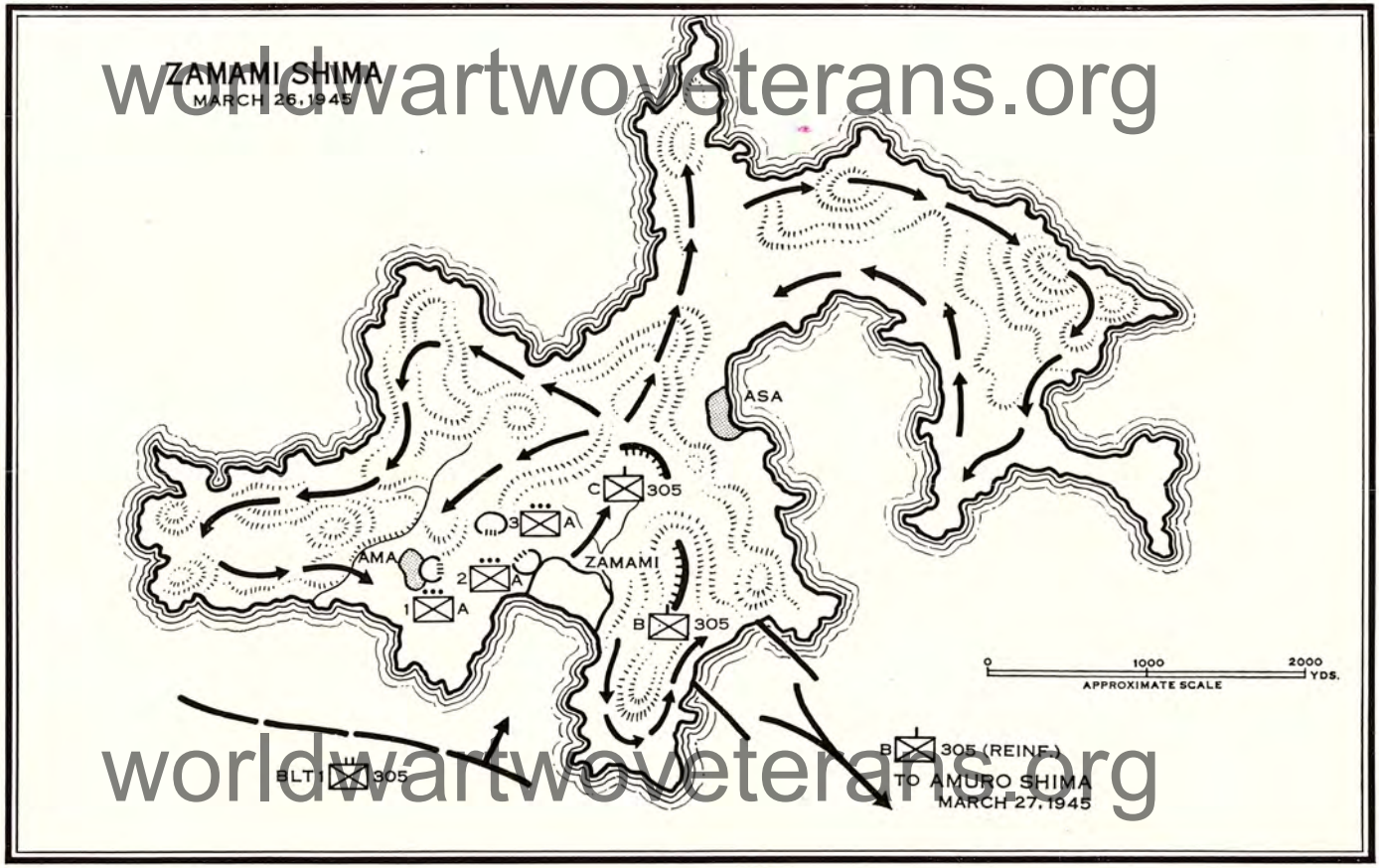

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Some of the suicide boats burned and destroyed in the Keramas.

The 1st Battalion found more difficulties in their more heavily fortified and larger island of Zamami Shima. At the assault companies approached Violet 1, at 0900, they were not only greeted by the expected shallow coral reef, but also by a thick concrete sea wall fifteen feet from the water's edge, making it impossible for amphtracs to move inland with us. The men poured out of the landing craft at the prescribed time, climbed over the sea wall, and moved in to complete their mission. The Nips resisted the landings of the first waves only with small-arms fire that caused very little damage. As soon as they were on the beach, however, the Japs opened up with light mortars and automatic weapons which for a short time kept us in a small pocket near our landing point. As soon as the additional waves were on the beach we set out to take and secure the town of Zamami. The town, already flattened by naval fire, was cleared of all enemy snipers and fire was poured on the fleeing enemy, which we believed to be one rifle platoon plus about three hundred laborers dressed as soldiers, who took to the hills directly behind Zamami. By noon the village and the surrounding high ground were firmly in our hands.

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During the afternoon we improved our positions by taking high ground near the central portion of the island in preparation for an all-out assault to clear the island of all hostile forces by the night of March 27. This attack would be supported by troops of the 2d Battalion who were now alerted aboard the USS *Pitt* and would join us the morning of the 27th to complete the final assault.

The Japanese forces on Zamami Shima, frightened by the air and naval bombardments, had abandoned Zamami town, except for snipers,

A ten-minute break on Zamami Shima.

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and fled to the hills the morning of the 26th. The panicky Japs, who from all indications had the customary intentions of dying for the Emperor, had not taken advantage of the natural defense available on the island. Undefended Zamami, with its thick concrete and stone walls around each house, was a natural fortress. The houses themselves were well constructed and compactly placed with only a few yards between buildings. The lanes were too narrow for even the smallest of our armored vehicles to operate. With infantrymen well placed and machine guns covering the lanes of the village, it might have been a costly fight. Fortunately it was not.

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Back on Aka Shima, after a very successful morning, the 3d Battalion added to their accomplishments by launching an attack of three spearheads, consisting of one reinforced company each, deep into enemy territory. This resulted in heavy losses to the enemy in men and matériel. These spearheads covered two-thirds of the island, each ending near the coast after the central portion of the island had been cleared of all weapons and installations that might have been a threat to the naval anchorage to be established in the Kerama Retto group.

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Civilians return from hillside caves on Zamami. Military Government took charge of them.

On Aka, the morning of the 27th, the plan called for the companies to advance to commanding terrain at three points from which each company was assigned a sector of the island to clear. They were to destroy all enemy personnel, equipment, and installations found in their areas. Patrols moved away from the perimeter at 0800, covering all sectors of the island. Company I, patrolling the northeast coast of Aka Shima, found and destroyed 38 suicide boats (designed for use against the Navy when it reached Okinawa), an inter-island boat, and an ammunition dump located in caves near the beach in their sector. At 1030, K Company, patrolling inland from the southern tip of the island, received machine-gun fire from a Jap defensive position situated on the reverse slope of a hill near the center of the island of Aka. After feeling out the position, the patrol reported that approximately 75 Japs, well armed and fortified, were opposing them. The company called for an air strike. Following this bombardment the position was assaulted by Company K from the south and Company L from the west. They found a number of dead Japs, a destroyed dual-purpose gun, and a considerable amount of abandoned ammunition and equipment. The remaining Japs had evacuated their position during the air strike.

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At the end of the day the patrols had covered the island, killing all Japs and destroying all equipment and installations that were found. No coastal guns were on the island. All communication equipment had

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Men of the 305th take cover behind the sea wall prior to advancing into the town of Zamami.

been destroyed. Aka Shima was now secured, except for small bands of enemy hiding in the hills or in caves along the coast.

On Zamami Shima, the Japanese forces, while fleeing from Zamami town in a disorganized manner, failed to take advantage of the commanding ground overlooking the village. Thus the infantrymen of the 1st Battalion, in spite of heavy mortar fire, most of which fell harmlessly in the town, were able to advance up the hills and establish defensive positions on the high ground overlooking the village by the night of March 26.

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It was in these positions that we received six counterattacks in the true Banzai style, between 0001 and 0600 of the following morning. The first attack commenced at 0001, as about 150 Nips, using pistols, sabers and knee mortars, rushed the position occupied by C Company and one platoon of D Company. The Japs did succeed in reaching the edge of C's outer defenses in spite of the heavy fire from all of our infantry weapons, but they were forced to withdraw from this point to reorganize for the next attack. Five similar attacks came during the night, each with a smaller force, until 106 of the 150 were piled in

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The 1st Battalion advancing through shattered Zamami under fire.

front of the foxholes occupied by Charlie Company. Company B, in a nearby position, repulsed the only Jap attack on their position with equal success, killing 35 of the 60 involved. These Japanese counter-attacks greatly simplified the conquest of Zamami, for their strength was expended in their all-out effort to inflict casualties by rushing our positions. We now had only a few scattered Japs and a large number of unarmed Korean laborers to round up. Our patrols, operating from their company positions on the high ground, moved to the north and northeastern tips of the island on the morning of the 26th without opposition.

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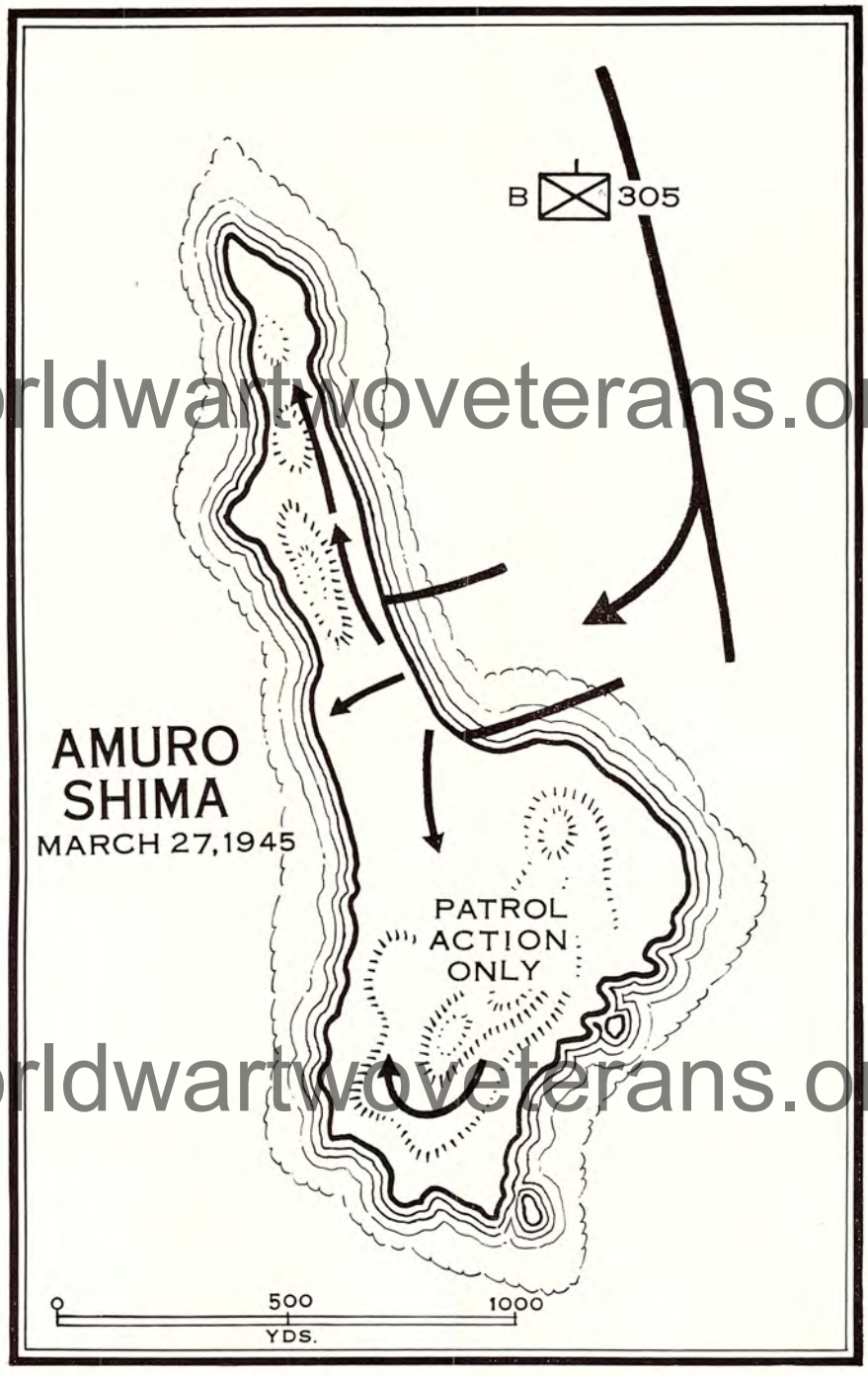
Company B embarked in LVTs at Violet Beach, Zamami, at 1230, and landed on Amuro Shima at 1300 unopposed. Moving rapidly inland, they quickly covered the small island without finding any enemy. The island was declared secured at 1400 and B Company returned to Zamami and bivouacked for the night in and around Zamami town.

The 2d Battalion, having landed on Zamami the morning of the 27th, moved to high ground and dug in. In conjunction with the 1st Battalion early on the 28th patrols from both battalions moved



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A lunch of K rations on Geruma Shima.

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away from their company positions at 0800, with the 1st Battalion covering the north and northeast parts of the island and the 2d Battalion covering the south and west. Except for two groups of five Japs each, killed by patrols of Company E in the western portion of the island, no opposition was found. An F Company patrol of one reinforced platoon, assigned the neck of land that led to the extreme southern tip of Zamami, found the going not so easy. The platoon leader halted his men in the hills overlooking Beach Violet 3 and sent one squad to the beach. It was pinned down by mortar fire coming from the southern extremity of the island, and, unable to withdraw over the ridge, was picked up by LVTs at 1215. The remainder of the platoon returned to F Company's area at this time to arrange for naval fire support and to prepare for an assault on this position. At 1300 the companies, reinforced by a platoon from H, advanced to a position in the hills back of Beach Violet 3. As the barrage lifted at 1415, two platoons attacked along the beach while the third platoon moved along the high ground overlooking the position. The Japs withdrew into a series of nearby caves and placed heavy fire on the two platoons moving along the beach. The platoon on the high ground found the caves to be in

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This was the 1st Battalion objective for the day on Zamami Shima.

such a position that they could be of no assistance to the forces on the beach. At 1700 Company F, unable to cross this open ground without tank support, returned to the bivouac area and made plans for assaulting the position on March 29 with amtank support.

Their mission accomplished, the 1st Battalion reembarked on LSTs at 0900, March 29. All troops of the battalion were reloaded by 1200 and were awaiting further orders. At the same time Fox Company, moving into position to assault the series of caves at the extreme northern tip of Zamami, halted in the hills back of the beach to await the arrival of two amphibious tanks that were to support the attack. At 0930 these tanks arrived and the company attacked along the beach. The mortar and amtank fire kept the Japs in the caves, allowing the company and the two tanks to reach the mouths of the caves at 1230 without losing a man. The tanks poured direct fire into the caves, while Fox waited to assault. Before the company moved, the tank fire hit a gasoline dump which exploded, sealing all occupants in the caves. That taken care of, we returned to the bivouac area, tired but jubilant. Other patrols were covering all sectors of the island, but only minor resistance was encountered and was quickly destroyed.

All resistance having been dealt with in the prescribed manner, the 2d Battalion prepared to turn the island of Zamami Shima into a base for naval operation and repair. They were assigned to garrison the island and to take care of any stragglers that might still be left. Bulldozers began construction of roads, and by the afternoon of that day roads had been put into operation from the beach into the hills west of Zamami town.

The remainder of the outfit was loaded on to LSTs to await further orders. We didn't have a long wait: word came down that the Division was to hit a small island on the west coast of Okinawa, by the name of Ie Shima.

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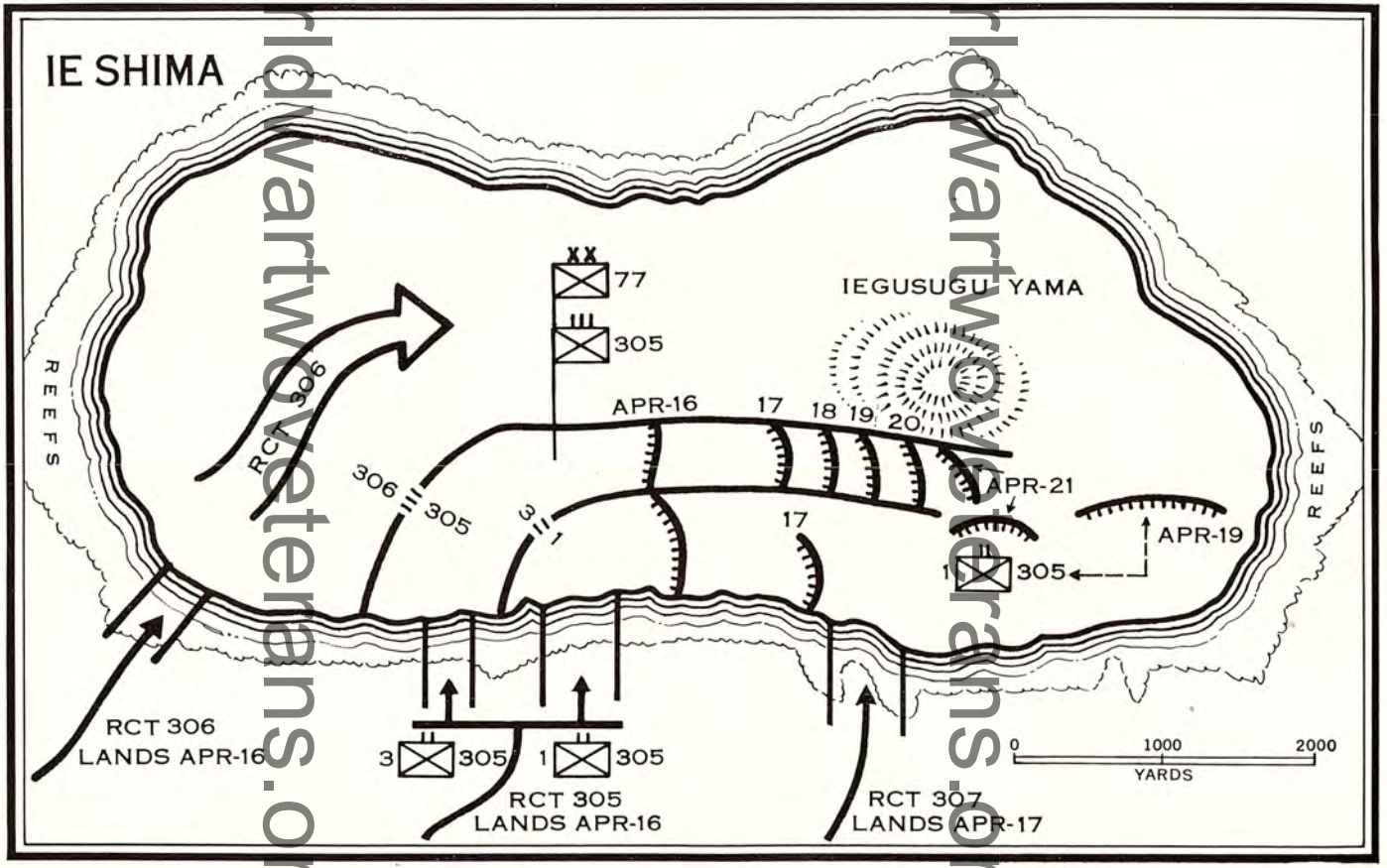

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Chapter 15: Ie Shima

On completion of the operations on Aka Shima, Zamami Shima, and Amuro Shima, the 1st and 3d Battalions were reloaded on LSTs. The 305th Regimental Headquarters and attached units were loaded aboard the USS *Henrico.* The 2d Battalion was detached temporarily from the Regiment on April 1 and operated under Division control as a garrison force on Zamami Shima.

We were placed in floating reserve status to wait and sweat in anticipation of what was next to come. We were soon to know.

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We had heard innumerable accounts of the Japs' new secret weapon, the one thing on which they pinned their hopes of yet winning the battle of the Pacific, but as yet we had not realized the damage this weapon which they called Kamikaze could do. When we did learn we were taught the hard way—by a mixture of grief and shock.

On April 2 the *Henrico,* en route to the night rendezvous area, was crash-bombed by one of the Kamikaze planes. The Nips must have had a sixth sense when they aimed at that particular ship, for important documents, records and maps relative to future operations were destroyed. But that was not all we lost. Colonel Tanzola, the CO, was killed, and many other headquarters personnel were killed or wounded.

The men gathered in sorrowing groups to mourn and discuss the death of Colonel Tanzola. "He was a great guy," was the usual obituary passed among us. "One of the best. A lot of times I never thought of him as an officer. He acted just like any other soldier." Those were crude obituaries but no more fitting tribute could have been made. For the colonel was more to us than our commanding officer—he was our buddy.

On the night of the 3d we lay about three hundred miles off the coast to avoid as much as possible any more such aerial attacks. The Japs were bent upon detaining our advance even though it cost them heavily in both pilots and planes. Trouble followed us only slightly until April 14, when we were told to make ready for another battle.

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Within the next two days reconnaissance was made of the beaches, the terrain and the enemy. Teams made soundings and marked channels through the surf.

No obstacles or mines were discovered; the sea was calm. On a later reconnaissance the UDTs drew small-arms fire from a green patch along the beach, but, for lack of noticeable traffic, it was assumed that the enemy had withdrawn inland leaving only land mines to harass our landing.

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Colonel Vincent J. Tanzola, CO of the 305th Infantry from Indiantown Gap until his death aboard the USS Henrico on 2 April 1945.

Three artillery battalions, two light and one medium, had landed on the island of Minna Shima on the morning of the 15th to furnish artillery support for our subsequent assault on that island. The 305th Field Artillery Battalion was in direct support of our RCT. Early in the morning of the assault the field artillery's liaison team was in the air over Ie. No concentration of enemy or gun emplacements were to be seen.

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Carrier-based planes of the Fifth Fleet had been executing air strikes on the island while we were still at sea. They strafed and dropped Napalm over all the beaches. They flew constant missions over the island during the landing. Following that they remained at sea, ready and waiting for any call should we need them.

Early in the morning of the 16th we prepared for the assault landings. Almost as though the Japs knew what was coming, they sent several

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A scene from the forward winch table of the Henrico, showing the starboard side of the bridge and the point of impact. The commodore's cabin on this side was completely demolished.

air attacks our way, but with our own antiaircraft weapons and the Navy's planes we managed to repulse all the raids the enemy sent at us. At 0630 we loaded into tractors and twenty minutes later we departed for the rendezvous area. The sea was still very calm; the weather was mild and clear; visibility was excellent. Everything seemed to be in our favor. The first wave left the rendezvous during a heavy naval bombardment that blanketed the beach in smoke. Fighter and TBF planes continued to strafe the beaches as assault waves neared the shore. As the weather conditions were in our favor the tractors and tanks were able to negotiate the beaches with only a minimum of trouble. Nor did the enemy make any attack on us while we were waterborne.

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The assault waves of the 1st Battalion landed on Beach Red T-2 without opposition. With Company A on the left and Company C on the right the battalion moved inland in the prescribed zone of action. Contact with the 3d Battalion on the left was established at 0800 and was maintained. We continued the advance.

No longer were we novices when it came to combat. Nine months had passed since our baptism of fire on Guam. Though we appeared to have no opposition we still did not relax vigilance. Combat experience had taught us that we might never know when or where the enemy would strike. And the enemy struck.

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We pay our final respects to Ernie Pyle, the Doughboy's best friend.

We were continuing the advance when the Nips opened up with machine-gun fire northeast of our zone of action. Without any hesitation on our part we pushed ahead and routed a squad of machine gunners. Pete was one of those who were in on the kill. He rejoined his buddies with a self-satisfied smirk playing about his lips. "Look at me," he said, "I have just done the Japs a big favor. They are always happy to die for their Emperor and join their honorable ancestors. Well, fellows, I have just helped make a group of them very happy."

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Throughout that area land mines were found both in the fields and on the roads. Camouflage of these mines was very crude and there was ample evidence that they had been recently and hastily placed. They gave us much food for thought. In one respect, the Japs were ingenious soldiers. They used as land mines all types of aerial bombs,

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Memorial services for Ernie Pyle on Ie Shima.

mortar shells encased in wooden boxes, and the customary antipersonnel mines or booby traps with trip wires. But their use of bombs and mortar shells also gave us a suggestion that they were becoming desperate and that they were using everything at their disposal as a means of slowing our progress.

We continued the advance, meeting scattered sniper fire and more machine gunners left behind in suicidal attempts to inflict casualties among us.

The 3d Battalion met stiffer resistance than did the 1st. The Japs made good use of the coral-rock emplacements, caves and tombs, fighting a stubborn delaying action. Our armor and artillery were of little use to us. This was a case of getting in and digging them out the hard way.

That night we men of both battalions had much to talk about. "Did you know that Ernie Pyle is with us?" Joe asked Pete.

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"Sure," Pete replied, "and he's right up on the front lines with us."

"I've heard about him," cut in another man. "I can't understand a guy like that. He doesn't have to be here, but here he is. You can bet that if I were as old as he is and knew that I would never be drafted I would stay home."

"That isn't his way," said Joe. "He's got a job to do just as we have and he's the kind of guy who is going to get it done the right way. Some war correspondents will stay way back with the rear echelons and get their stories from G-2 reports. But not Ernie Pyle. He's got to get his information first-hand."

Snipers stall the advance from positions on this hill on le Shima.

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"This puts us in the same class as the Marines," said Pete. "They do the same kind of work that we do, but do the people at home ever hear about the glory of the Infantry? They do not. Whenever they hear of a lot of fighting being done they think only of the Marine Corps. Somebody said once—I read it—that the Navy gets the pay, the Marines get the glory, but the Infantry does the dirty work. The Marines never go into battle without carrying a press agent along with them. Well, now the folks at home will get some straight dope on the Infantry. Ernie Pyle will be our press agent."

"I have nothing against the Marines," said a soldier. "Remember back on Guam how they fought beside us as though we belonged to the same combat team?"

"Sure," agreed Pete, "but why should they get all the credit?"

The following night the conversation was a bit different. Pete and Joe shared neighboring foxholes. "Hear about Ernie?" asked Joe.

"Yeah, tough, wasn't it? Did you hear how it happened?"

"I heard that Ernie was riding in a jeep and a machine gun opened fire on it so all the men in the car hit the dirt. Well, Ernie apparently thought he couldn't write about what he couldn't see, so he raised his head just a little, but that little bit was too much for him."

The 305th Infantry had lost another valuable friend.

On the night of the 17th and the very early morning of the 18th enemy forces which we estimated as a reinforced company launched repeated attacks against the 3d Battalion's lines. By dawn their attempt at mass infiltration was completely crushed. One hundred and fifty-two enemy dead were found lying before our positions. Before we moved out we took time to investigate their bodies and the equipment they carried. The majority of them carried rifles but many of them carried nothing more dangerous than bamboo sticks sharpened as improvised bayonets. Some of the bodies had bags of grenades tied to their belts or lying close by and others carried mortar shells in wooden boxes. Some of these Japs had made human bombs of themselves by rushing our positions until they decided they were close enough and then used their mortar shells and grenades to blow up both themselves and our men. Needless to say, we suffered losses in both men and equipment but the Japs took the worst beating.

Again we attacked and again we found scattered fire throughout the area. The 3d Battalion had moved ahead only about two hundred yards when a machine gun placed a stream of fire into the left sector of our line. That machine gun was quickly silenced and once more we moved forward, now hindered only by scattered sniper fire.

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A Japanese machine-gun emplacement on Ie Shima.

Early in the afternoon, troops of the 307th pushed through our lines to continue the advance, and both the 1st and 3d Battalions reverted to a reserve status and prepared a defensive position for the night. In the meantime civilians of Ie Shima who had sought refuge in the numerous caves were sought out and given food and medical care, and were then sent to the prisoner-of-war inclosures.

During the morning of the 18th mortar and machine-gun fire from Iegusuku Yama began to fall around us, but no great damage was done. At 0800 we received a warning order for an attack along the right flank of the 307th Regimental Combat Team with the mission of protecting the Division's main forces against attacks from the southeast.

At 1120 our 1st Battalion moved into a covering zone from the right flank of the 3d Battalion of the 307th to the beach. Contact was established with the left flank and we reverted to the control of the other regiment. In the afternoon we launched our drive north with Company A on the left and Company B on the right. In an advance of one thousand yards we encountered slight sniper fire, but we were able to reach our objective. The order then came through that we were to withdraw to a defensive position for the night.

The 3d Battalion was put under the strain of orders that were issued and countermanded every few minutes. Finally everything was settled and at 1130 the battalion hopped off behind an artillery preparation. Inasmuch as the enemy had built an elaborate defensive network

in the town proper directly across our zone of advance, the battalion was required to fight along an 800-yard front to maintain contact. The enemy fought a determined delaying action from house to house. He used coral pillboxes, caves, and stone ruins. Our artillery fire was ineffective against such emplacements. We employed the M8s and the M18s, now known as Hellcats, but their movement was largely restricted by mines and the narrow, debris-filled streets. Enemy machine gunners and mortarmen were throwing everything at their disposal except the mountains at us, and had they not been too firmly planted to the earth we should undoubtedly have received them too. Each sniper had to be ferreted out of his hiding place individually.

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During the night we were again bothered by the "rats" crawling out of their holes to scavenge our front lines.

Morning dawned on a sorrowful looking island. It was not much larger than the farm that Pierre grew spuds on in Aroostook County, Maine, or the ranch over which Pedro allowed his sheep to graze in New Mexico. The artillery had begun their morning tuning-up process by laying down concentrations in the town for thirty minutes.

After we moved away from our line of departure we encountered a heavy flow of small-arms fire not more than a hundred yards to the east. The terrain again favored the enemy's fighting a delaying action, and he made good use of it. As we continued our push the use of artillery was restricted by the proximity of adjacent units. All streets were mined; machine guns firing from coral rock emplacements prevented mine-detector teams from clearing avenues of approach for our tanks. Progress of the attack was slow and costly.

Back in our basic training days we were occasionally asked the question by our instructors: "If you were in combat and your buddy beside you was wounded would you stop to give him a hand or would you continue the advance?" The proper answer, of course, was that we should continue with the attack. One man's stopping to help a buddy might prove costly to the operation and there would result from it more than one casualty for the medics to look after. There were a few of us who considered that answer rather selfish; what kind of a buddy would we be if we left a friend lying in pain behind us? But now we were able to see the answer to that old question from a different light. When a friend dropped from a wound the soldier often did not see him fall or had no time to think about his falling anyhow. So it was when Joe stopped a round. No one missed him until later.

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The men in the rear saw them carrying him back on a stretcher. Joe was lying there grinning and waving to friends as the medics carried

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A demolition team clears a vehicle by-pass on Ie Shima.

him to the improvised hospital. "Hey, Jim," he shouted as he went by, "look at me; I'm riding for a change. Am I lucky! While you boys are sleeping in foxholes tonight I will be taking it easy on a cot way back in the rear."

Joe was no less brave than any other man in the Combat Team. We have all seen movies of the heroes being carried away from the scene of the battle on stretchers as they fight the medics to get back to their buddies. Well, we had seen a lot of combat by this time and as yet none of us, wounded or in fine shape, had voiced a desire to get back to the front. Such things happen only in stories, in our opinions. Joe, at any rate, never returned to the combat team again.

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In the meantime our forward elements had fought their way to the main line of resistance in the center of the town. Nine pillboxes blocked approaches on the left sector. Flanking battalions were unable to cover their assigned zones. As its primary mission, the 3d Battalion was ordered to maintain contact. It was necessary for the commanding officer to extend the battalion line into parallel zones of advance. Con-

tact between squads was difficult; fields of fire averaged ten to twenty feet. Under these conditions the battalion was not in a position to concentrate its forces on the major points of resistance or make full use of its heavy weapons, its artillery or its armor.

The 1st Battalion, however, still remained attached to the 307th Infantry. The battalion was assigned the mission of attacking north between the 2d and the 3d Battalions of the 307th and seizing the high ground south of Iegusugu Yama. We managed to take that objective about 1400 but we were immediately subjected to intense machine-gun and mortar fire, which fell along our entire line for two hours. We were forced to withdraw to a defensive position for the night.

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At daylight we again attacked and seized the same high ground we had taken and lost the day before. We dug in and prepared to pass a restless day doing little more than listening to the twan-nng-gg of enemy-hurled projectiles passing over our heads.

The 3d Battalion passed a very quiet night. In the morning we and our opponents continued the same bitter house-to-house fighting. Their general defensive tactics remained unchanged, so it was a matter of our advancing a block at a time using streets as phase lines. Our contact platoon on the left was withdrawn and used to strengthen the center of the battalion line. Visual contact with the 306th and physical contact with the 307th were maintained. This was necessary because of the close and combined use of the artillery and mortar fire we were so dependent upon.

Those of us who were with the 1st Battalion had prepared merely to hold what we had taken, but at 1215 we were ordered to renew the attack toward Iegusugu Yama and hold what ground we were able to seize. Contact with our adjacent units had not been broken. After an hour and a half of fighting and advancing, units from the two flanking regiments (the 306th and our own 305th) met and pinched our unit, still attached to the third regiment of the Division, out of the fight. We reverted from control of the 307th to the status of Division reserve.

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In the sector occupied by the 3d Battalion an enemy force which we estimated as two reinforced platoons infiltrated into our area on the left flank. We completely crushed this attack and the Japs were forced to retreat—thirty of them were unable to retreat very far.

Perhaps it only seems that each engagement we entered was more intense than the preceding battles. The Japs were clever. They were brave. More than that, they were fanatical. A fanatical enemy is more dangerous than a brave one. A brave man will fight well and hard but he is also inclined to be cautious. A fanatical enemy throws caution to the winds. These Japs were fanatical. They had very little at their

disposal with which to fight—and yet they fought. They gave us very little chance to rest between skirmishes.

So it was that we of the 3d Battalion were informed immediately after our repast the following morning to (1) seize and hold a north-south line until pinched out by the attack of flanking units; (2) guide the 3d Battalion of the 307th into contact with the 2d Battalion of the 306th. At 1130 the forward unit had reached the holding line with a grand total of twelve emplacements destroyed in the left sector of our zone. The reserve company was given the mission of mopping up isolated snipers remaining in the town, blowing caves, and furnishing protection for the Army and Navy interpreter teams operating in the town. The mountain that rose like a finger pointing to the sky was dotted with caves and pillboxes—and snipers. Flamethrowers, bazookas, and pole charges were our main implements of reducing the emplacements. We also used them to destroy mines which were preventing our all-out use of 37mm AT guns and M8 and M18 tanks. On this day, April 21, 1945, all organized resistance was broken on the island, but there still remained a lot of mopping up for us to do. We erected our night defensive position on the eastern side of Ie Town.

Both battalions spent the 22d in assembly areas cleaning equipment, destroying supplies and installations the enemy left behind, and doing the unpleasant job of burying the enemy dead. Under the supervision of specialized engineer personnel, troops searched out, marked for destruction and blew up all mines.

Civilians streaming into our lines were sent to the beach area where they were turned over to Military Government. It was very surprising to us to see the way they cringed at their first sight of an American fighting man. The Japs had them so thoroughly schooled into thinking we were the worst sort of barbarian that they were afraid to leave their caves. For that matter, there were a few Japanese soldiers still at large who prevented some noncombatants from leaving their caves even though they had a desire to surrender. Many of the civilians were wounded, not only by our own fire, but by the Japanese soldiers themselves who were either careless or thoughtless in their last mad attempts to die for their Emperor. Those who did manage to get into our lines, bearing their white flags so that we would not fire upon them, found that we were not so barbaric after all, that we fed them and gave them needed medical attention. Some were induced to return with our patrols and seek out their friends and relatives and tell them of the fair treatment we were offering prisoners.

From April 23 to 27 we of both battalions devoted our efforts to mopping up the last elements of the scattered Nips' resisting forces.

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The majority of them had sought sanctuary in coastal caves where they were protected from our small-arms fire but not from our flame-throwers and very little from our white-phosphorus grenades.

Gradually many Japs who had previously indicated a preference of dying in battle began to give themselves up in surprisingly increasing numbers. Most of the enemy troops had been air force personnel and maintenance crews, but the resistance they offered us in the line of infantry combat we recognized as being to their credit. They utilized the terrain to full advantage, preferring not to defend the beaches. The fact that large numbers of land mines had been found in the roads and areas behind the beaches told us that they knew only too well that invasion was imminent. They had made their main effort on the high ground and in the town of Ie. They had made a valiant last stand in the vicinity of Iegusugu Yama. The suicide groups that made nightly raids upon our lines were of little military importance, only adding to the casualties they received. They had used no armor or artillery on us and none was found by our patrols in their mop-up activities. They were clever, we had previously learned, in the manner in which they made mines of weapons which had been designed for other uses. An undetermined amount of demolition and aerial bombs, gasoline and other materials were destroyed during the final period and we have no means of knowing how many such stores of supplies were destroyed in our destruction of the caves.

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After the Ie Shima campaign the 1st Battalion and the RCT Headquarters remained on the east end of the island until May 6, during which period the Regiment worked in conjunction with Island Command Headquarters, exterminating what little remained of an enemy force on the island. In the meantime plans were made for the defense of the island against counter-landing and possible airborne attacks.

As a result of this campaign an important island in the Nansei Shoto group was acquired. It suited us as a base for further operations in the area and for use against the Japanese homeland. The island contained two airstrips which were suitable for the development of fighter and bomber airstrips for our own aircraft.

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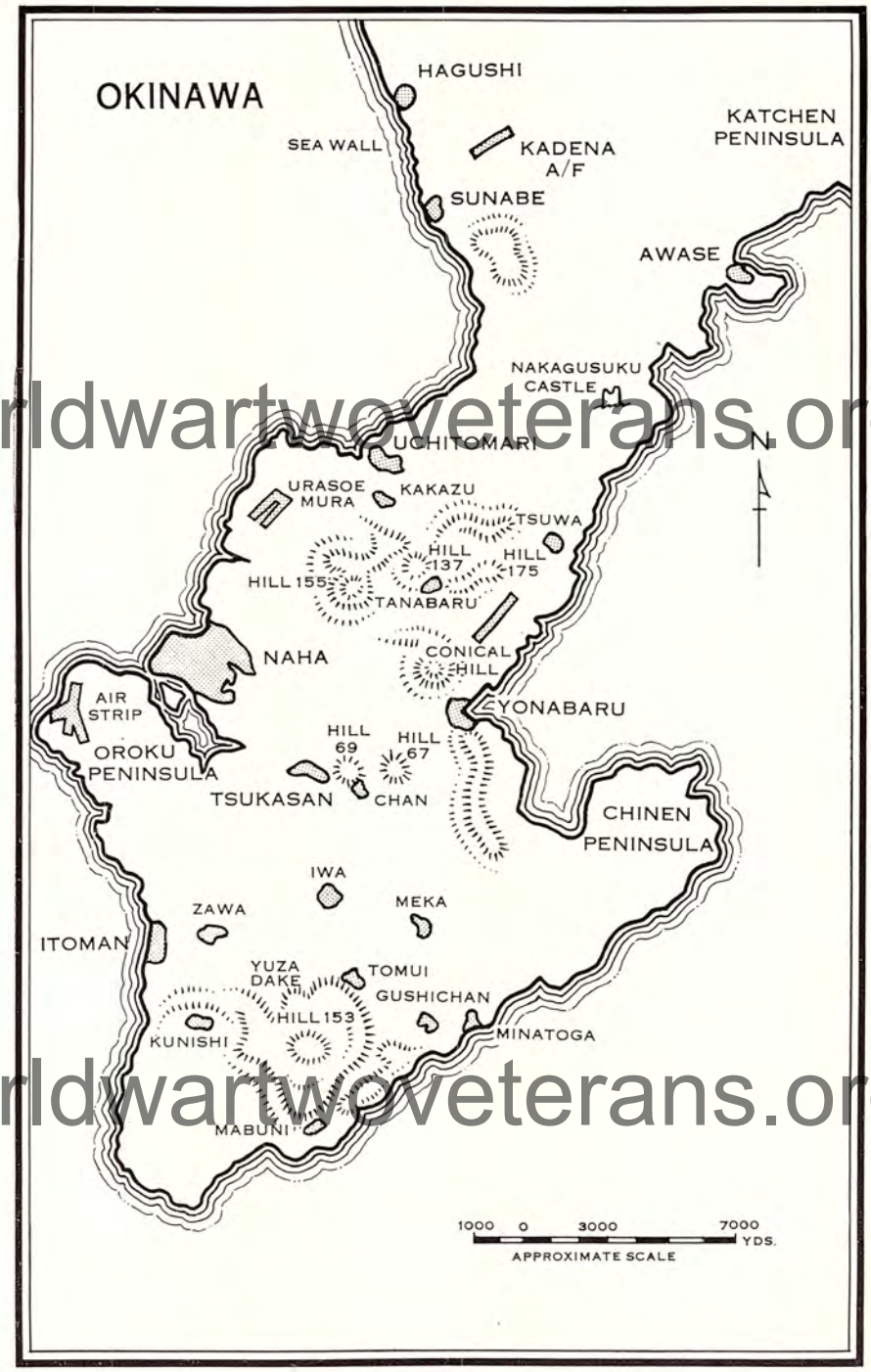
On the 27th the 3d Battalion was loaded and scheduled to leave for Okinawa. That particular island had been hit six days after we had landed in the Ryukyus and from the way the fighting had progressed it was inevitable that we had to dip our fingers into that particular piece of pie. The 1st Battalion remained to garrison Ie Shima for a while longer, but was scheduled to follow soon. The 2d Battalion was still a garrison force on Zamami Shima.



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There was very little that could be done in the way of preliminary training prior to our entering the Okinawa phase. Our battalions were stationed on three separate islands. The RCT commander visited the scene of the battle, which was already raging with all the fury of a tempest, in order to acquaint himself with the situation before calling all regimental units together on the island of Okinawa. Following that visit he held a discussion with the staff of the 3d Battalion in which he stressed the differences in tactics employed by the Japs in this campaign and those of our previous engagements with the enemy. He acquainted the battalion's leaders with the overall situation and laid possible plans which the Regimental Combat Team might follow. At Ie Shima he called a meeting of all officers and gave an outline of the campaign, putting particular emphasis on the fact that it was conducted by the use of unorthodox tactics which were a far cry from the jungle tactics and small island warfare to which we men of the 305th Infantry had become accustomed.

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On May 6 the 1st Battalion and our regimental headquarters began to load supplies and equipment aboard the *LST 565.* This loading continued all night despite the many air raids the Nips hurled over us. The troops began to embark at 0400 and four hours later the loading was complete.

Close association with death had made philosophers of many of us. Pete, standing on the deck, looked up into the sky. "There will be a lot of us who won't come back," he remarked to a soldier standing nearby. "Perhaps you or perhaps me. Now take the fly boys—their job is just as dangerous as ours, but just the same I envy them. They go out on a mission with the risk of not returning, and many of them don't return. But the ones who do will return to a comfortable bunk and a good meal and a chance to wash their faces and hands. With us infantrymen it is different. We have a mission, too, and we do it with as much odds of never returning as the boys in the planes. But when our mission is accomplished we don't go to the rear and eat a good meal or sleep in a comfortable bunk or clean up. We eat cold K or C rations. We dig a hole and sleep in it. We don't have enough water in our canteens to wash with. I don't begrudge the fly boys the breaks they get, but I don't see where things properly balance up!"

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His neighbor made no reply, but one could easily see that he was busy thinking over the things that Pete had said.

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Colonel Gordon T. Kimbrell, then a lieutenant colonel, took command of the regiment on Okinawa. He received his eagles while we were on Cebu.

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On May 7 we landed on Okinawa and moved by trucks to an assembly area in the central part of the island.

Our 3d Battalion moved up and relieved the 2d Battalion of the 307th; a movement which was completed about 0815 that same morning. Company L, which had been attached to the 307th, reverted to control of our own Regiment. At 0845 a fifteen-minute artillery barrage was laid down and the 3d Battalion attacked. Company K moved along the right flank with Company L on the left and Company I in reserve. Our attack met heavy machine-gun and mortar fire along our left flank and immediate front. One enemy machine-gun squad, operating from the sanctuary of a cave, was blasted into nonexistence by M4 tanks. By

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A typical Jap cave that had to be cleaned out on Okinawa.

1130 we had reached our objective and then we began extensive mopping up operations and the consolidation of our position.

There was little doubt in the minds of any of us that we were to have a tough skirmish ahead of us, and there wasn't much we could do to make it any easier. Our tabulations showed that during the day the 3d Battalion had killed only a known total of 61 Japs and taken 15 Okinawan civilians prisoner. At least that was better than having the figure read against us instead of for us.

At 1300 our 1st Battalion moved ahead to relieve the 3d Battalion of the 307th, completing the movement at 1530. The 1st Battalion of the 307th dropped back into reserve for our Regimental Combat Team, but it could not be used without the consent of the Division Commander. All reliefs were completed by 1835.

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Throughout the night of May 7 enemy mortar and artillery fire fell into the sector held by our 1st Battalion with its heaviest concentration hitting to the left of the position. The enemy also made unsuccessful attempts to infiltrate during the night. Their only accomplishment was to leave 31 dead behind them. The battalion was then ordered to make local attacks to its front to secure more favorable ground from which to launch our next assault. At 0930, May 8, Company C began mopping


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Moving to the front through a sea of mud on Okinawa.

up the area behind our 3d Battalion, which lay to the left of the 1st. A and B Companies' efforts to advance were met with small-arms, machine-gun, and mortar fire from the front and both frontal flanks. The enemy was sheltered in caves and tombs and it was therefore necessary for the remainder of the unit to maneuver around the left flank of the two companies better to engage the Japs.

Company C began the movement. It advanced one hundred yards before coming under the enemy's intense machine-gun fire. Supporting fire was called for and two pillboxes were reduced to rubble, yet the intensity of the fire abated very little. There was only one direction in which the company could move—backward. So it was withdrawn to a more tenable position.

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The 3d Battalion received sporadic mortar and artillery fire throughout the night of May 7 but the foe made no attempts to infiltrate our position. Around 0500 the following morning a concentration of mortar and artillery began falling in the vicinity of our battalion command post—an estimated 30 rounds of 105mm, 15 rounds of 150mm, and 25 rounds of 81mm mortar. Company I began the day with a limited-objective attack, seizing and holding ground. The weather during the day of the 8th restricted the movement of our troops and supplies. We contented ourselves with holding an extended front throughout the day with the 306th Infantry on the 3d Battalion's left. Both of our battalions continued mopping-up operations during which they destroyed many caves which honeycombed the area.

Only harassing fire fell in the 1st Battalion sector during the night of May 9. The Japs made a minor attempt to infiltrate our lines and nine of them were slain in the attempt. One of the bodies had its face painted white, which caused considerable discussion at various times. The battalion received the order to move its reserve company to the high ground on the right flank where it might be in a better position to support by fire the attack of the 3d Battalion. Company C moved to carry out the order and reached the hill, but there it came under unsuspected and intense rifle and machine-gun fire from its front and right flank. The opposition came from such a direction and with such intensity that the company was unable to advance to a point where it would be of any assistance to the 3d Battalion. At 1300 the 1st Platoon of B Company moved to the forward slope of the ridge and seized and occupied the position formerly held by Company K. It was around 1600 that C Company was able to recall its platoons and withdraw to its position of the previous night. All day long a great deal of mortar fire fell into our ranks and we were subjected to machine-gun fire which

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The cutting effect of artillery on Okinawa.

greatly hampered our movements. We estimated that two reinforced companies were opposing the advance of the 1st Battalion. Now two companies holding up an entire battalion might have seemed out of proportion to us had we not been able to see that the terrain which afforded a natural defensive position for the Japanese troops was more than enough to offset the difference in manpower.

During that night the 3d Battalion received sporadic mortar and artillery fire in its sector. As morning approached this fire became concentrated upon our right flank. K Company retaliated by spotting the source of the barrage and reacting with 81mm mortar fire of its own. Also during the night 65 Japs who had managed to sneak through our lines were killed. It became obvious that they were trying to establish an outpost of their own. Early in the morning attention was called to the body of a Japanese soldier who was garbed in green fatigues not too unlike our own. It was a reminder to us not to relax our vigilance but to remain on the lookout for all types of trickery to which our enemy might resort.

Company I crossed the line of departure at 0800 and advanced under the supporting fire of K Company and the 1st Battalion. The company soon ran into intense small-arms fire from the ridges which lay to our front. This advance was halted while K Company maneuvered to the right through the position occupied by the 1st Battalion of the 306th Infantry. About 1500 Company K signalled that it had reached a position abreast of that of Company I and the attack was resumed. As a result of this coordinated attack the objective for the day was secured and the two companies consolidated their position for the night. Company L moved into the position formerly held by I Company.

On the night of May 10 the regimental command post received nine rounds each of 150mm and 105mm artillery throughout the night.

The 3d Battalion received heavy artillery and mortar barrages which were sent over to keep us occupied while the enemy's infantrymen attempted to infiltrate through our lines. Part of this barrage was made up of about ten rounds of 320mm mortar. This new weapon was given such titles of respect by us as the "buzz bomb" or the "flying jeep." As for the Nip infiltrators, all except 25 of them were sent back to their own lines to tell their buddies what a tough nut we were to crack. These 25 were unable to move a muscle in either direction.

At 1345 we made our own attack, moving under the protection of our own and Nipponese counter-mortar fire. Moving through heavy machine-gun fire we captured our objective and commenced the task of consolidating and holding the position for the night.

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An air photo of the Escarpment north of Shuri.

Although the weather was fair, the roads remained muddy. Supply and evacuation became very difficult. And it was here that we applied the methods of moving supplies and evacuating wounded that we had learned back in the swamps of Louisiana more than two years before. It was gradually soaking through our skulls and into our brains that each and every phase of our long-past training had been taught us for a purpose. The enemy was still resisting stubbornly any of our attempts to get into the inner perimeter of the Shuri defenses. The Jap's selection of defense positions was excellent, and his system of using a reverse-slope defense was employed extensively. The enemy defended fanatically from strongpoints in caves and tombs which were reinforced as pill-boxes with fields of fire across the hilltops and along the gullies.

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The terrain over which we were advancing slowly was well suited for such a stubborn defense, and information we had extracted from a captured Jap showed that the enemy had long before planned this defense perimeter which we came to know as the Shuri Castle Line. They had established excellent fields of fire for machine guns and observation posts for mortars. They lobbed accurate and telling small-arms and artillery fire into our midst both day and night.

Although the unwelcome enemy fire fell into all sectors of our lines it caused no real damage. At 0700, Companies A and B crossed the line of departure. In one-half hour they had advanced two hundred yards despite the heavy opposition put up by the defenders. Our own artillery was called on to demolish the opposition which lay ahead of them and tank support was called up to assist in overcoming the stubborn resistance. Two tanks from Company C of the 706th Tank Battalion were destroyed while moving into position. A Jap gun accounted for the first and the second turned over while attempting to cross the rough terrain. The advance made by the 1st Battalion that day was measured in feet rather than in yards.

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As a result of two days of maneuvering, the 1st Battalion had elements on the extreme left flank of the regimental sector with the 3d occupying a position in the center of the zone of advance. A field order issued by our headquarters on May 11, to become effective the following morning, ordered Companies A and B to attack to the right across the front of the 3d Battalion with the support of their fire. The mortars of the 2d Battalion of the 307th also were to support this attack.

Company A began the attack at 0800 and at 0850 had moved some one hundred yards toward their objective against very little opposition. Company B launched its attack simultaneously and had better luck in having no opposition whatever. Company A, upon reaching its position,

The ridge south of Shuri.

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was better able to support the advance of the 3d Battalion than it was to move through a draw to reach the initial objective as had been planned. The 3d Battalion was ordered at 1000 to advance and capture a strategic hill, which it had done by 1330. Company A thereupon pushed through the draw, passed through K Company at 1400, and moved to a new position which it occupied for the remainder of the period. Company C reported that 3 caves had been sealed and four light machine-guns and a knee mortar destroyed. The 1st Battalion reported 45 Japs killed and 7 light machine guns destroyed during the day's advance.

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The night of May 13 was very quiet in comparison with preceding nights. Very little artillery fell around us and only six Japs tried to infiltrate through our lines. In the morning we moved forward with very little resistance. We captured two Nips who were of no use to us, but one attracted our attention as a curio for he claimed to have spent his early years in Honolulu.

One platoon from A Company established contact with the 7th Marine Regiment early in the morning. The nearness of the Devil Dogs was perhaps responsible for the small amount of resistance our advance met.

Supported by tanks we attacked along the ridge to our immediate front. Company C moved through the draw with the mission of sealing caves and eliminating all places of possible Jap resistance which we had by-passed. As the company moved through the area the Japs opened up with a concentration of knee-mortar and machine-gun cross fire from the front. We retaliated and succeeded in knocking out one machine-gun nest but other than that, because the ground was unsuitable for action on our part. our own fire power was almost fruitless.

The company therefore withdrew to more suitable terrain for the night. Company A also was ordered to halt its advance and to organize a night defense.

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The 3d Battalion, jumping off with the 1st, had tanks for support. It launched an attack against light opposition and by 1045 elements of the battalion had reached the objective. On their move they discovered a mine block consisting of three plastic mines with a new type of fuze. The 302d Engineers were notified and the area was properly marked. Intelligence scouts sealed three caves and reported having heard muffled sounds from within one of the sealed crevices which they believed were caused by the explosion of grenades. The fanatical Japs were destroying themselves in preference to being taken prisoner.

Okinawa was proving to be a more costly campaign than any of our

Looking south from Hill 178.

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previous campaigns had been. Two more of our supporting tanks were rendered ineffective after direct hits from a Japanese 47mm gun firing from a camouflaged position. We placed direct fire on the gun promptly but the results of our attempt are unknown. The battalion went on to seize the hill toward which we had been maneuvering, but while we were consolidating our positions for the night we received a heavy barrage of artillery fire. The enemy still had the advantage of observation and their artillery fire was accurate. Their guns were also well placed and cleverly camouflaged, and their positions on the high ground were well organized.

As our troops pressed toward the Shuri line of defense we met stubborn resistance. So completely had the Japs organized their positions with an extensive cave system and so intense was their fire power that our progress was measured by but a few yards.

Each succeeding attack we made followed much the same pattern as attacks which had gone before, but there was really no other way we could meet the foe. Many a time the Japs occupied the reverse slope of a hill while we were fighting, occupying and organizing on the forward slope. Our artillery had to lay rounds so close to our line that any one which happened to fall short would have caused casualties among our own ranks. Fortunately for us our men with the big guns were strictly on the ball and we were glad to include them as falling under the same category as we infantrymen of the 305th: second to none.

At 0910 on May 15, following an intense barrage thrown at us by the Japs, Companies A and C, supported by M4 tanks, attacked southwest from their previously occupied position. Company C moved through the draw to the left of Company A using flamethrowers, satchel charges, and bazookas to destroy the many caves that were abundant in the area and whatever Japanese tanks they might chance upon. By the elimination of this once strongly fortified draw, Company B was able to move one platoon from its position to a small knob of earth which lay to the front. Company A achieved a position to the left. With the aid of supporting fire from elements of the 1st Marine Division, the company advanced rapidly against moderate resistance to capture its temporary objective. But heavy mortar fire began to fall on the unit so, to better secure the line for the night, it was withdrawn to a position with better defenses.

The attack by the 3d Battalion at 0900 was preceded by an excellent artillery and mortar preparation so that they were able to make an advance against light opposition. The natural conformation of the terrain was such that our tanks could not be used to support our attack.

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Ruins of the enemy-held chapel in Shuri.

On reaching their first objectives, Companies I and L met stiffening resistance from machine-gun nests which cast a steady stream of bullets from the protection of caves and Japanese tanks. Our units immediately organized for defense and proceeded to bombard and blast the hill which lay before them until its forward slope was cleared of enemy. But the mortar fire which was being hurled into our ranks from an inconspicuous source began to increase noticeably. Although L Company was in physical contact with Company A, it was necessary for it to abandon its position and withdraw for one hundred yards for the night.

The fanatical defense of the outer perimeter of the Shuri Line had exacted a heavy toll upon our Regimental Combat Team. The 1st and 3d Battalions had by this time been depleted to about fifty per cent of our normal strength. Not one of us who remained able and willing to fight had not suffered the loss of one or more close friends. Perhaps it was the deep feeling within us that our fallen buddies be avenged that drove us into the battle from time to time with the fury that eventually made us the winners of the campaign. It did ease our hearts and wearied minds somewhat to know that the majority of our casualties were only wounded and might either be returned to the unit as time permitted or else return to America to their homes and loved ones.

Despite our losses we continued to press the attack, exerting steady pressure to our front against centers of resistance, finding ourselves

inching steadily ahead, and, upon gaining new ground, consolidating and cleaning up the rear of our lines.

The plan of the day called for our making a pre-dawn attack on the morning of May 17, putting our main effort on the left of our line. So far as we have been able to learn, the 305th in conjunction with the 307th was the first organization in the Pacific Area to make a night attack against a strongly held Japanese position. At 0330 our preparations were completed. At 0415 L Company crossed the line of departure and advanced 75 yards with no opposition. By 0500 the ridge which extended to our front was in our possession. Company K, moving around the right flank, attacked south along the ridge and by 0540 had advanced to the ridge's far end. By this time the enemy was well aware of the situation and desperately retaliated by turning his automatic weapons upon our two companies. The RCT received excellent support from our light, medium, and heavy artillery, our M4s, M7s, M8s, M18s, and flame-throwing tanks.

In the early hours of the morning a pocket of Japs in a ditch was destroyed by a flame-throwing tank. Another group of twenty or thirty was destroyed by tanks and one of the enemy's 70mm guns was captured intact. Our artillery silenced and destroyed two heavy machine guns and went on to dislodge the camouflage which protected a pillbox in the area. The direct fire of an M8 proceeded to reduce this same pillbox to rubble while the artillery concentrated upon a group of Japs seen running along an irrigation ditch.

The 1st Battalion was ordered to render fire support to an attack launched by the 3d, but to be prepared to join the assault at the word from the regimental commander. The final order came about 0545 and Company A moved ahead two hundred yards to occupy a ridge to the front. Company C, in support of A, advanced under the harassing fire of heavy machine guns and mortars from the southwest and seized its objective. This ridge was one of the best organized Japanese defensive positions we had so far encountered, although it was held by no more than one reinforced company. Because of the excellent fields of fire offered for Japanese antitank weapons, and because of the muddy ground which lay between us and the enemy, our tanks were unable to render effective support in the neutralization of the position. One platoon of Company B moved forward to the right of Company K and, before reaching its chosen destination, received intense machine-gun and mortar fire from the rear. It, like the Japs, sought refuge in a cave. Company C, trying to relieve the pressure on the platoon, attempted to flank the

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strongpoint in front of its position and came under intense rifle and machine-gun fire on its right flank from an enemy position in the vicinity.

At 1300 a smoke screen was laid around the cave in which the trapped platoon was patiently waiting for an opportunity to return to its lines. But the smoke screen was of little avail for the enemy concentrated rifle and machine-gun fire on the mouth of the cave and drove the men back for cover each time they attempted to leave. By 1400 both the 1st and 3d Battalions were engaged in endeavoring to extract the lone platoon. Only when 4.2 mortars continued to lay down the smoke screen and the two battalions turned such heavy fire upon the Nips did the platoon finally manage to return to its company position.

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The plan of May 18 called for a continuation of this same attack, the main effort being placed on the left. The right sector confined its activities to mopping up our rear area and exerting pressure on our right flank.

At 0900 M8s from Cannon Company fired into a series of caves and destroyed them to aid the advance of the 3d Battalion. Flame-throwing tanks and a platoon of M4s, covered by our fire power, attempted to maneuver around the right flank of Company A to neutralize the enemy strongpoint. They received such a volume of hostile mortar fire, as well as running up against a large ditch filled with water which was more than a formidable obstacle, that they were unable to reach the position. Thereupon, the 1st Battalion placed a heavy concentration of 81mm mortar fire into the Japanese position and did succeed in knocking out of existence one knee mortar and killing the members of that mortar squad. Company C made a fair-sized advance but was forced to withdraw to a more tenable position for the night.

The 3d Battalion, attacking at the designated time, advanced southwest astride the road against moderate to stiff enemy resistance. The tanks were able to support this advance in spite of machine-gun fire from both flanks and mortar fire from defiladed positions to the right and from the high ground to the frontal right flank. After having progressed 150 yards, the battalion stopped and engaged itself in the cleaning up and destruction of the numerous caves that had been bypassed in our zone of advance.

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On May 19 other enemy positions along the regimental front were to be softened up in preparation for our second pre-dawn attack. Throughout the morning and early afternoon, the supporting weapons

of both battalions were employed in firing on all enemy positions which were located in our planned zone of advance.

The 3d Battalion of the 306th Infantry, now attached to our RCT, was to relieve our own 3d Battalion. The commanding officer of the 306th unit, accompanied by his staff, went forward with the regimental commander on a reconnaissance prior to effecting the planned relief. By 1430 the relief was completed and the 3d Battalion of the Second to None retired to an assembly area in the division rest position.

On May 20 an intense mortar and artillery barrage fell into the 1st Battalion sector. However, our own counterbattery fire proved effective in stopping the enemy barrage and A Company succeeded in attacking through the mortar fire from both friend and enemy to occupy a knoll which lay to our immediate front. After securing the goal, the knoll was organized so that it could support the advance of Company B which was to leap forward through A Company's demolition teams (engaged in destroying caves on the forward slope of the knoll) and seize and hold an objective of its own.

Company B was stopped on its way to the second objective by withering machine-gun and rifle fire and was forced to withdraw. In the meantime, our own mortars, artillery and tanks continued to soften the enemy position to the front and neutralize the enemy machine guns on the battalion's right flank.

The battalion spent the remainder of the day using direct-weapons fire on any pinpoint targets that were located. Our artillery and mortars continued the softening-up process.

Orders were received on the evening of May 20 from higher headquarters for another pre-dawn attack, the second in the Pacific Theater of Operations. This attack was to be supported by our 1st Battalion prior to its relief by G Company of the 306th.

The Japs, realizing that another salient had been made in their defense line, fought stubbornly against any penetration. Throughout the day they hurled everything at their disposal on our troops while we consolidated our gains and sealed numerous caves.

The relief of the 305th by the 306th was completed by 1145 on May 21 and the special units of the Regiment dropped back to the rest area. The 1st and 3d Battalions passed the period between the 22d and the 24th resting and cleaning weapons and equipment. Special Service units provided moving pictures each night for our entertainment. We had, while on the line, begun to think that we had forgotten how to relax—but relaxation is something which comes from instinct

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The RCT's rest camp when in reserve on Okinawa.

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rather than from habit. Unfortunately, it could not go on forever.

In the meantime orders were received from higher headquarters that we were to prepare for the capture of Shuri Castle. This, each of us realized, would be a job which would call upon every ounce of fortitude, skill, strategy, and daring that we possessed. The 1st and 3d Battalions reconnoitered in the vicinity of the rest camp to locate terrain similar to that of Shuri Castle so that we could rehearse before making the actual attack.

On the 24th the 2d Battalion arrived on Okinawa and moved to a bivouac area. Its commanding officer and his staff reported to regimental headquarters promptly and were informed of the current situation. Having been placed in the status of Division reserve on arrival, the battalion made plans to move into an assembly area.

From the 25th to the 29th training plans were organized for the immediate instruction of replacements who were soon to arrive. These plans of training were to acquaint the newcomers with the type of enemy and the tactics he would be using, for we well knew that Stateside training had only partially covered the many things the new men would need to know.

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Key noncoms from the 2d Battalion were transferred to the 1st and 3d to strengthen the depleted noncom groups in these two units.

On the 29th we received the report of the Marines' having taken Shuri Castle, and that report brought sighs of relief from all of us. But the taking of that strongpoint did not necessarily mean that our work on the island was finished. We could yet visualize much fighting ahead of us and, for that matter, the taking of Hills 133 and 166 was

immediately at hand. From what information was available to us it was apparent that the resistance on these hills remained quite strong.

At 1700, May 30, our 2d Battalion was attached to the 307th and moved into a reserve position. The 1st and 3d Battalions moved into their individual unit assembly areas. It was planned that on the coming day the 1st Battalion would be placed under direct command of the 306th Infantry.

Orders were received the following morning for us to relieve the other two regiments, thus assuming control of the Division sector. The relief was completed by 1400, our 1st Battalion holding the right flank, our 2d the left, and the 3d echeloned in depth behind the left flank. This was only one of the many occasions when orders were issued on one day and countermanded the next.

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At 1600, the regimental command, meeting with the battalion leaders, discussed the mission of the Regiment in this phase. It was emphasized that our job was to protect the Corps right flank which had been left open by the rapid advance of the 96th Division. We were to occupy key terrain features as the 96th progressed and were not to engage ourselves in fire fights unless the right flank of the Corps was threatened. At this time it was contemplated that the Regiment would extend only as far south as the Naha–Yonabaru road. At 2010 the 2d Battalion received the order to move on the following morning at 0700 to occupy Hill 125, our 1st Battalion to follow in case the 2d should become overextended. It might be worthwhile to mention that terrain features such as hills and road junctions were named by numbers to correspond to their height in feet above sea level. Thus, it was easily understood that Hill 125 was 125 feet above sea level and would not be confused with Hill 133 which, by the larger number, was indicated as a hill of higher elevation.

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The 1st Battalion received approximately fifteen rounds of artillery fire during the night. Local patrols were sent out around each company's position for the battalion was on strict alert; it was to move forward on order of our regimental commander. About 0600 of the first of June, termite patrols from Company B captured a prisoner who supplied us with the information that he was a member of the 29th Independent Shipping Engineers. He knew little of the situation other than that the troops which had formerly been located around Shuri had been ordered to withdraw to Shima Juri and that he had heard that the final stand would be made at Itoman Machi.

The 2d Battalion moved at the specified hour and occupied its position as planned. By 1100, the job well in hand, the battalion prepared to move south behind the 96th Division to maintain contact. The occupation of the hill had been delayed somewhat because of the tardiness of the 96th in vacating its positions on the hill. Company G supported by fire the Marines' attack on Hill 127, silencing two machine guns during the action. Company E, at 1600, occupied a position on Hill 78, but at 1707 our unit withdrew because elements of the 96th elected to remain on the hill for the night.

Emphasis was placed on the training of our replacements in patrolling. Conditioning of the new men under actual conditions was extremely beneficial to the combat efficiency of the Regiment. Weather conditions during this period were adverse and the transportation of supplies was being accomplished by hand, over distances often equalling four thousand yards. The roads were in extremely bad condition and it was the policy of higher headquarters not to move the troops farther south than was necessary to fulfill the assigned mission.

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No activity occurred during the night in the regimental sector. Such pauses in Japanese activities did give us a small opportunity to rest our bodies, but it caused a strain on our minds. When we fought our bodies grew weary but at least we knew what the enemy was doing. Whenever the Japs let up we began worrying ourselves by wondering what they were planning. These pauses also gave us time to think of things which lay ahead . . . and our thoughts were always far from being cheerful. During the following day we passed most of the hours demolishing caves.

Only sporadic artillery fell into our zone during the night and day of June 3. The 1st Battalion moved from its position as regimental reserve to Hill 78 where it occupied the area vacated by the 2d Battalion in its move southward. After reporting its position at 0930 it began patrolling the hill for the purpose of clearing the area of Japs and for preliminary training of replacements before putting them into telling action.

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The 2d Battalion was ordered to remain on Hill 45 until the troops of the 96th, moving from Hill 67, had displaced them. By 1500 two companies of the battalion had an established position on the hill, leaving one company to occupy Hill 45. Although one company was alerted at 1650 to move to Hill 47B, this did not materialize as troops of the 96th remained in that position for the night.

In the 3d Battalion sector action was at a minimum. Positions were consolidated and local patrolling and the training of replacements were

stressed. Patrols at 1000 located three feeble civilians in a cave and Military Government was promptly notified. Because of the extremely bad roads the evacuation of civilians was accomplished largely by supply vehicles and carrying parties.

On June 4 intermittent rainfall hindered improvement of the roads and our troop movement south was limited because of difficulties in transporting supplies. All units passed a very quiet night throughout the entire zone. During the day the Regiment had carried on its mission of protecting the Corps right flank, echeloning companies forward and occupying hill masses in the rear of the 96th Division. Patrols were organized, consisting of replacements led by veteran squad and platoon leaders, and they did excellent work in mopping up their respective battalion zones.

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On June 5 there was no ground activity reported in the zone occupied by the 305th RCT during the night, although several rounds of artillery of an undetermined caliber landed in the 1st and 2d Battalion sectors with no damaging effects. The conditioning of the roads was impossible because of the incessant downpours. All battalions continued to organize their positions.

Patrols throughout the day made no contacts with the Japs. We did succeed in locating a cave filled with 155mm shells and on Hill 53 found a quantity of small-arms ammo. Twenty-nine civilians were placed in the custody of Military Government.

There was harassing ground activity in the vicinity of Dionne Hill from snipers which plagued the 2d Battalion. At daybreak ten rounds of artillery fell into the area, but the remainder of the regimental zone had no activity. There was no displacement of troops during the period. It was beginning to look as if things were beginning to slow down a bit, but the Nips were unpredictable.

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On the morning of June 7 patrols from the 1st Battalion operated as far east of their position as two thousand yards, finding no enemy but sealing three caves, one of which had contained medical supplies. The 2d Battalion was subjected to four rounds of artillery which fell intermittently into its area.

Still the main supply route remained in poor condition. However, the engineers constructed a by-pass which permitted 2½-ton trucks and tracked vehicles to reach Shuri. At 2130, the eighth day of June, we received orders which stated that four M18s were to be attached to

the 383d Infantry Regiment of the 96th Division at Iwa. The commanding officer of the antitank company was to command this detachment.

The report of the 96th stated that no enemy activity was in progress and that the battalions were continuing extensive patrolling. The main supply route remained in poor condition because there were but sporadic let-ups in the rain and it was necessary to supply our 2d Battalion over the Yonabaru Road.

June 10 was also a quiet night. During the day the Regiment and its battalions continued patrolling, sealing caves and training replacements. At 1045 we had been placed in corps reserve and were ordered to assemble north of Shuri. At 1500 ten rounds of light artillery fell in the vicinity of Francis and Dionne Hills, causing no damage to our troops in that area.

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On June 11 and 12, in compliance with instructions from higher headquarters, patrols of platoon strength were sent to thoroughly cover the area from Shuri to Dionne Hill and north from Shuri to our RCT bivouac area. Close-in termite patrols were sent out each morning and night to thoroughly screen the area against any enemy survivors who might have infiltrated into the area. These patrols destroyed numerous caves and ammo dumps and reported the location of an enemy minefield. The 1st Battalion's termite patrols killed two Japs on the 13th. These Japs had been armed with grenades but they carried no rifles.

On the 14th the Regiment received the oral directive to move to an assembly area in the vicinity of Kamizato. On the morning of the 15th the Regiment received the confirming order from higher headquarters. One battalion was to move that day so, at 0900, the 2d Battalion closed its bivouac area and began the movement south. The remainder of the Regiment was to follow on the 16th as Corps reserve but prepared for combat. Patrolling of the rear areas was left to the discretion of the commanding general of the 96th Division.

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On the designated day at 1145 the 1st and 3d Battalions moved to join the 2d Battalion. By 1235 they closed in and established the forward command post. Orders were then received that the Regiment would be attached to the 96th Division, but its reserve status remained unchanged.

Following a quiet night in the new area, all battalions began patrolling in their respective areas. A reconnaissance party went forward to locate an assembly area to be used prior to the commitment of the

Regiment. A patrol from Company K reported the location of three large caves, each having several entrances, filled with large-caliber ammunition. This patrol killed one Jap and picked up one civilian. Other patrols from the 3d Battalion killed two more Japs and sealed eight caves.

On June 18 the 2d Battalion, which had been attached to the 381st Infantry, moved to Marvel Hill, arriving at the assembly area just behind the rise at 0900. They also had orders to reduce a pocket of resistance which had been by-passed. Ten of the enemy were killed but activity was still observed to the front.

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During the night the 2d Battalion received twelve rounds of 150mm artillery fire. It succeeded in killing two Japs before morning. At 0800 on the 19th the battalion attacked to the right, supported by three medium tanks of the 763d Tank Battalion and two flame-throwing tanks from the 713th Armored Battalion. Heavy machine-gun and rifle fire from caves and pillboxes as well as the nearness of adjacent units limited our field of maneuver which made our progress slow throughout the morning and early afternoon. In the afternoon the volume of fire lessened. We counted 35 Japs dead but 60 were estimated to have been killed. Three civilians were found. We also estimated that approximately 25 or 30 Japs remained in the pocket and, because of the rocky terrain and its protecting low underbrush, it was difficult to extract them from their places of hiding.

The 2d Battalion was doing the most of the fighting at that time. On June 20, 36 Jap infiltrators were killed, while at the same time sporadic mortar fire was falling on our right flank. Our replacements of only a few weeks were engaging in the fighting with almost the same attitude of the hardened veterans. Perhaps they were filled with a little more nervous excitement than those of us to whom combat was no longer something new. On one occasion when we had come into close contact with the enemy and rifle fire was exchanged, one blond youngster who was armed with a BAR released a burst and then turned to his assistant automatic rifleman and shouted, partly in fear and partly in elation, "I got one!"

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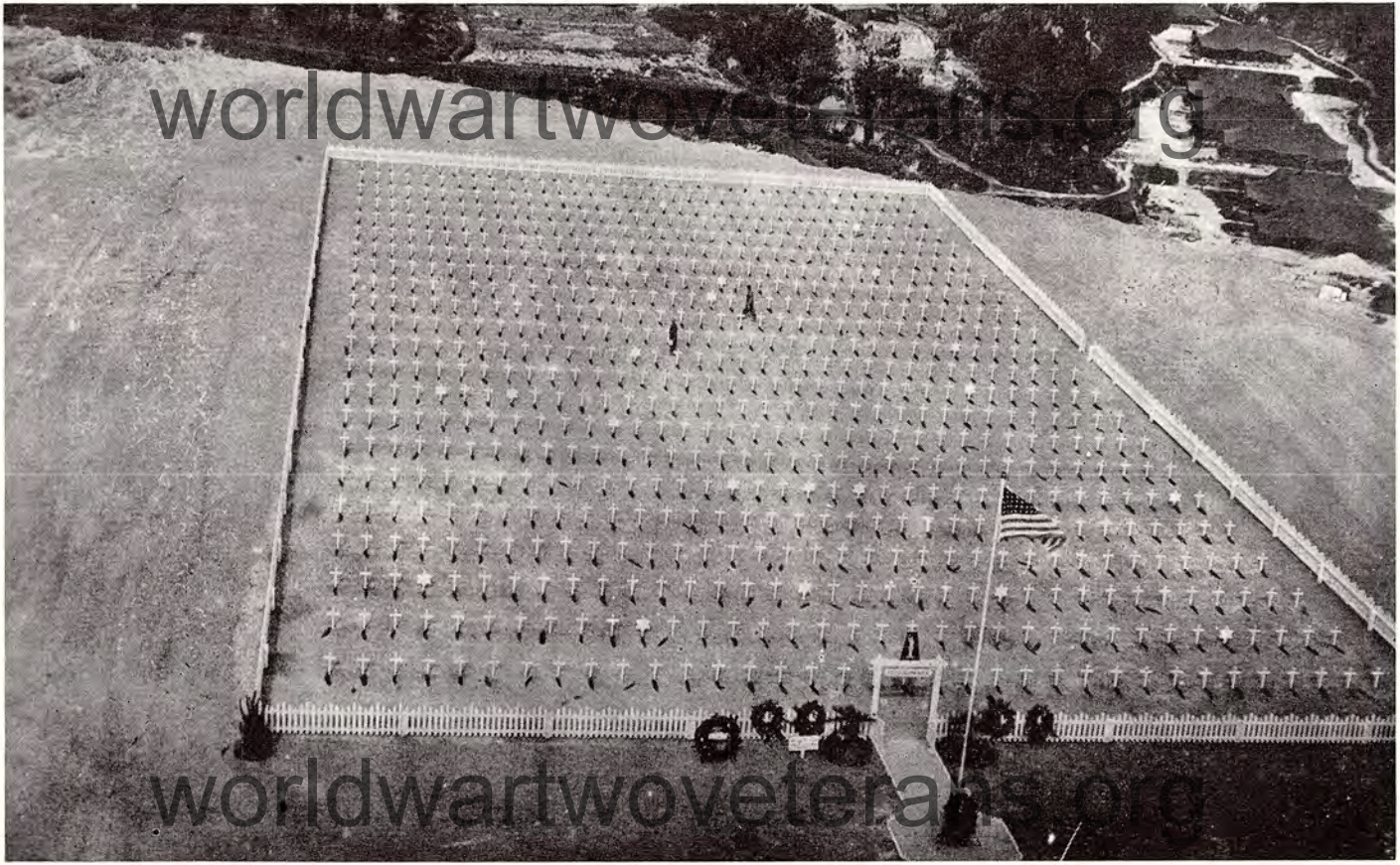
The assistant was not exactly new to combat. He had joined our outfit shortly after the Leyte campaign. "Well, Tommy—so what?"

At 1510 the battalion had completed its mission of eliminating the by-passed pocket near Marvel Hill and was awaiting further orders, which were soon to arrive. We were released from the 381st and were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An air view of the Division Cemetery, final resting place of our comrades on Okinawa.

glad to revert to our own Regiment. We were ordered to move on at 0630 on the 21st and rejoin the 305th.

Our movement to the assembly area began an hour later than was scheduled. By 0830 the 1st and 3d Battalions had closed in and the 2d arrived at noon. All possible time was utilized to study the terrain as plans of attack were made. It was decided that we should attack in column with our 1st Battalion in the assault position.

The attack began on time, following an excellent mortar and artillery barrage. It was most successful. The 1st Battalion seized Hill 179 and the 3d poised in preparation to pass through it on June 22 to assault Hill 85. Throughout the day 235 Japs had been killed and only 2 taken as prisoners of war. Thirty-four civilians had been turned over to Military Government. Two medium tanks and numerous smaller pieces of equipment were either captured or destroyed.

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On the 22d the 3d Battalion attacked Hill 79. Company K assaulted behind an excellent preparatory mortar barrage and was quick to secure and consolidate its position. Company I, using the advantage of fire support from K, began its attack on the hill from the left. During this attack our machine guns and supporting tanks concentrated their fire upon a group of approximately a hundred Japs in the vicinity. Supporting tanks were working along both sides of the hill, one of which, a flame-thrower, was knocked out by a satchel charge at 1935. However, seven Japs were killed by supporting fires of the infantry during the engagement. Earlier in the day, at about 1015, tank fire had destroyed one 150mm field piece and its crew, and forced the abandonment of two other 150s.

We were developing the same ruthlessness the Japs had forced upon us. It no longer seemed horrible to us to seal a group of Nips in a cave where they could only die of starvation or suffocation, or to burn our enemy alive with our flamethrowers. It was not of our choosing that we were being forced to revert to that old law of the primeval that we either kill or be killed. In warfare only the fittest could survive—and we were doing our utmost to remain the fittest. On many occasions groups of Japs ranging in numbers from twenty to thirty were cornered in small ravines and unmercifully scorched to death. The results of the day's fighting this June 22 was an estimated 313 Japs slain. A reconnaissance located nine field pieces destroyed or abandoned. Our continued advance clearly indicated to us that we had passed the turning point of the campaign.

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At 1530, June 23, the Regiment received a warning order from higher headquarters to be prepared to relieve the 306th RCT on outpost duty along the Naha–Yonabaru Road which cut the island from coast to coast. This relief was to be made position for position as a precaution against any Japanese infiltration to the north. Our battalion commanders made a reconnaissance of the 307th RCT's positions and, as a result, selected our 1st and 2d Battalions to occupy the main outpost line and our 3d to hold the secondary line. For the remainder of that day we rested and cleaned our equipment.

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On the 25th the entire Regiment assembled in its bivouac area north of Shuri and began to ready itself for the southward move for outpost duty. At the same time plans were under way for loading the Regiment on LSTs for our movement off the island of Okinawa.

There followed a very quiet night. Only the 3d Battalion was ordered to relieve the 2d of the 307th. Our 1st and 2d prepared to complete the relief on June 27, which was done. On the first night of its new mission, the 3d Battalion killed ten Japs who found their way into our area. On its first day in the new locale our 1st Battalion engaged in extensive patrolling but made no enemy contacts. Ten caves, however, were located and sealed and a minefield was marked for destruction. Our 2d Battalion had little to report on its first day on outpost duty other than having made its relief according to plan.

But that first night was an active one. Seventeen Japs were killed as they attempted to reach the northern part of the island where we believed a Japanese force to be assembling. During the period patrols had located and destroyed 41 Japs and sealed 76 caves.

Late that evening orders had come down to us that the 96th Division was to relieve the 305th on the outpost line by the 28th, but our Regiment was not to move from position until higher headquarters ordered us to do so. In time this order arrived and our 1st Battalion returned to its bivouac area, followed by the 3d Battalion at 1530 and the 2d at 1600. Again the Regiment reassembled at its rendezvous north of Shuri. This time we were to board the LSTs for another movement—a welcome movement.

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June 30 was a great day for us. We were leaving behind us one of the toughest battlefields any fighting unit of the U. S. Army had yet encountered. But amid our joy at leaving the island we were yet sad for we were leaving many good friends behind us. There was Max who had stopped a machine-gun slug and Bill who had been the target for

a fragmentation grenade—and there was Pete. We missed him; we missed his witty philosophies; we missed his ever plentiful wisecracks. And there were many others whom we would miss. Men who were afraid to die and yet not afraid to die, men who had had a job to do and had given their all to see that it was done properly were behind us in a final, eternal rest area. So ended the battle of Okinawa for the 305th as we sailed from the island on July 1, 1945.

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Father Donnelly offers prayers of thanksgiving on VJ-day.

Aboard ship our life was much the same as it had always been—and from all indications as it would always be. An LST is not one of the most comfortable of ocean-going vessels, but to be away from the island which had caused us so much discomfort put us in such a frame of mind that we were now able and willing to put up with most anything.

The rumors were flying hot and fast concerning our present destination. "Will it be Hawaii?" one would ask, or, "I'll bet it will be Luzon. Perhaps Manila." Soon it was definitely known that we were going to the Philippines but to what island we had yet to be told. Then the rumors pepped us up with the prophecy that we would continue from the Philippines to that Paradise of the Pacific, Oahu.

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We arrived at Leyte Gulf still not knowing where we were headed, but our minds were soon set at ease. Orders were received that we would proceed to the island of Cebu and there under the spreading palms we could rest our bones in the heat of the tropic sun.

The Filipinos were not new to us; most of us knew their customs and were for the most part prepared for their tricks of the trade. We had learned on Leyte that the culture of the people who occupied Cebu was much superior to that of the neighboring islands.

On the morning of August 9 we saw the island that was to be home to us for at least the next two months. To us it looked much the same as the rest of its sister islands. Our LST was greeted by a fishing fleet, who in their joy at seeing so many fish in one boat, believe it or not, threw fish at us. Having been welcomed, we set about the procedure of landing.

The landing was accomplished without any enemy activity, although some was expected. It had been rumored that the Americal Division or elements thereof had been posted near our landing spot.

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The weather was one of those things upon which no one cared to make any comments for fear that some passing cloud would change its very scientific calculation. The day set for our landing was very wet and conditions promised to become much wetter as the hours passed. But since we were toughened to the elements, we donned our ponchos and went forth into the storm.

Our areas had already been assigned to us by the advance guard. They, with their usual cunning and conniving, had managed to secure for us a very beautiful spot near the beach. Luck was with us and, as we began the preliminary job of policing up, the rain let up and the sun once again shone on us. By nightfall we had sufficiently cleared


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The Division Band provides music at the VJ-day services.

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VJ-Day in Cebu City.

the area so that our tents could be temporarily aligned. With a sigh of relief we closed our eyes until the dawn—and the sergeants broke our slumber.

Morning came and brought with it the usual tasks of clearing the areas of all debris in preparation for the task of setting up a semi-permanent camp. Naturally we had to scout the area to find those people who could and would do our laundry. Special details were sent out to look over the situation, and with the reports filing in, it was assumed that our accumulation of dirty clothes could well be taken care of.

We were given orientation talks and told of the boundaries within which we were required to stay. The customs of the people were again discussed as well as the various types of plagues that would overtake us were we not careful. Last but far from least, we were told when we would be able to see the City of Cebu.

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Now that most of the preliminaries had been properly looked after, we began the landscape artistry for which we had long been noted. That had to be done in order to acquire a more respectable place in which to live as well as rid ourselves of the flies and mosquitos that inhabited the nearby swamps.

Our recreational facilities were being planned and, from the way it looked on paper, we were to have everything that was available to the Army, plus a few extra items, such as an ice-cream freezer and iceboxes.

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VJ-day services on Cebu.

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The Officers' Club on Cebu.

The labor was to be taken care of by the natives. Both men and women were to help.

The theater, Red Cross building, PX, and the two chapels began to take shape and were just as hastily put into operation.

The theater was named the Doogan Theater after one of our men who had been lost to us on the outskirts of Matagob, on Leyte. It consisted of a covered stage and dressing rooms, which were built by the carpenters of the Regiment. Bamboo matting side coverings were being furnished by the natives. The seats, when they were completed, were also made of bamboo and were placed in the open area to the front of the screen.

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Father Donnelly began the reconstruction of a small barrio chapel which had been sacked by the Japs. He soon had a place of worship for those of the Catholic faith.

Chaplain Berrett had begun the Chapel in the Palms, which was built entirely of local bamboo and palm fronds. The chapel was quick to take shape, and soon services were being held.

The PX was one building that we were all anxious to see finished because of our dire need of many articles. We were in hopes that all sorts of goodies would be sent to this battle-weary outfit. It wasn't too long before our hopes were realized, and almost every man who had the

Basketball teams entered for the Division playoff on Cebu.

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An interior view of the Catholic chapel on Cebu.

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ambition to walk to the PX was satisfied. Of course all the things we wanted were not to be had, but the majority of us came away with our pockets bulging.

The Red Cross Club, although last of the buildings to be completed, was indeed the finest source of rest and relaxation. Of course, a few of the men preferred other spots, but for those who were satisfied with staying in camp it was an ideal haven. There could be found in the club cards, games, ping-pong, free sewing done, and for a while the ice cream was given out there. The Red Cross girls who had been assigned to the Regiment were more than kind to every GI who happened to come in. There was competition between the EM and the officers over their attentions—as there always is. At times it seemed that the officers were winning. The ladies were housed in a private home that had been secured for the purpose and guards were placed to keep the more foolhardy soldiers in their proper places. Such quarters were also provided for women of the various USO shows that toured our island.

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Finally the day came when we were told that we could sign up for a pass to town. Our natural curiosity made us want to go, for the city was supposed to be the second largest in the Philippines. The long ride into the city was of course hot and dusty, but we were constantly

The Protestant chapel on Cebu.

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cheered on by the people who saw our trucks passing. Cebu City, as we could see, had been a large and prosperous town but between the Jap shells and those shells of our own that were necessary to eject the Nips, the town had all but fallen apart. Some of the more fortunate who had met people who lived in town went to visit them and returned to camp with tales of marvelous times. The favorite stopping places for the fellows could not be confined to one spot, for the many restaurants and honky-tonks enabled one to change scenery by only a short walk. There was a movie that had daily shows, both in the afternoon and at night, and also a Red Cross club where one could get a bite to eat if one was hungry. The town in itself was a disappointment, but it comes natural to a soldier to provide his own pleasures.

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Mactan Island, which lies in the bay just off Cebu City, has a historical interest in that it is the last resting place of the great explorer Magellan. Many of the fellows made the ferry trip across the bay to visit the island and came back with the news that the island in itself was worth the trip.

Beer, to the delight of all, was supplemented by native whisky. Beer had been in our possession most of the time, so it was only natural that we should desire a change of beverages whenever we went to town. This whisky was distilled in Cebu City and distributed throughout the island from there. Discarded beer bottles were used as containers for this

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A section of the Red Cross building.

more potent drink. Various names were attached by labels to these bottles . . . names so constructed as to give us an impression that we were consuming some Stateside product. Most popular of the Filipino "rot-gut" were those bottles bearing the titles Golden Crown, Silver Horse, and Black Cat. Drinking had by this time become our chief means of distraction, a way of momentarily helping a lonesome soldier forget his homesickness. We were learning to consume the stuff in the same manner of drinking as befitted the proverbial "gentlemen of the old school." But, of course, there were many of us who had never even heard of the old school, much less attended it, so our decorum when we were under the influence of alcohol was greatly frowned upon.

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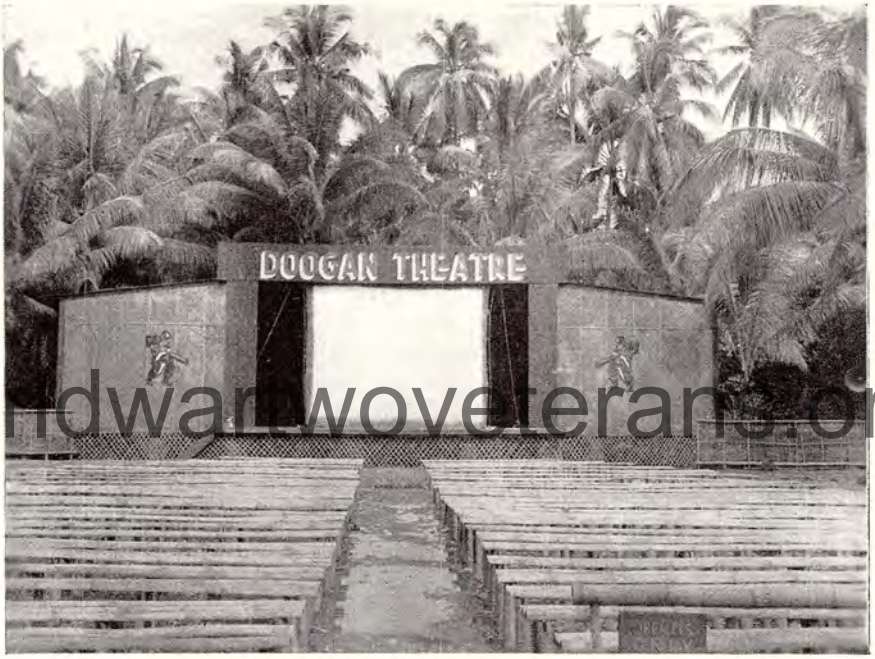
In due time our areas had been cleansed and rebuilt to the maximum. Now was the time when we should have had the opportunity to rest our weary bodies and forget the Army. But the Army was not so willing to be forgotten. Training schedules were already in the hands of those who were to administer them and the program soon began. It was the same old story we had undergone in our training camps wherever we had been—a story which was becoming immensely stale. We did agree that if we were to fight the Japs again we would need further training along certain lines, but it was beginning to seem to us that they were trying to overdo the schedule. Noncom schools were put into existence



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The Regimental theater, named after Pfc. Theodore J. Doogan, Company H.

and hikes had to be taken. In fact, all our basic material was covered as it had been many centuries ago (it seemed to us) in the States. From all appearances we were going to hit the Nips soon again, but hard—this time at their own front door.

We were enjoying a movie one evening when the projector was suddenly shut off for no apparent reason. Our howls were quieted when a booming voice came to us over the loud speaker:

"The Japs have accepted our surrender terms."

That was it!

The place went wild. Who cared about the picture? The Nips had had enough. They were calling it quits. That meant we wouldn't have to fight them again. Soon we would be on our way home—or so we thought.

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Following the completion of the terms of surrender we held a thanksgiving service in memory of those who could not be with us to enjoy the war's end. We had much to be thankful for. Peace again brought the security of our homes and our families and it brought to a close this mass killing of humanity which we found so distasteful. Yes, we had hated the Japs for all we were worth—one gets that way after a time—but this meant that American boys would no longer be butchered and

The Oak Leaf Review.

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American hearts would no longer be broken. Again the world would live quietly and in peace.

Training, however, continued, although it was now along a different line. We now had to learn the customs of the Japanese people, not merely their fighting men, for it soon became apparent to us, to our displeasure, that we would be called upon to render our services in the home islands of Japan as one of the occupation units. This was hard to swallow. We had fought for the right to return home and that right was now being denied to us.

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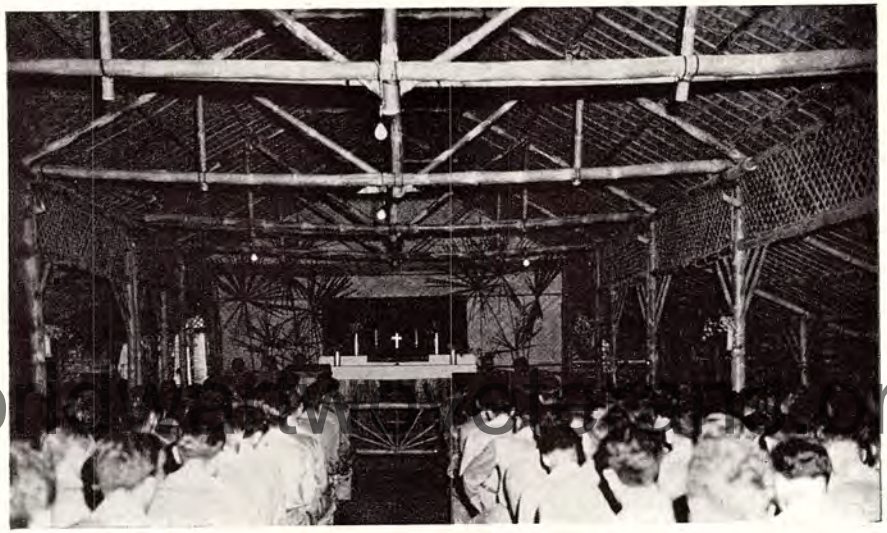
Our recreational facilities were now running on a full time basis with baseball, basketball, volleyball, softball, and tennis taking the main spotlight. Boxing was coming along nicely and for what time the pugilists had they made a good showing for themselves. Our baseball teams were in fine shape. Although we had a very poor field, it was good enough to practice on. We were reputed to have the best team on the island and our opponents seemed willing to verify that opinion.

In the world of entertainment we were very fortunate in being visited by a number of USO shows. One of the best was the stage production of the famed presentation, "Oklahoma." Kay Kyser graced us



Services in the Protestant chapel.

with his presence and brought his popular jokes along. It seemed that as soon as one show had departed for other areas another show was scheduled to arrive. Not to be outdone, we of the 305th RCT decided to put on a stage production of our own. This giant of all stage productions, a masterpiece in all the arts of showmanship, we entitled the "Oakleaf Review." The show was so successful that we were called upon to perform it for the benefit of the Division commander himself. Following that performance we were scheduled to tour the various theaters of the other two Regiments of the 77th but, as luck or fate would have it, the Regimental Combat Team was given orders and our well laid plans were set aside. We felt genuinely sorry for the men of the 306th and 307th that they did not get the opportunity to thrill at the art of our own 305th's talented actors.

This chapter would not be complete if we did not mention the people of the island of Cebu who made our stay so pleasant. The Filipinos are much the same as any other people of the world in their emotions. They have their own customs and their own manner of dress and their complexion was a little darker than ours, but their friendliness toward the American soldiers can never be bettered anywhere in the world. We found them to be more than pleasant and extremely courteous. But, like all nations, our own America included, they had their thieves and their confidence men who would attempt to sell the nuts off the palm trees to us in the same manner that American con men sell mining stocks

or the Brooklyn bridge to innocent yokels. Many of the men paid more than outrageous prices for worthless souvenirs.

Many of us found friends among the natives, people who found some reflected glory in having one of the long-striding American soldiers visit him at his humble dwelling. Others of us found the feminine populace of the island to offer a type of companionship which we had been denied since we left Stoneman for our overseas assignment. These girls were not of the Stateside color but it was more than nice to have a bit of femininity clinging to one's arm as she showed her soldier the many sights of the island which, though he had seen it before, seemed quite different when viewed with the appropriate companion.

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The people had a custom of offering gifts to the men in a token of friendship. But they did not lose by it, for the soldier who accepted such a gift was expected to give the native something in return as a token of his own friendship.

The mail service was the thorn in our sides. It was most irregular. Because our own mail did not always reach us we were never sure that the letters and money orders and occasional souvenir boxes that we sent home reached their destinations.

Toward the latter part of September we received orders that we were to be a part of the Army of Occupation. Our home base would be the most northern of the four main Japanese home islands, Hokkaido. We put all our incidentals in order and by battalions were given a last opportunity to visit Cebu City where we bade farewells to the many Filipino friends we had made. We departed from the island in groups, but we were soon to meet again in the land of the Sunken Sun.

With the trade winds gently caressing our faces, we took our leave of the beautiful island of Cebu. As the sun slowly disappeared beyond the horizon we turned and caught a last fleeting glimpse of the palm-spread beaches. The memories of those tropical nights were again called to mind. Then we turned our faces northward and sailed peacefully toward Japan.

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Chapter 18: Hokkaido: Journey's End

Hokkaido! Second largest and most northern of the four main islands of Japan. This was the island, so the rumor went, that the 305th had been scheduled to invade. As we neared the shore and got our first view of the land, not one of us was other than glad that we were going to step from the ship's gangplank upon a conquered country, rather than swarm ashore in an attempt to establish a beachhead. For the natural terrain of the island would have made invasion difficult and costly.

We landed at Ituro in the mid-afternoon of October 6. It might be hard to describe the mixed emotions of us all as we paraded ashore, but there can be no doubt that most of us wondered what reception the natives would offer their conquerors. Would there be noticeable resentment? Would they cause us much trouble? Or would they merely keep out of our way, obviously afraid of the "butchers of Guam and Leyte?"

There was nothing in the outward appearance of the civilian populace of Ituro to give us a hint. Groups ranging from five to forty-five stopped curiously, to watch us as we landed, and then went about their personal business. The children approached us first, perhaps encouraged by pieces of tropical chocolate and sticks of gum which grinning soldiers offered to them. There is that one thing about the American soldier which holds him to the ties of civilization, regardless of how savagely he fought upon the battlefield: he cannot be other than friendly with children no matter where he may be.

Gradually the adults approached us, some to beg a "cigarett-o," others to merely talk with the men. Yes, we talked, but it was a slow insensible conversation in each group. We could not speak Japanese and the Nips could not speak English. Nor were the issued Japanese-English phrase books of much use to us.

We did not dally long on the docks of Ituro. Almost immediately we were marched to a troop train. The Japanese version of a railroad is similar in many respects to an American railroad. The coaches are built along the same order but a little smaller, and equally as uncomfortable. However, the seats are not fitted to the curve of the spine, being set up back-to-back on a ninety degree angle and thus making relaxation almost an impossibility. The tracks are much narrower than those back home and are inclined to be bumpy. But we endured the ride; by this time we were toughened veterans and could endure almost anything. We travelled non-stop to the city of Asahigawa and arrived about 2300.

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"We have arrived."

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The advance party had already laid out the camp site for us. Originally the site had been a Japanese Army garrison and the buildings were in fair condition as compared with other inconveniences we had suffered in the past. The camp was constructed in such a manner that we were able to occupy barracks buildings as though the pattern had been planned, with the 1st, 2d and 3d Battalions located in consecutive order and five companies arranged as though blocked within each battalion area. There were also conveniently located quarters for our service units, on the eastern side of the regimental headquarters building.

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Our next few days were devoted to work, work, and more work as we labored to make the buildings livable. We had to patch destroyed and rotten woodwork, replace shattered windows, mend holes in the roofing. And then we had to combat the rats and house fleas. There lay our chief problem. The rats were pretty cagey animals and were not trapped too easily. The insect powder we carried seemed to do very little good. A few men insisted, and still do, that, where there were

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"All is calm . . . All is bright"

no fleas and we sprinkled that GI insect powder, then fleas came! However, the 305th Combat Team carried on with the reputation it had earned, and before long we could see that we were winning our battle with the pests.

In a few days Japanese laborers were brought into camp to help us with our construction and rebuilding of the place. We welcomed their assistance for it gave us more time for recreation. Places were provided for entertainment. The camp boasted of seven theaters, open daily with a different feature every night. There were set up NCO clubs and enlisted men's clubs in each battalion, and one regimental officers' club. Later the Red Cross established a club room for enlisted men. A large recreation hall was reconstructed from a gymnasium and we were soon having personal appearance shows of various natures. There was also a PX. It was not the kind of PX to which soldiers doing Stateside duty had become accustomed. It had no bars, no fountain, no lunch counter. There were no tables to lounge at and while away the time. In fact, very often there was nothing in the PX to sell at all. However, when supplies, which usually comprised candy bars, chewing gum, soap and other toilet articles, did come in, the men formed a line which sometimes took as long as three hours to pass the counter.

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Chaplain Berrett conducts Sunday services.

In the rear of the 2d Battalion area were some stables housing several horses left behind by the inactivated Japanese troops. We found them in a semi-starved, unkempt condition, but under careful American care they began to fatten up and regain some of their lost spirit. Soldiers who knew, or cared to learn how to sit in a saddle, found pleasure in riding over the muddy roads surrounding the camp or traveling on horseback through the nearby hills.

Then if this entertainment was not enough, we could always go sightseeing or shopping in the city of Asahigawa which the postcards described as being a modern industrial metropolis but which we found to be dirty and shabby and smelling too strongly of fish which the natives were wont to hang upon the outer walls of their homes to dry.

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However, our stay in Hokkaido had not been entirely devoted to attending movies, engaging in sports, and working around our quarters. We were sent to Japan as an occupation force and certain duties were expected of us.

It was our job to round up and destroy all supplies and ammunition which the former enemy had left cached around or had turned over to us. It was up to us to do our share in governing the land and providing military police forces. It was our duty to maintain order and to prevent riots. For the purpose of destroying the supplies and maintaining order,

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Paradise Inn—with beer and whiskey made in Japan.

patrols were sent out to various points of the island, such patrols varying in strength from platoons to entire companies.

The chief difficulties we encountered were the few riots between Chinese ex-prisoners and the Japanese authorities and the strikes of Korean laborers in the Hokkaido coal mines. Military Government had promised these Chinese and Koreans that they would be returned to their own countries but shipping facilities had delayed their return and their impatience prompted minor uprisings. However, we were able to handle these flare-ups with a minimum of trouble and very little personal danger.

Winter arrived on Hokkaido. A winter on Hokkaido is something to remember. Yes, some parts of our United States are equally as cold if not colder than this northern island. But there was that one difference; back in the States when one's day's work was completed he could go into a warm house to a comfortable chair and enjoy a pleasant evening. Not so here. Our barracks were cold. Our theaters were cold. Every place was cold. Our theaters, however, along toward the last of our stay in Camp Asahigawa, were improved to a certain extent, but as always is the way in the Army they were improved so late that we had but little opportunity to enjoy them.

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It is difficult to say whether the fault lay in the poor insulation of our barracks or our poor heating equipment. It could have been both.

Some of the men, those from Oregon, Wisconsin, New England, and other northern States, did not mind the cold weather too greatly. But

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Gateway entrance to Regimental headquarters.

men who had lived most of their lives in a warm climate, or those who had served in tropical islands during past winters, spent a large portion of their time shivering and shaking from the cold.

The snow had its good points. It covered the fishy smell of the city of Asahigawa and the odor of fertilizer in the fields, and helped to create an aroma of cleanliness to appease our nostrils. It covered the ankle-deep mud through which we had formerly had to wade whenever we moved from one point to another. It stole away the dirty, drab appearance of our surroundings and replaced it with a clean, white covering.

It provided another sport for the men. Stored away in warehouses throughout the post were found innumerable pairs of Japanese skis which were distributed among the companies for the use of the men. Soldiers from northern states renewed their interest in skiing and men who had never before had much experience with snow tried to learn to ski. Many were the soldiers who, though hardened by rough living, found undeveloped muscles in their legs becoming sore as a result of this new exercise.

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Soldiers did not complain of this. It was all in the days' fun. But many of the men who took frequent spills in the snow became somewhat provoked at the crows, ever abundant in the treetops (Japan has more than its share of these huge black birds). More than once a soldier was heard to remark to a friend: "Every time I hear one of those birds haw-hawing I get the feeling I am being laughed at. I don't like to be laughed at, even by a crow."

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The Lady with the Torch done in snow by Shuzo Iwafune and Matao Higuchi, in our honor, under the auspices of the railroad people of Asahigawa. The statue stood before the station door.

Christmas arrived. Considering everything, it was a holiday which surprised us. We had thought it would be just another day, but no, it was really Christmas. Pine trees were placed in every barracks and every club building as a token of the American spirit of the day. Japanese merchants dug into their supplies and brought forth a heavy amount of Western style Christmas decorations. Such international spots as the Paradise Club in Asahigawa, an imitation of our Stateside honky-tonks, eager to please its American trade, decorated its walls with evergreen and tinsel.

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At the 2d Battalion EM and NCO clubs a party for small Japanese Christian children was held. Several hundred attended. With Buddhism as the prevalent religion in Japan, and Shintoism as the state-sponsored religion, it surprised us that Christianity had even the smallest oppor-

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Souvenir hunting in a typical department store on Hokkaido.

tunity of survival here. That it did was in evidence by the large number of Christian children and the priests and ministers at the party. We were agreeably surprised. Perhaps, after all, there was hope of Nippon's becoming a decent nation.

Then came the New Year, 1946. With it came the hopes of a new life for us—or a return to our old manner of living—a return to the United States of America.

Most of the older combat men had gone. We had left many behind on Guam, Leyte, Ie Shima, Kerama Retto and Okinawa who will never return home, their passage paid by the wounds they have received. At regular intervals buddies shook hands and said goodbye as one or the other started the long journey homeward because he had accumulated the much-prized points which rendered him eligible for discharge.

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Replacements arrived fresh from the States, men and boys who were lucky never to have seen combat and knew that they were lucky, men and boys who would carry on the important work of occupying Japan and teaching the Japanese the decent way, the American way, of living.

Late in January rumors again began to spread among us, rumors which soon developed into facts, that on March 15, 1946, the three

regimental combat teams which comprised the 77th Division were to be prepared for inactivation. Our unit had served its purpose. It had served its country well and we were proud of it.

The 11th Airborne Division was coming into Hokkaido to replace us. They were already among us seeking volunteers for their outfit. "Going to join the parachuters, bud?"

"I should say not. It was bad enough to be in the regular infantry. Nope, all I want to join is the ranks of civilians. I want to go home."

The telephone on its stand in the hall began its loud, raucous buzzing. The sound of soft, feminine footsteps hurried toward it. The buzzing stopped.

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"Hello!" said a girl's voice.

"Hello, Mabel! I'm back!"

There is no more appropriate place to bring a story to a close than at its happiest point, and there is no happier point than the reunion of husbands and wives, men and their sweethearts, boys and their mothers. So, naturally, here we end the story of the 305th. And let us offer a prayer that the story stays ended and there is no need to revive to life the Combat Team which is Second to None for some future war.

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Medal of Honor Citations

Distinguished Unit Citations

Campaign Casualties

Killed in Action

Purple Heart

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Medal of Honor Citations

WAR DEPARTMENT
Washington 25, D. C., 8 February 1946

GENERAL ORDERS
No. 16

MEDAL OF HONOR. By direction of the President, under the provisions of the act of Congress approved 9 July 1918 (WD Bul. 43, 1918), a Medal of Honor for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of life above and beyond the call of duty was awarded by the War Department in the name of Congress to the following-named officer:

Captain *Robert B. Nett* (then first lieutenant), 01305818, commanded Company E, 305th Infantry Regiment, Army of the United States, on 14 December 1944, near Cogon, Leyte, Philippine Islands, in an attack against a reinforced enemy battalion which had held up the American advance for 2 days from its entrenched positions around a three-story concrete building. With another infantry company and armored vehicles, Company E advanced against heavy machine-gun and other automatic-weapons fire with Lieutenant *Nett* spearheading the assault against the strongpoint. During the fierce hand-to-hand encounter which ensued, he killed seven deeply entrenched Japanese with his rifle and bayonet and, although seriously wounded, gallantly continued to lead his men forward, refusing to relinquish his command. Again he was severely wounded, but, still unwilling to retire, pressed ahead with his troops to assure the capture of the objective. Wounded once more in the final assault, he calmly made all arrangements for the resumption of the advance, turned over his command to another officer, and then walked unaided to the rear for medical treatment. By his remarkable courage in continuing forward through sheer determination, despite successive wounds, Lieutenant *Nett* provided an inspiring example for his men and was instrumental in the capture of a vital Japanese stronghold.

* * *

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF WAR:

DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER
Chief of Staff

OFFICIAL:

EDWARD F. WITSELL
Major General
The Adjutant General

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WAR DEPARTMENT
Washington 25, D. C., 26 June 1946

GENERAL ORDERS
No. 60

MEDAL OF HONOR. By direction of the President, under the provisions of the act of Congress approved 9 July 1918 (WD Bul. 43, 1918), a Medal of Honor for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of life above and beyond the call of duty was awarded by the War Department in the name of Congress to the following-named enlisted man:

Technical Sergeant *John Meagher* (Army serial No. 32261405), Infantry, Army of the United States, as acting platoon leader, Company E, 305th Infantry Regiment on 19 June 1945, near Ozato, Okinawa, in an attack against enemy bunkers and machine-gun nests, displayed conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty. In the heat of the fight, he mounted an assault tank and, with bullets splattering about him, designated targets to the gunner. Seeing an enemy soldier carrying an explosive charge dash for the tank treads, he shouted fire orders to the gunner, leaped from the tank, and bayoneted the charging soldier. Knocked unconscious and his rifle destroyed, he regained consciousness, secured a machine gun from the tank, and began a furious one-man assault on the enemy. Firing from his hip, moving through vicious cross-fire, which ripped through his clothing, he charged the nearest pillbox, killing six. Going on amid the hail of bullets and grenades, he dashed for a second enemy gun, running out of ammunition just as he reached the position. He grasped his empty machine gun by the barrel and, in a violent onslaught, killed the crew. By his fearless assaults, Sergeant *Meagher,* single-handedly broke the enemy resistance, enabling his platoon to take its objective and continue the advance.

* * *

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF WAR:

DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER
Chief of Staff

OFFICIAL:

EDWARD F. WITSELL
Major General
The Adjutant General

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WAR DEPARTMENT
Washington 25, D. C., 17 July 1946

GENERAL ORDERS
No. 71

MEDAL OF HONOR. By direction of the President, under the provisions of the act of Congress approved 9 July 1918 (WD Bul. 43, 1918), a Medal of Honor for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of life above and beyond the call of duty was awarded posthumously by the War Department in the name of Congress to the following-named enlisted man:

Sergeant *Joseph E. Muller* (Army serial No. 32230455), as an acting squad leader, Company B, 305th Infantry Regiment, Army of the United States, on 15 and 16 May 1945 near Ishimmi, Okinawa, displayed conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty. When his platoon was stopped by deadly fire from a strongly defended ridge, he directed men to points where they could cover his attack. Then through the vicious machine-gun and automatic fire, crawling forward alone, he suddenly jumped up, hurling his grenades, charged the enemy, and drove them into the open, where his squad shot them down. Seeing enemy survivors about to man a machine gun, firing his rifle at point-blank range, he hurled himself upon them and killed the remaining four. Before dawn the next day, the enemy counterattacked fiercely to retake the position, Sergeant *Muller* crawled forward through the flying bullets and explosives, then, leaping to his feet, hurling grenades, and firing his rifle, charged the Japs and routed them. As he moved into his foxhole shared with two other men, a lone enemy, who had been feigning death, threw a grenade. Quickly seeing the danger to his companions, Sergeant *Muller* threw himself over it and smothered the blast with his body. Sacrificing his life heroically to save his comrades, Sergeant *Muller* upheld the highest traditions of the military service.

* * *

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF WAR:

DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER
Chief of Staff

OFFICIAL:

EDWARD F. WITSELL
Major General
The Adjutant General

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Distinguished Unit Citations

The *1st Battalion, 305th Infantry Regiment,* is cited for outstanding performance of duty in breaking the final organized resistance of the Japanese Army on 21-22 June 1945 at Hills 79 and 85, Okinawa, Ryukyu Islands. Hills 79 and 85 had been chosen by the Japanese as the ideal location for a final stand, because they were really one long, continuous ridge of hard, jagged coral interspersed with fissures 10 to 12 feet wide. Every one of these fissures contained Japanese automatic-weapon positions, which permitted them to rake the approaches to the Hills with a deadly cross-fire. Because of the proximity of friendly units on the right and left, it was virtually impossible to use artillery support in the attack. The 1st Battalion, whose ranks had been decimated by bitter fighting throughout the Ryukyus campaign, was made up of replacements with no combat experience. Handicapped by this fact, as well as by a narrow frontage which afforded no maneuver room, the battalion, nevertheless, launched an attack at noon on 21 June. Following a devastating preparation by 81mm mortars, M4 tanks, SP 75mm guns, and heavy machine guns, Company A moved across the line of departure and advanced 200 yards in the face of enemy machine-gun and mortar fire. At this point, the company was forced to halt. Reorganization was effected and, despite the vicious enemy fire, Company A continued to push forward. As the advance continued, the enemy tried twice to counterattack in force, but was beaten back with heavy losses. When Company A reached the base of Hill 79, Company C passed through it and continued the attack. Every enemy position had to be reduced systematically by riflemen, but this was accomplished successfully with a minimum of casualties and Hill 79 was captured. On the following morning, the battalion once more attacked and successfully captured the portion of Hill 85 within their zone of action. Troops rushed at double time with fixed bayonets in an all-out, aggressive attack, which overwhelmed desperate enemy resistance and the final defenders were wiped out at 1600. During this whirlwind 28-hour action, 986 of the enemy were killed and 13 captured, compared to 4 killed and 62 wounded in the battalion. The battalion accomplished a tremendously difficult mission in 28 hours, which even the most optimistic high commanders had estimated would take 3 days. The unflinching courage and devotion to duty exhibited by every officer and man in the *1st Battalion, 305th Infantry Regiment,* are worthy of the highest praise and are in keeping with the best traditions of the United States Army. (General Orders 45, Headquarters 77th Infantry Division, 28 January 1946, as approved by the Commander in Chief, United States Army Forces, Pacific.)

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The *3d Battalion, 305th Infantry Regiment,* is cited for outstanding performance of duty in action against the enemy in breaking through the much-vaunted Shuri defense line on Okinawa, Ryukyu Islands, on 15-17 May 1945. After 10 days of bitter fighting, the *3d Battalion, 305th Infantry Regiment,* launched an attack against the enemy near Shuri Castle on 15 May 1945. The enemy was numerically superior, determined, and deeply entrenched in a maze of caves, tombs, pillboxes, and revetted installations. Despite murderous fire from all types of weapons and repeated counterattacks, on 16 May, this battalion reached a position from which it could direct an assault against the main Shuri line position. At 0415 on 17 May, the battalion launched an all-out offensive against this position in a predawn attack. So depleted was the effective fighting strength of the battalion that only 21 riflemen remained in the entire battalion. Cooks, bakers, drivers, headquarters personnel, and pioneers had been pressed into front line duty. Skillfully taking advantage of the element of surprise, the battalion forced a breach in the Shuri defense line in a violent bayonet assault, executed under cover of darkness. The enemy was forced into a withdrawal, which contributed ultimately to the Japanese evacuation of Shuri Castle. The assault element doggedly held their captured position against increasing enemy reaction until the first light of day. Harassed by pockets of Japanese bypassed in the surprise attack, and exposed to heavy fire, the battalion organized the position. At dawn, when all supporting weapons had been brought up, the gallant infantrymen resumed the attack, capturing a dominant ridge which secured our position in the break made so gallantly in the enemy line. No other battalion participating in this assault was able to effect a penetration of the enemy main defenses on these dates. During the 2-day action, 707 enemy dead were counted, 99 caves were sealed, 7 prisoners of war were taken, and 6 light and 6 heavy machine guns were destroyed. Officers and men of this battalion distinguished themselves consistently with great individual courage, extraordinary heroism, and exemplary devotion to duty. The action of the *3d Battalion, 305th Infantry Regiment,* was marked by gallantry, fearlessness, and outstanding esprit de corps, and exemplified the highest traditions of the armed forces of the United States. (General Orders 30, Headquarters 77th Infantry Division, 19 January 1946, as approved by the Commander in Chief, United States Army Forces, Pacific.)

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The *306th Field Artillery Battalion* is cited for its magnificent courage, heroism, and skillful performance of duty in action against the enemy on the Island of Leyte, Philippine Islands, during the period 24 to 31 December 1944. The *306th Field Artillery Battalion* was given the vital mission of supporting the 305th Infantry Regiment in its attack on the last enemy escape route to the seaport of Palompon. This operation consisted of a pincer movement of one force driving over the mountain and another from the sea. On the night of 24 December, the *306th Field Artillery Battalion* began its march from the Palompon Road Junction along the only road to Matagob, a distance of 10 miles over a single, narrow causeway, under persistent enemy sniper fire. Immediately upon arrival at Matagob, the *306th Field Artillery Battalion* came under observed enemy artillery fire and promptly opened counterbattery fire while shells were falling in battery positions. The enemy fire was silenced and enemy field pieces destroyed within a few minutes of the initiation of artillery fire. The battalion's position was, of necessity, 2,000 yards in rear of the front lines and without defilade from the commanding terrain held by the enemy demolition parties, which were killed at close quarters by members of the battalion. On 25 December, the infantry advance in the mountains encountered strong enemy resistance and was held up temporarily. The enemy was concealed skillfully in numerous mutually supporting strong points. Massed artillery fire was placed on the enemy. These concentrations were so dense and effective that they stripped the terrain of all vegetation, caught the enemy in his well-concealed and dug-in positions, and inflicted severe casualties. After these fire missions were completed, the infantry was then able to continue its advance. This vital artillery support was accomplished, despite the fact that the *306th Field Artillery Battalion* was hemmed in by enemy groups in the surrounding hills, without infantry protection, continually fired upon by enemy artillery and mortar units, and subjected to persistent night attacks made by the demolition parties of a fanatical foe. About 0300 on 26 December, an enemy force, with estimated strength of a platoon, attacked the service battery, but was driven back after a sharp and decisive fight, leaving three dead. Substantial evidence was discovered later that the enemy had suffered heavy casualties in this short action. Later, an artillery patrol engaged the enemy about 1,000 yards from the battalions's position. After receiving several casualties, the patrol was withdrawn and the enemy taken under direct artillery fire. More than 50 Japanese were killed in this action. Another artillery security patrol, composed of 20 men from a firing battery, encountered an enemy infiltration party of approximately 50. The patrol, with grim determination, charged the enemy, killing 33 and routing the others. Only six members of the patrol were wounded. Lacking infantry protection, the *306th Field Artillery Battalion* maintained its position for 144 hours in this infested area, displacing only when its immediate tactical mission had been completed. Though subjected to attacks day and night, this organization contributed materially to crushing the enemy between two friendly forces, enabling the latter to effect a junction and wrest from the enemy his last port, thus terminating all organized resistance on the Island of Leyte, Philippine Islands. The extraordinary determination, tenacity, aggressiveness, and esprit de corps displayed by the *306th Field Artillery Battalion* in its isolated mountain position and fight against a fanatical enemy reflect the highest credit on this organization and the United States Army. (General Orders 61, Headquarters Eighth Army, 2 August 1946.)

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Campaign Casualties
(Official)

Type	*Guam*	*Leyte*	*Ryukyus*	*Total*
Killed in action	60	159	160	379
Died of wounds	20	38	51	109
Injured	29	22	82	133
Wounded	183	428	760	1371
Total	292	647	1053	1992

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Killed in Action

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So. Jackson Rd
Lawrenceburg, Tenn.
Maj Jacob H. Woodward, Jr.
Columbia, S. C.
Capt Charles T. Hillman
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Turner Falls, Mass.
Capt Eugene H. Rennick
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1st Lt Otto R. Thiede
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2nd Lt Sylvester C. Bitter, Jr.
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2nd Lt John A. Drake
52 Maple St
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2nd Lt Donald N. Flower
Decatur, Nebr.
2nd Lt Martin A. Levine
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2nd Lt Marle E. Labler
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Michigan City, Ind.
2nd Lt John H. Nelson
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2nd Lt William V. O'Connell
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The rosters on the pages that follow are as complete as it was possible to make them at the time of going to press. But despite the care exercised in preparing the lists, certain omissions and errors may have occurred.

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Pfc Robert L. Honea
Rt. No. 2
Marietta, Ga.
Pfc Thaddeus S. Lakomski
127 Brighton Ave
Perth Amboy, N. J.
Pfc Herman Lebenz
3288 Hudson Blvd
Jersey City, N. J.
Pfc John E. Lewis
Gen. Del.
Clinton, Tenn.
S/Sgt William N. Loveland
39 Lower Wright St
Hudson Falls, N. Y.
Pfc Joseph W. McFadden
521 Harrison Ave
Harrison, N. J.
Pfc John J. McFeeley
60½ Front St
Port Jervis, N. Y.
Pfc Edward J. Shanley
247 Market St
Brighton, Mass.
Pfc Paul E. Swank
111 N. Broadway
Shelby, Ohio
Pvt Walter A. Szypka
61-11 Wilson St
Lackawanna, N. Y.
Pfc Dules T. Vazquez
Rt. No. 1 Box 102
E. Shafter, Calif.
Pfc Calvin D. Watford
Rt. No. 4
Darlington, S. C.
Pfc Stanley Williams
422 W. Cambria St
Philadelphia, Pa.
Pfc John E. Wint
Towa Pine Road
Ontario, N. Y.
Pfc Claude Tulek
RD No. 1
Lockwood, Ohio

COMPANY H

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Cpl Thomas M. Corcoran
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Pfc Theodore J. Doogan
Box 514
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Pfc Isadore Falkoff
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Brooklyn, N. Y.
Pfc Donald E. Jones
General Delivery
Spickard, Mo.
Pfc James A. Jones
RD No. 1
Grindstone, Pa.
Pfc John M. Lade
24 Rotary Ave
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S/Sgt Edward M. Lynagh
1715 Kimball St
Brooklyn, N. Y.
S/Sgt Stanley S. Majewski
3207 Park Ave
Bronx, N. Y.
Cpl Simon Mayer
701 W. 178th St
New York, N. Y.
Pfc Emil M. Schoene
111 MacDoveal St
Brooklyn, N. Y.
Pfc Raymond B. Smith
Rt. No. 2
Gilmor, Texas

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Sgt Edward J. Chickowski
1714 Leishman Ave
Arnold, Pa.
Pfc Harry P. Arena
350 E. Airy St
Norristown, Pa.
Pfc Frederick J. Piszczek
65 West St
Ware, Mass.

COMPANY I

Pvt John Andlelik
74 Ontario St
Pittsburgh, Pa.
S/Sgt Stephen T. Bonczek
169 Grove St
New Britain, Conn.
Pvt Louis Bell
2137 Wallace Ave
Bronx, N. Y.
Sgt Elton C. Campbell
Box 260 Aster Sta
Boston, Mass.
Cpl Herbert A. Dauerheim
1576 76th St
Brooklyn, N. Y.
Pfc Homer W. Dillon
Rt. No. 1
Warner, Okla.
Pfc Francis J. Drobuick
1050 Skinner Ave
Painesville, Mich.
Pfc Harry Dalrymple, Jr.
Lacon, Ill.
T/Sgt Arthur J. Edwards
607 N. Bouldin St
Baltimore, Md.
S/Sgt Ernest H. Fort
Browns Mills, N. J.
Pvt Robert E. Guillot
4812 Prytania St
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Pfc Arthur Haberman
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Asherton, Texas
Pfc Jack E. Hodges
Bartlesville, Okla.
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Seaford, Del.
Pfc Henry H. Zabka
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Taylor, Pa.
Pvt Francis N. Wilson
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Pfc Ralph Burke
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Bessemer, Ala.
Pfc Louis L. Martini
818 C St
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Pvt Simon G. Wildeveld
9543 S. Dedzie Ave
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Sgt Clarence J. Moore
279 Cascade Place
Rochester, N. Y.
Pvt Homer F. Strain
Clark Ridge, Ark.
Pvt Steven Kouach
51 Blemingdale Ave
Garfield, N. J.
Pfc Richard M. Mackey
433 Durston Ave
Syracuse, N. Y.
Pvt Anthony L. Amedeo
315 Melrose St
Brooklyn, N. Y.
Pfc Walter Johnson
No address
Pfc Ardie Rockwell
No address
Pfc William E. Hunt
Crozet, Va.
Pfc Robert W. Killgallen
28 Avon St
Malden, Mass.
Pfc Peter P. Landini
216 Meridan St
Port Chicago, Calif.
Pfc Wilfred H. LeBlano
4th Baily St
New Haven, Conn.
Pfc Robert J. Mortimer
32 Ernestine Ave
Rochester, N. Y.
Pvt Ernest R. Morrison
Rt. No. 1
Lynn, Kan.
Pfc John J. McNeil
10 York St
Norwich, N. Y.
Pvt George W. McElroy, Jr.
75 Briarcliff Rd.
Larchmont, N. Y.
Pfc Ingacio G. Paz
Morenci, Ariz.
Pfc Antonio C. Quercia
50 Masseth St
Rochester, N. Y.
Pfc Emilio A. Randazzo
21 South Gate St
Brooklyn, N. Y.
Pfc Henry F. Reuenzahn
1531 N. 9th St
Reading, Pa.
Pfc Stanley Rusin
103 14th Ave
N. Tonawanda, N. Y.
Pfc Francis T. Rotert
Rt. No. 5
Payette, Idaho

Sgt Robert H. Sharp
Rt. No. 1
West Union, Ohio
Pfc Richard C. Shipston
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Pfc Walter R. Sudol
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2027 Flecher St
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Pfc Warren F. Yaud
2709 Main St
Baton Rouge, La.

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Pfc Robert N. Jacobs
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Pvt Marle W. Allen
Victor, Idaho
S/Sgt Benjamin Bennati
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Sgt Dexter W. Berry
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Cpl Edmund J. Busch
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Pfc John M. Butler
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S/Sgt John G. Cropper
Shelltown, Md.
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Welaco, Texas
S/Sgt Lawrence Dougherty
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Sgt William S. Dowd
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Richmond Hill, N. Y.
S/Sgt Roy L. Eckstrom
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S/Sgt George F. Edwards
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2119 W. Harrison St.
Chicago, Ill.
Sgt Luther B. Godard
502 Broad St
Columbia, Miss.

S/Sgt Andrew E. Hornik
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Garfield, N. J.
Pfc Robert E. Hazzard
R. O. No. 4
Mechanicsburg, Pa.
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Salem, Ore.
Pfc Arthur Kleinburg
1328 Grant Ave
Bronx, N. Y.
Pvt Michael Ladyczka
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Clifton, N. J.
Pvt Richard E. Lockwood
181 Second St
Albany, N. Y.
Pfc Lonnie E. Massalsky, Jr.
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Tarentum, Pa.
Pfc Charles McCoin
311 E. 11th St
Lawrence, Kan.
Pfc Paul H. McCoy
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Pfc Stanley Niedzieki
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Sgt Charles C. Note
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Paterson, N. J.
Pfc Herbert B. Nunnally
713 Colonnal Ave
Petersburg, Va.
Pfc Paul J. Ostrander
210 Brink St
Grayling, Mich.
S/Sgt Roy H. Otto
Ft. Lupton, Colo.
Pfc William R. Painter
19 S. Ann St
Lancaster, Pa.
Pfc George Papageorgiou
156 Main St
Oneonta, N. Y.
Pvt Paul J. Perdue
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Rocky Mount, Va.
Pfc Samuel Pincus
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Brooklyn, N. Y.
Pfc James M. Propes
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Marked Trees, Ark.
Pfc Edward F. Puhala
10 Street
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T/Sgt Arthur G. Rohl
Jefferson, Valley
Pfc Fred P. Rosenberg
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New York, N. Y.
Pfc Butler Salles
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154 President St
Passaic, N. J.
Pfc Joseph Tetti
349 Willow Ave
Long Branch, N. J.
T/Sgt Glen E. Tweed
207 E. Park St
Greenville, Tenn.
Pvt Angelo J. Telesco
112 Purdy Ave
Port Chester, N. Y.
Pvt Hyman Wasserman
397 Grand St
New York, N. Y.
Pfc Charles E. Webster
715 Ann St
Newport, Ky.
Pvt Robert Wilcox
314 Kimble St
Modesto, Calif.
Pvt Lauren J. Williams
Po Box 566
Patterson, Calif.
Pvt Perry E. Willis
Peggs Route
Tahlequah, Okla.
Pvt Dallas A. Wilson
Persia, Iowa
S/Sgt Robert Wyckoff
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Jersey City, N. J.
Pvt Charles C. Zerbarini
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Pvt Michael E. Zuba
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Providence, R. I.

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S/Sgt. Harry L. Bell, Jr.
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S/Sgt Adolf C. Brune
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La Grange, Texas
Pfc Earl R. Burton
Rt. No. 2 Mtn. Home
Baxter, Ark.
Pfc Salvatore Caliendo
185 Ind. Ave
Long Branch, N. J.
S/Sgt Joseph Caravaglio
16½ Burr Ave
Norwich, N. Y.
Pfc Frank J. Cardoza
1105 Prospect Ave
El Paso, Texas
Pfc Darivin D. Christie
5402 Horger St
Dearborn, Mich.
Pfc Ernest Collyer
265 Sayles Ave
Pawtucket, R. I.
Pfc Stanley J. Comoss
31 Sheridan St
Shamokin, Pa.
T/5 Noah H. Connell
RFD No. 2 Box 96
Lloyd, Fla.
Pfc Charles L. Davis
401 6th St
Fairport, Ohio
Pfc Eugene G. Cooley
18 Lincoln St
Union Town, Pa.
S/Sgt Charles Faber
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Jersey City, N. J.
T/4 Dante Grech
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Pfc Kenneth E. Groves
1179 Decatur St
Brooklyn, N. Y.
Sgt Julius Hanisko
73 Myrtle Ave
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Sgt Fred A. Harris
Park St
Milo, Me.
Pfc Cornelius Heffernan
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Pfc Peter Jacklin
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Hope, R. I.
Sgt Joseph J. Keller
1396 Commonwealth Ave
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Pfc Nathan Kellner
370 Morris Ave
Newark, N. J.
S/Sgt Bennard W. McReynolds
Route No. 2
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Pfc Edward J. Ores
1012 37th Ave
Astoria, L. I., N. Y.
Pfc Ernest Roe
Goldsboro, Md.
S/Sgt Donald P. Simmons
Selbyville, W. Va.
Pfc Marshall E. Terrell
Rt. No. 1 Box 47
Clifton Forge, Va.
Pfc John J. Tofil
31 7th St
Campbell, Ohio
Pfc Martin J. Verhagen
Route No. 4
Green Bay, Wis.
Sgt Junius H. Williams
Rt. No. 1
Pink Hill, N. C.
Pfc Robert A. Wilson
233 N. 11th St
Fredonia, Kan.
Pfc Francis J. Wohlfrom
Caynon Creek, Mont.
Pfc Toong Y. Wong
881 Clay St
San Francisco, Calif.
Pfc Preston R. Worrell
11 Cherry St
Medford, N. J.
Pfc Paul Yuschok
900 Washington Ave
Woodbine, N. J.
Pvt Nick Zuccard
264 Camden St
Newark, N. J.

COMPANY M

Pvt Elwood V. Cunningham
Rt. No. 1
Deep Run, N. C.
S/Sgt George J. Vane
Rt. No. 2 Town Line Rd
Macedon, N. Y.
S/Sgt George W. Anderson
108-25 Jamaica Ave
Richmond Hill, L. I., N. Y.
Pvt Roy E. Allton
622 N. 4th St
Columbia, Mo.
S/Sgt Roland E. Bessette
18 Tower Terrace
North Agawam, Mass.
T/5 Ciro F. Barrelli
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Brooklyn, N. Y.
Pvt Jesse L. Brown
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Los Angeles, Calif.
S/Sgt Walter J. Casey
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Pfc Stanley C. Corn
Rt. No. 1 Box 95
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Pfc Patrick J. Donohue
2311 Morris Ave
Bronx, N. Y.
Pfc Austin England
Star Route
Mt. Olive, Ky.
Pfc Roscoe F. Flowers
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Hortense, Ga.
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Pfc Edwin L. O'Brien
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Medina, N. Y.
S/Sgt Charles J. Smith
Picture Rock, Pa.
T/Sgt Victor H. Zinn
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Pvt Clifton Turner
Rt. No. 2
Pink Hill, N. C.

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Lt Col Joseph B. Coolidge
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Major Matthew J. Allaire
Major Edward L. Davis, Jr.
Major Rudolph J. Patrizio
Major Winthrop Rockefeller
Capt Frank E. Barron, Jr.
Capt Charles H. Borsom
Capt Paul R. Cinq-Mars
Capt Lee P. Cothran
Capt Peter McK. Cromartie
Capt Richard J. Cross
Capt Arthur G. Curtin
Capt Hugh S. Fitch
Capt Frederick W. Heidenreich
Capt Edward W. Hopkins
Capt James E. Mahar
Capt Robert S. Nett
Capt John L. Ruff
Capt Nathaniel B. Saucier
Capt Arthur L. Wheeler
Capt Richard O. White
Capt Clyde A. Yates, Jr.
1st Lt James J. Ballard
1st Lt Victor Baum
1st Lt Gibbes T. Beckham
1st Lt Robert W. Brady
1st Lt Jefferson O. T. Brown
1st Lt Eugene K. Dayton
1st Lt Lionel E. Deming
1st Lt Robert W. Derr
1st Lt Robert D. Dreyer
1st Lt Leslie B. Enoch
1st Lt John A. Falkenrath
1st Lt John E. Fasso
1st Lt Milton Fineman
1st Lt John D. Franklin
1st Lt Alexander Gamble
1st Lt Westley F. Gant
1st Lt Jesse Gershberg
1st Lt Albert J. Golia
1st Lt Roland R. Gullixson
1st Lt Harry L. Haley
1st Lt Raymond W. Hammond, Jr.
1st Lt Vernon C. Hassell
1st Lt Jack D. Hendley
1st Lt Howard E. Hoover
1st Lt Paul L. Hopkins
1st Lt Stanley J. Jacobs
1st Lt Charles F. Jones
1st Lt John J. Kelley
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1st Lt Henry S. Lufler
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1st Lt Michael C. Savatovic
1st Lt Lewis C. Sanseider
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1st Lt Lester W. Siecre
1st Lt Charles W. Stall
1st Lt Robert Suling
1st Lt Bud L. Tadlock
1st Lt Roy C. Weaver
1st Lt Charles R. Wall
1st Lt Paul J. Wiwi
1st Lt Wilton Wallis
2nd Lt Nelson G. Aubray
2nd Lt Michael A. Brennan
2nd Lt Alfred W. Brown
2nd Lt Howard J. Calvert
2nd Lt Kerby L. Coleman
2nd Lt Francis Lernor
2nd Lt Robert E. Fors
2nd Lt Edward C. Harper
2nd Lt Delbert J. Hook
2nd Lt Edward F. Hynes
2nd Lt John N. Kane
2nd Lt James L. Kennedy
2nd Lt Harry L. Kittler
2nd Lt Merle E. Mahler
2nd Lt Albert S. Marchetti
2nd Lt Charles A. Milo
2nd Lt Simon Rappaport
2nd Lt Charles J. Reaves
2nd Lt Theodore Rycharski
2nd Lt Robert H. Thompson
2nd Lt Richard F. Todd
2nd Lt Logan C. Weathers
2nd Lt Joseph A. Weinberger
2nd Lt Earl L. Wiggins
2nd Lt John J. Wilkinson

302d MEDICAL BATTALION

COMPANY A

T/5 James J. Delvin, Jr.
Pfc William S. Klebbe
Pfc Edward C. Lord
T/5 Frank W. Schnitzler
Pfc Barton W. Smith
Pfc Michael J. Tino

COMPANY D

Pfc Stanley Gaska
S/Sgt Michael Melkisethiam
Pfc Francis W. Rorick
T/3 Henry Spielvogel

305th FA BATTALION

MEDICAL DETACHMENT

S/Sgt Joseph P. Ahearn
Cpl George Bella
Sgt Walter P. Beloski
Pfc Lee R. Chastain
S/Sgt Carl Couch, Jr.
Pvt Edward L. Cutshall
T/5 William E. Diamond
Pfc Cosimo Fecaro
T/5 John Q. Flint
Pfc Frank P. Gurka
Pfc George B. Hensley
Pvt Roger D. Hicks
S/Sgt Alexander H. Lucas
Pfc Harry C. Mansfield, Jr.
T/5 Walter J. Melena
Cpl Wade L. Miller
Sgt George E. Moran
Cpl Richard L. Murphy
Pfc Dewitt Podqurski
Cpl Thomas W. Relf
T/5 Frank H. Roe
Pfc Eddie P. Rowe
Pfc Joseph Robichaud
T/4 Paul Skrovanek
Pvt Thomas L. Staples
Pfc David Stein
Cpl Emanuel Sussman
Cpl James B. Tooley
Sgt Heinz P. Warnbrunn

SERVICE BATTERY

Pfc Clifford C. Clarkson
Pfc John Klein

BATTERY A

T/5 William A. Blount
Pfc Charles C. Buchanan
Pvt Morris Cohen
Pfc Charles P. Hendrickson
T/5 Joseph T. Kelley
Pvt J. F. Kelly
T/5 James H. Morgan
1st Sgt William A. Reese
Pfc James A. Scruggs
Pfc Angelo F. Valentino
Cpl Victor B. Vitkevick
Cpl George W. Waters

BATTERY B

S/Sgt Harold J. Tatro
Sgt Joseph J. Krineski
T/4 Conrad DeRuiter
Cpl William C. Grice
T/5 Albert Lopes, Jr.
Pfc Frank S. Gregory
Pfc Paul W. Nutt

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T/5 Lester F. Addis
S/Sgt James R. Barnes
Pfc John Bohaczyk
Cpl Thomas E. Brown
Pfc James E. Chambers
T/4 Eric J. Arcy
T/Sgt Thomas M. Gorman
T/4 William A. Hathaway, Jr.
Pvt John W. Stalter
S/Sgt Adam W. Szumowski
Pfc Gerard F. Taugher
Pfc Metro Wasnick
Cpl Edward J. Watkins

305th INFANTRY

HEADQUARTERS COMPANY

Pfc Dominic P. Giordano
Pfc Robert T. Williams
T/4 Charles J. Citrenberg
Pfc Angel L. Colone
Pfc Ley H. Dobbins
Pfc Edward J. Dumaz
Pfc John E. Nolka
Pfc Robert F. Kugath
Pfc John J. Mellon
Pfc Jesse A. Murray

CANNON COMPANY

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Sgt John D. Helmick
Sgt Harry R. Momi
Sgt William Taylor
T/4 Robert D. Mellott
Cpl Henry J. Colton
Pfc Arthur P. Buck
Pfc Frederick E. Emmerich
Pfc Lawrence W. Hall
Pfc Thomas T. Katreeb
Pfc Joseph R. Patamia
Pfc Anthony J. Pompilio
Pfc Lawrence E. Riley
Pfc Milton Rosenzweig

ANTITANK COMPANY

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S/Sgt Anthony M. Demayo
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Cpl Joseph V. Milone
T/5 Joseph J. Mriss
Pfc Joseph A. Muller
Pfc Royal T. Nelson
Pfc Hugena G. Roberts
Pfc Patsy J. Rubbiano
Pfc Ralph M. Switzer
Cpl Franklin E. Terry
Pfc Roy F. Upchurch
Pfc Jack Weinsoff

SERVICE COMPANY

Sgt Andrew Pejko
T/4 Loyal F. Yorgensen
T/5 William P. Petty
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Pfc Joe R. Proppa

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M/Sgt Ramond F. Anthracite
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T/4 Leonard Elber
T/5 Kieran P. Fennelly
Pfc John T. Garnett
Pvt Charlie P. Herbert
M/Sgt William Mantell
Sgt Robert Mitchell
S/Sgt Isadore Ouriel
Pfc Bernard Pruzansky
T/5 Manuel Weintraub

MEDICAL DETACHMENT

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Cpl Arnold Anthony
T/4 Stephen A. Appolonia
Pvt William N. Atwell
Pvt Edgar C. Bevene
T/5 Thomas E. Bilone
T/5 George D. Bogue
Pvt James L. Brannon, Jr.
Pfc Royal J. Brown
Pfc Wilbur R. Brown
Pvt John G. Cahill
Pfc William H. Cannington
T/5 Samuel R. Caplowe
T/4 Edward V. Cappetta
T/4 Howard E. Carter
Pfc Phillip Carnera
T/4 Daniel W. Cohen
T/3 Anthony Compitelle
T/5 Howard Conwell
Pfc Salvatore De Cassie
Pfc Abraham W. Effron
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Pfc Michael Facanello
Pfc Arthur Fisher
Pfc Alfred J. Forsberg
Pfc Jack H. Forsmark
T/5 Thomas H. Francis
Pvt Victor Grande
Pfc Milton N. Greenker
T/4 Phillip C. Harnischfeger
Pvt Samuel Nochheiser
Pfc Walter L. Jernigan
Pfc Henry J. B. Johnson
T/5 Howard L. Jones
Pfc Virgil W. Jones
T/5 Dennis J. Kennedy, Jr.
Pfc Ramon A. Ledesma
T/4 William E. Livesey
Pvt Nate S. Lomoriello
Pfc Riddel Manseil
Pfc Walter L. Marquart
T/4 Louis A. Mastandres
T/5 Carl F. MaClain
T/5 Oatis R. McIntosh
Pfc Michael Messina
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T/Sgt Howard J. Newman
Pfc Charles W. Ott
T/5 Elmer E. Perkins
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T/Sgt Daniel J. Pfanner
T/5 William J. Pignatora
T/5 Francis W. Peloney
Pfc Bertrand E. Roy
Pfc William J. Bauser
T/4 John J. Sgetrone
T/3 Robert B. Simms
S/Sgt Stanley Skolinsky
T/5 Charles J. Sperrazza
Pfc Steve S. Talerico
Pfc Yolanto J. Teti
Pvt Carl A. Thatcher
T/4 Alexander Thompson
Pvt Austin K. Van Dusen
T/4 Melvin Wahrhaftig
Pfc Kenneth L. Ward
T/3 Gerard Warren
Pfc Milton G. Weiner
T/4 George Wetherbee
Pvt Carl B. Williams
Pfc Ralph F. Willis
Pvt Henry Ziernberg, Jr.
Pfc James H. Zuttermeister
Sgt Robert D. Weathers
T/4 Stephen A. Appolonia
Pfc Robert R. Albanese
Pfc Andre A. R. Brachais
Pfc Allen F. Scranton

HEADQUARTERS COMPANY, 1st BATTALION

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Pfc Pasquale V. D'Aprile
Pfc Earl A. Pergens
Pfc Emerson H. Funk
Pfc Peter B. Reynolds
Pfc Welford L. Atkins
Pfc Karl R. Black
T/Sgt Charles A. Lyden
Pfc Nathan Melnicker
Pfc Warren S. Schmitt
Pfc Harold C. Walters
T/5 Melvin L. Wukotich
Pfc Richard P. Killmeyer
Pfc Harvey D. West

COMPANY A

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Pfc Carl W. Anderson
Pvt Harold G. Bennett
Pfc Harold O. Christensen
Pfc Grant R. Christensen
Pfc Loren C. Clark
Pfc Charles Crowell, Jr.
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Sgt Edward G. Rowland
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Pfc David B. Allsup
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Sgt Werner Bereswill
Pfc Peter J. Bessone
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Pfc Basil S. Bird
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Pfc Herbert Cheyne
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Pfc Daniel L. Griffith
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1st Sgt James Herbert
Pfc Edward H. Herter
Pfc Lyle E. Horrigan
Pfc Kenneth H. Jacoby
Pfc Joseph Jastrzebaki
Pfc Norris H. Jasner
Pfc Raymond M. Jernigan
Pfc Sidney W. Joffs
Pfc Earl R. Jones
Pfc Henry G. Kaylor
Pfc Louis K. Keay
Pfc Arnold W. Kelly
Pfc John T. Kontre
S/Sgt Raymond J. Laughlin
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S/Sgt Francis E. Leniban
Pfc Louis Livingston
Pfc Harold J. Madigan
Sgt John D. Maines
Pfc Caborne Marsh
Sgt Eugene Marstall
Pfc Isaac Martin
S/Sgt Thomas I. Martin
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Pvt Frank Pasek
Pfc Earl W. Reinboldt
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Pfc Karl L. Rofer
Pfc Gordon W. Rux
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Pfc Otto H. Rudolph
Pfc Friedolph A. Ruhanen
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Pfc Arsenion S. Salazar
Pfc Roy L. Salois
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S/Sgt Edwin J. Bosell
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Sgt Pondu Bicki
Pfc Stanley Bielawski
Pfc Albert Bogdanowski
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Pfc Paul Converso
Pfc Harold E. Craig
Sgt Carney R. Crick
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Sgt Thomas L. Hamlett
S/Sgt Harold R. Hammond
T/Sgt Joseph Hendler
Pfc Floyd Hines
Sgt Edmund J. Hinkelmann
Pfc Leo E. Hisoire
Pfc Robert A. Howard
Pvt Edward G. Howe
Sgt Benjamin J. Hudson
Pfc Emanuel I. Kohn
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Sgt John J. Malley
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Pfc Elba McCallister
S/Sgt Robert J. McGowan
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Pfc Steve J. Mihalik
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Pfc John C. Morris
T/Sgt James J. Murphy
Sgt George G. Murtagh
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Sgt Joe E. Flores
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Pfc Ralph E. Dade
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T/Sgt Donald Ferguson
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Pfc Anthony W. Jungier
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Sgt Charles P. Little
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Sgt William A. Manolio
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Sgt Arthur E. Markle
Sgt Thomas R. McCallum
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Pfc Wylie C. Sullivan
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Pvt Donald F. Watters
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Pfc Orville Whitehair
Pfc Hubert J. Wurstner
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T/Sgt Bruce P. Archer
T/Sgt Joseph E. Bogdan
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Sgt Robert G. Neu
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Pfc William C. Randolph
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Pfc Joseph Gallagher
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S/Sgt Frank E. Perdue
Sgt Antonio L. Ramirez
Pfc Donald D. Reed
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Pfc William J. Venus
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Pfc Glen E. Risdal
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Sgt Nick E. Rucci
S/Sgt Bronislaus Rokicki
T/4 Robert H. Rosenblatt
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Pfc Melvin A. Yoakam
Pfc Frank L. Zimmerman, Jr.
Pfc John F. Smith
T/Sgt Hal T. Spetty
Sgt Alvin L. Meinhardt
Pfc Frank J. Ceaminaro
Pfc Phillip C. Eckmann
Pfc Henry G. Escobedo
Pfc Duane P. Leary
Pfc George S. Sanchez
Pfc Hugh W. Simmons
Pfc James E. Winning
Pfc Manford A. Wobker
Pfc Milbert Wolff

COMPANY M

Sgt Jos. R. Debrowolaki
Sgt William S. McCully
Cpl Leon M. Hayden
Pfc Willis Bailey
Pfc Francis G. Carrade
Pfc Harvey H. Lamp
Pfc Vincente Romero, Jr.
Pfc Robert V. Tarkett
Pfc Doyle A. Wagner
Pfc Corbett S. Woodworth
Pvt Frank W. Anderson
Pvt Albert A. Astrowski
S/Sgt Phillip D. Bish
Pfc Charles J. Carr
Pfc John S. Dama
Cpl Isidore Golub
Pfc James J. Gill
Pfc Murray Green
Pfc William Green
Pfc Winfield Hochensmith
Pfc George Howe
Pfc Arthur J. Jameson
T/Sgt Joseph P. Kehoe
S/Sgt James T. Keegan
Pfc Wilmer W. King
Pfc Ralph E. Landwehr
Pfc John A. Maher
Pfc Stanley A. Miller
Pvt Billie H. Manes
Pfc William E. Nelson
Pfc Peter J. McHugh
Pfc Jack Parillo
Sgt Carl W. Rankin
Cpl Raymond Rothmund
Pvt Vicente Romero, Jr.
Pfc Alvice J. Snyder
Pfc Robert A. Stevens
Pfc Hayden Stewart
Pfc Peter P. Swiderski
S/Sgt Michael F. Tomica
Pfc Charles H. Thomas
Pfc Joseph Timpano
S/Sgt Norman P. Wood
Pfc Doyle A. Wagner
Pfc Joseph F. Wasko
Pfc Donald P. Webster
Pfc Howard H. Widener
Pfc Eldon L. Woode

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