

The Fighting 36th
HISTORICAL
Quarterly

Worldwartwoveterans.org



FRENCH VILLAGE HONORS 36

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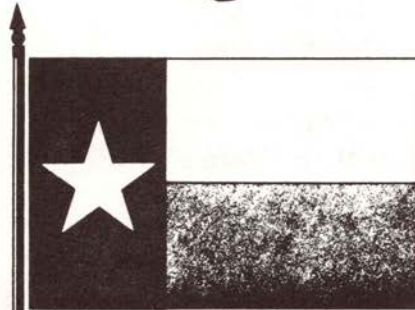
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The Fighting 36th



HISTORICAL QUARTERLY

Worldwarwoveterans.org



VOLUME III

NUMBER 4

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TEXAS *36th Division
Association*





Service Record of the 36th Infantry Division in World War II

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Activated 25 November 1940 at Camp Bowie, Brownwood, Texas, they were the first American troops to invade Hitler's Europa at Salerno, Italy, 9 September 1943.

The division made two other amphibious assault landings at Anzio and Southern France.

The 36th Infantry Division participated in SEVEN (7) European CAMPAIGNS:

- **Naples-Foggia**
- **Anzio**
- **Rome Arno**
- **Southern France**
- **Rhineland**
- **Ardennes-Alsace**
- **Central Europe**

The 36th suffered over 27,000 casualties, third highest of any World War II division.



OUR THANKS to Colonel Vincent M. Lockhart, 36th Division Historian, for setting the record straight, after all these years.

VOLUME III
WINTER 1983



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The Fighting 36th



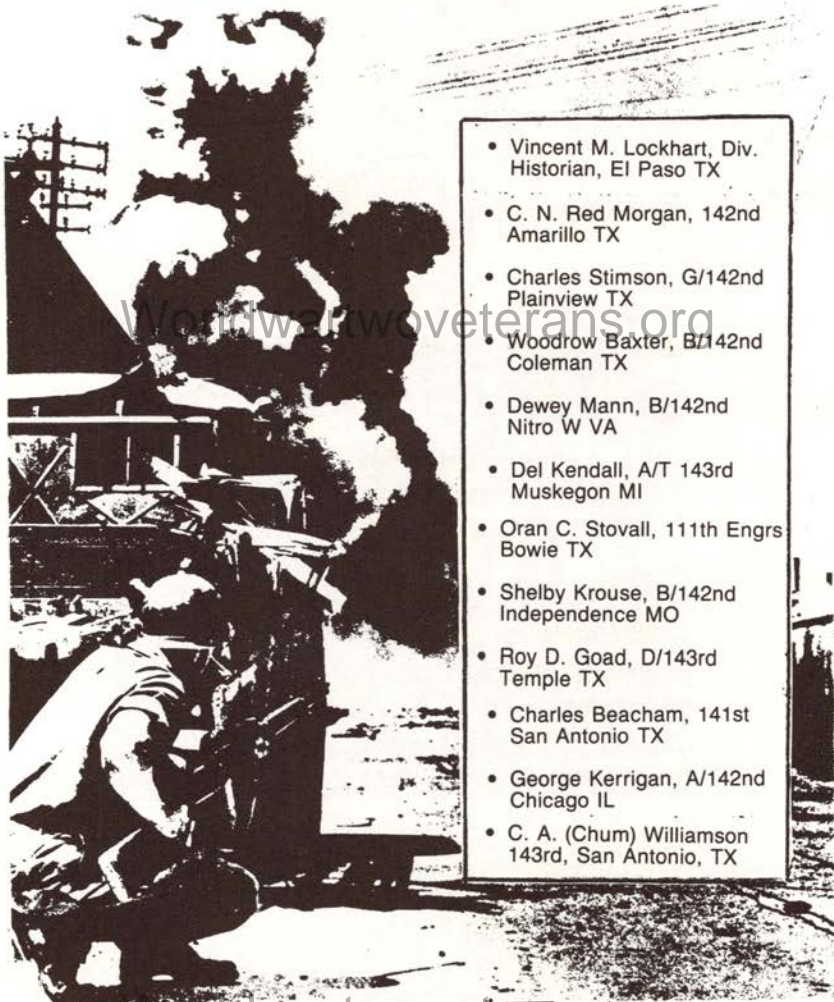
HISTORICAL
Quarterly

Texas 36th Division Association

The Fighting 36th Historical Quarterly is published for the members of the 36th division in World War I and World War II. It contains the best of new stories by the men who served, and reprints of previously published great stories of the exploits of the T-Patchers in both wars. It is available only on a subscription basis to 36th Association members and all interested war buffs.



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CONTENTS

Vol. III

Winter 1983

No. 4

1. COVER STORY - Invasion of Southern France
 - (a) Anvil-Dragoon, planning and operation, by Adm. Hewitt 6
 - (b) The Sweep From the South, 36th Revenues Salerno 16
 - (c) French Town Honors 36th 28
2. C.M.H. Winner, William A. Crawford 34
3. The San Angelo New Year's Eve Blow-out by Del Kendall 35
4. The Battle At Oberhoffen, by Marvin F. Robinson 38
5. How I Celebrated V.E. Day, by Ray A. Lee 41
6. Inside The Wrecked Schoolhouse, by Raymond D. Grossman 42
7. Dr. Ogden, Oldest Living (101) T-Patcher 47
8. Trio Has A Date With Fate, by Francis A. Cervellera 48
9. The First Draftee, by Bill Steger (1919-1982) 54
10. Happenings At Selestat, by Woodrow J. Baxter 59
11. Where You At LYON? French professor Needs Help 60
12. Kurtz Remembers Turkey Day 1943, by Noel Kurtz 64
13. San Pietro, Film by John Huston, by C.N. Red Morgan 66
14. Confessions of a Yardbird, by Henry B. Anthony 70
15. Monte Cassion, Book Review by Col. Stovall 72

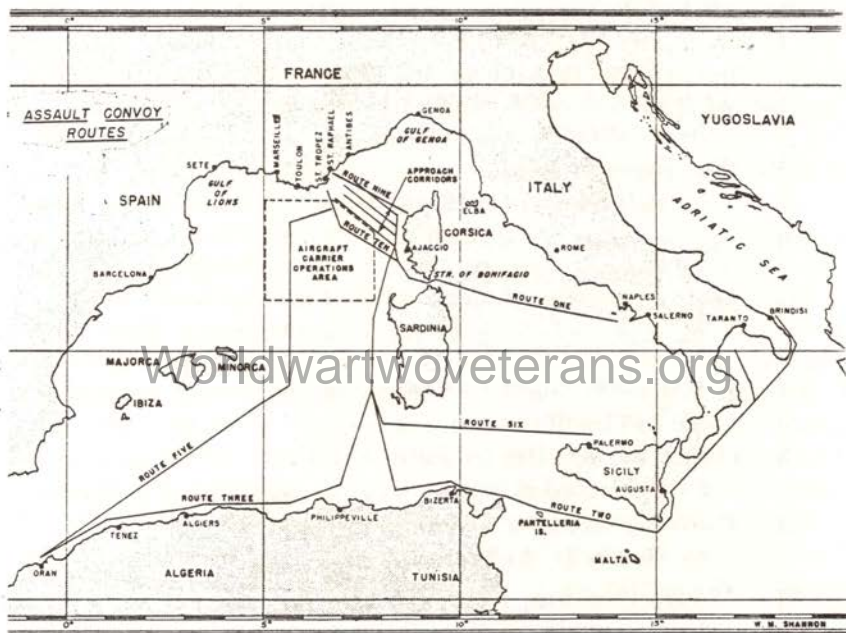
COVER STORY
INVASION OF SOUTHERN FRANCE

PART ONE

ANVIL-DRAGOON

This cover story on the Invasion of Southern France is covered in three parts. Starting with the Navy side of the invasion, the next 9 pages cover the Early Planning for **Anvil - Dragoon** and Executive Operation written by Admiral H. Kent Hewitt and reprinted from United States Naval Institute Proceeding, July 1954. These are just parts of the text, but it gives a clear cut idea of the scope of this operation.

Admiral Hewitt was senior U.S. Naval officer in the Mediterranean as Commander of the U.S. Eight Fleet (March 1943 until April 1945). He became as Commander of U.S. Naval Forces Europe, August 1945 until 1947, and then was U.S. Naval Representative on the United Nations Military Staff Committee until retirement in 1949.



THE ENTIRE WESTERN MEDITERRANEAN SERVED AS A STAGING AREA FOR OPERATION ANVIL-DRAGOON

EARLY PLANNING FOR ANVIL-DRAGOON

By ADMIRAL H. KENT HEWITT,
U. S. Navy (Retired)

The possibility of a landing in Southern France in support of the intended cross-channel invasion of Northern France (Operation Overlord), was discussed by President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill and the Combined U. S. and British Chiefs of Staff as early as the Quadrant conferences at Quebec in August, 1943, when the Sicilian Campaign was still in progress.

It received further and more detailed consideration at Teheran on November 29, 1943, where the idea was supported by Stalin as well as by the U. S. Chiefs of Staff. Prime minister Churchill, however, while at that time expressing no definite opposition to the Southern France operation, very evidently preferred an advance from the North of Italy, via the Istrian peninsula and the Ljubljana gap, toward Vienna. He also felt that it was important not to neglect the Eastern Mediterranean, and that it might be possible to employ there forces not otherwise applicable to the cross-channel operation.

The upshot of the various discussions on the policy making level, in late 1943 and early 1944, was a decision that Overlord should continue to have first priority, that the advance in Italy should be continued to and beyond Rome but not beyond a line Pisa-Rimini, and that a landing in at least two division assault strength (Operation Anvil) should be made in the South of France concurrently with Overlord.

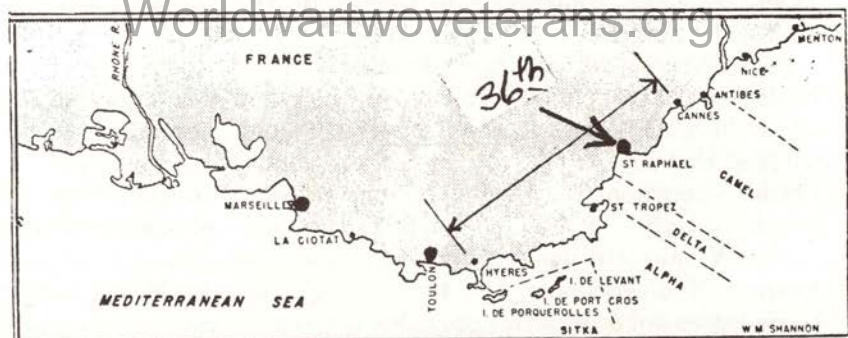
The first directive for Anvil was issued in Algiers, the Headquarters of the Supreme Allied Commander Mediterranean, on December 28, 1943, by the Commander-in-Chief Mediterranean, the Allied Naval Commander. Admiral of the Fleet Sir Andrew Browne Cunningham, who had been General Eisenhower's Naval Commander from the initiation of the North African-Mediterranean Campaign had been called to London in October to succeed Sir Dudley Pound as First Sea Lord, and his place in the Mediterranean had been taken by Admiral Sir John D. H. Cunningham, another inspiring and capable naval leader. General Eisenhower himself, in order that he might assume command of preparations for Overlord in the United Kingdom, had been succeeded as Supreme Allied Commander Mediterranean by the British General Sir Henry Maitland Wilson.

This preliminary directive for Anvil appointed me as the naval commander of the operation with the title of Naval Commander

ANVIL - DRAGOON

Western Task Force (NCWTF). In order to support the invasion of Northern France, the mission assigned was to establish the army firmly ashore and to maintain and support it over the beaches until the need for beach maintenance had ceased.

As a basis for planning, it was stated that the landing in Northern France was expected to take place during the first suitable day in May, 1944, that a beachhead was to be established on the south coast of France in conjunction with the northern invasion for the purpose of supporting it, and that the composition of the army forces for the southern invasion had not been decided but would probably consist of ten divisions, three or four United States divisions and the remainder, French.



The Allies wanted possession of Marseilles and Toulon, but a frontal attack against the heavy defenses of those ports would have resulted in thousands of unnecessary casualties. Invasion through the Hyeres-Cannes beaches could—and did—outflank the Nazi's strongest defenses and save lives without losing time.

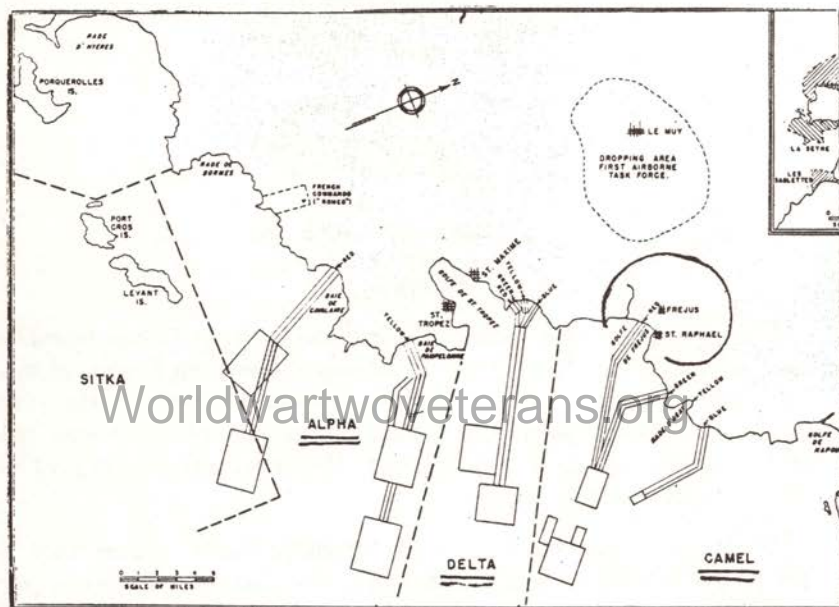
MISSION ASSIGNED

36th Division Assigned Right Flank
Attack on CAMEL Green Beach

The right flank of the assault was assigned to the Thirty-Sixth Division, which was to land in the Golfe de Frejus Agay region with the task of capturing St. Raphael and Frejus, seizing of Lemuy and airfields in the Argens River Valley, linking up with the 45th Division on its left, and securing the right flank. The task of landing and supporting this division was assigned to a Camel Attack Force (TF 87), under Rear Admiral Don P. Moon, who was to be returned from Normandy in time for this duty, and who would fly his flag in the amphibious flagship Bayfield.

The only suitable beaches in the Camel Area were Red Beach, at the head of the Golfe de Frejus; Green Beach, a narrow beach just northwest of Cap Drammont, fringed by hills and having only a

ANVIL - DRAGON



LANDING ON THE BEACHES OUTFLANKED THE HEAVY FORTIFICATIONS AT MARSEILLES & TOULON

single winding road as an exit; Yellow Beach, at the head of the narrow Rade D'Agay; and Blue Beach, about three-quarters of a mile further east, also narrow, hill-fringed, and having a single winding road as the sole exit. Camel Red was the only one of the four with sufficient capacity fully to support the Division, and it was immediately adjacent to a large airfield. Its approaches, however, could be covered by flanking fire from the vicinity of St. Raphael.

The Golfe de Frejus was known to be thoroughly mined, and the immediate approach to the beach was defended by the most complete set of underwater obstacles observed in the Anvil attack area. Camel Yellow would make a good site for a small boat landing, except that intelligence showed a beach defense of pill boxes, machine gun emplacements, and small guns, all out of scale to its importance. The other two beaches, while considered practicable, would not support a landing on a wide front. Green Beach was the only one of the two over which heavy vehicles could be promptly handled.

It was decided to land one Regimental Combat Team of the Thirty-Sixth on Green Beach and one battalion on Blue Beach at "H" hour. The assault on Red Beach, to be made by another Regimental Combat Team, was to be deferred until about H plus 6, to allow time for the capture of the flanking shore defenses near St. Raphael, and for the removal of mines and beaching of underwater obstacles obstructing the Red Beach approaches.

EXECUTING OPERATION ANVIL-DRAGOON

By ADMIRAL H. KENT HEWITT
U.S. NAVY (Retired)

(Published July 1954 by the
U.S. Naval Institute,
Annapolis, MD)

Ten years ago this month the last major amphibious operation against the Nazis, Anvil-Dragoon, liberated Southern France. Months of careful planning, in which cooperation between nations and among the branches of the armed forces had never before been equalled, produced, in my opinion, the most satisfactory of the Mediterranean campaigns.

What we had learned in North Africa, in Sicily, and in Italy, we put to use when invading Southern France. Fortunately, the crumbling Nazi power offered less opposition than we had originally expected. That casualties were gratifyingly low should not divert attention, however, from the efficiency with which the participants in the operation carried out their assigned tasks.

The situation of the units of the Western Naval Task Force on August 9 (D-67) may be summarized as follows:

In the Bay of Naples and adjacent ports were all the assault ships, landing craft, and escort vessels of three major assault forces, and those of the Sitka force as well. Also included were the flagship Catoclin, some forty-eight merchant vessels for the VIth Corps follow up, and the Sitka Gunfire Support Group, consisting of Admiral Davidson's Augusta, the French battleship Lorraine, the British cruiser Dido, the U.S. destroyers Somers and Gleaves, and the British destroyer Lookout. (Assignments to gunfire support groups were made on the basis of prospective bombardment requirements, and on the political desirability of having French representation in each group.)

Records indicate that 307 landing craft and 75 assault transports, assault cargo ships, and merchant vessels were loaded in the Naples area, and that assigned to them were 165 escorts. This made a tremendous concentration of shipping, a prime target, of which the enemy was well aware through his air reconnaissance. But he apparently had become too weakened to deliver an effective air attack, because none developed.

ANVIL - DRAGOON

D-DAY AUGUST 15 1944

The scheduled pre-H hour bombing and bombardment of the coast and beach defenses commenced promptly at daylight and was executed with precision. It was beautiful to watch. Having had the misfortune of having to combat the French Navy at Casablanca, it was particularly heartening to see their fine cruisers, now under my command, flying their largest tricolore battle flags, heavily engaged in this drive to liberate their own country from the heel of the invader. A heavy rocket barrage fired from rocket launching craft preceding or accompanying the first assault waves was laid down on the beaches immediately prior to the initial landing.

Troops of the Airborne Task Force were successfully dropped about 0400 near Le Muy from some 396 troop carrier aircraft which had been guided to their objective by carefully stationed beacon vessels. How different from Sicily! A few of these troops, dropped in error near St. Tropez, were joined by French resistance forces, who later led them in a successful attack on that city.

The initial landings were all carried out exactly as planned, and, as a result of the very careful preparation, met little resistance. The initial attack waves of Alpha, Delta, and Camel touched down respectively at 0800, 0802, and 0803. Such precision could only have been the result of experience, thorough training, and careful planning on the part of all concerned.

Early in the morning after his scout craft had verified the absence of beach obstacles off the Delta beaches, Admiral Rodgers cancelled the use of the radio-controlled "drone" explosive boats for his force. These craft were successfully used against beach obstacles in the Alpha area, fifteen of the eighteen used functioning as designed and breaching the obstacles half an hour before the landing.

One "runaway," however, detonated near Sub-chaser -1029 and severely damaged it. In the Camel area, no drones were required for the landings on Green and Blue beaches.

They were held in reserve for the afternoon landing on Red beach, which was faced with obstacles.

By 0300, the minesweepers of all forces had started their tasks by sweeping the outer and the inner transport areas and the gunfire support areas. Later, they swept the boat lanes to within some 1000 yards of the beaches.

ANVIL - DRAGON

At about 0915, I directed the Catoctin, with its escort and relief flagship, the destroyer Plunkett, to shift from the Alpha area to the inner Delta transport area, about five miles south of St. Raphael. This position gave a good view, not only of the Delta beaches but of Camel Red beach on which at 1400, the second Regimental Combat Team of the Thirty-Sixth Division was scheduled to be landed. There were several Red alerts during the morning, but no attacks developed, all being driven off by our fighter cover.

What happened was this. The Beach Assault Commander at 1400 reported to the Camel Force Commander that he was held up, and why, but stated that he would carry out the assault at 1430. Admiral Lewis, fully informed of the difficulties, knowing that the enfilade fire from the vicinity of St. Raphael was continuing with unabated intensity, and unable to consult General Dahlquist who was out of reach on shore, made the decision on his own responsibility of placing in effect the alternate plan of landing the Red beach Regimental Combat Team on narrow Green beach, where its predecessor had landed at 0800. This unit was safely ashore, without loss, by 1515 and immediately joined the advance on St. Raphael and ultimately on Red beach from the flank. Admiral Lewis was faced with a most difficult situation. The decision he made undoubtedly saved many American lives without hindering the final accomplishment of the Thirty-Sixth Division's mission. He was thanked for this action by General Dahlquist.

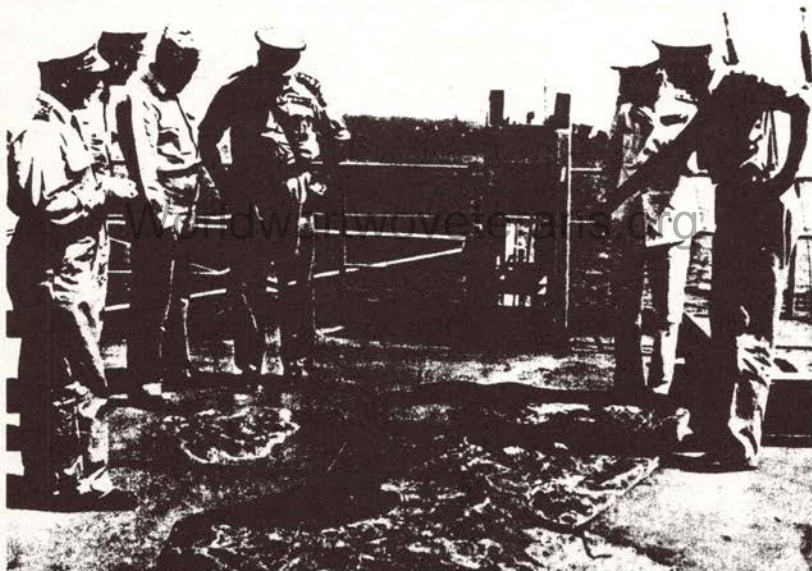
The hold up on Camel Red beach was the only hitch in carrying out the entire Western Task Force Plan, and this worked out satisfactorily. The landings on Levant and Port Cros were successful, but fighting there was still in progress. The French Commandos at Cap Negre, after driving off an enemy counterattack,



LST MOTHER SHIP off Green, Red & Delta Beaches. These mother ships maintained and supplied a large number of craft, such as the LCMs alongside in this photo, for unloading merchant ships in the follow-up convoys. Liberty ships in background are unloading with LTCs.

ANVIL - DRAGOON

and, unfortunately, being bombed by some of our own planes, were holding the coastal roads on the left flank, as planned. On the right flank, the French naval commandos landed near Theoule Sur Mer suffered rather heavy casualties in working their way through an enemy mine field between the beach and the coast road.



BRIEFING TOP COMMAND ON SUCCESSFUL LANDING

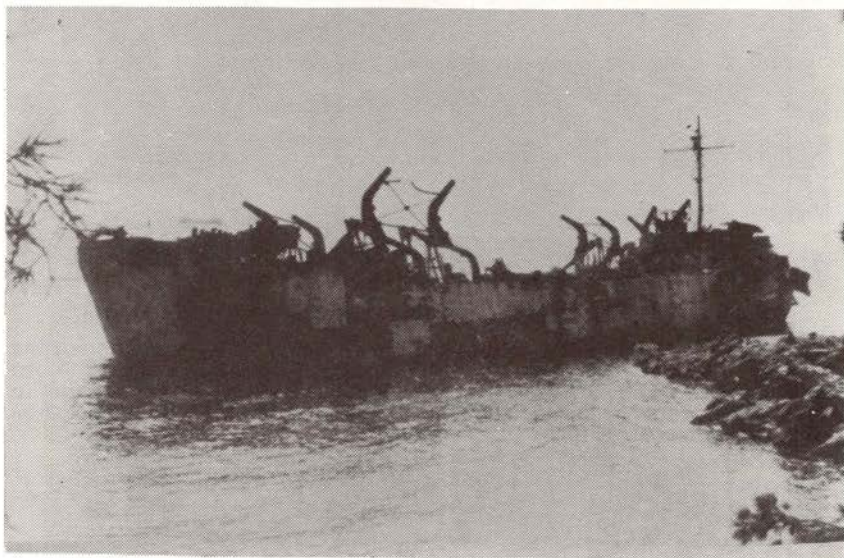
Aboard the command ship *Catoctin*, shows Admiral Hewitt pointing out the progress made to General Sir Henry Maitland Wilson, Supreme Allied Commander in the Mediterranean, while Captain English, uses the model to describe the operation to Admiral Sir John Cunningham, Naval Commander-in-Chief, Mediterranean. (Official U.S. Navy Photo).



GREEN BEACH — D-Day Plus one: Two Liberty Cargo Ships in background, and an LST and LCM. Note: pile of discarded life preservers. (Kodak shot made by Clifford L. Legerton, 8th Naval Beach Battalion).

ANVIL - DRAGON

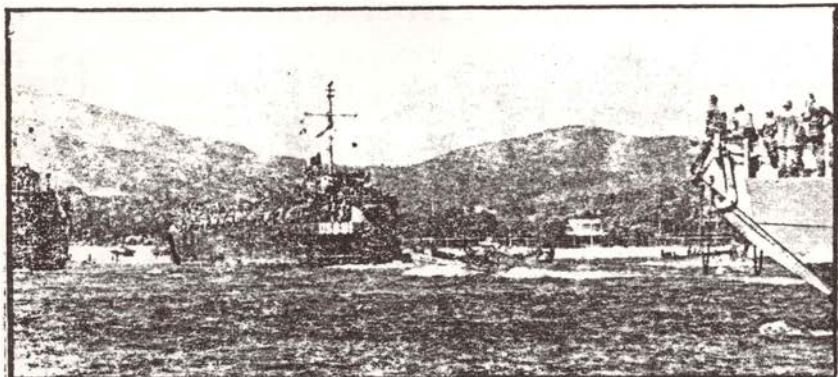
Near nightfall, four Dornier-217 planes, the type equipped to carry radio-controlled armor-piercing and glider bombs, approached the Camel area from overland at an altitude of 15,000 feet, later dropping to 8,000 for the attack. Since Salerno, when initial attacks with these weapons had been so successful for the enemy, much had been learned about countering them by jamming the radio control wave. About 22 ships equipped with jammers were scattered through the attack forces, but none of these, owing to the overland approach, were between the attackers and their targets. The Bayfield was near-missed by several bombs, and one glider bomb struck the LST 282, waiting off Camel Green to land a large detachment of the Thirty-Sixth Division Artillery. The ship was set afire and casualties were heavy. Although beached, the ship and its cargo were destroyed.



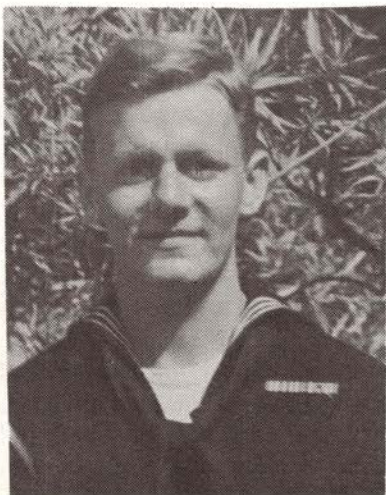
LST 282 is destroyed by Radio Controlled Bomb — although beached, the ship and 36th Division Artillery aboard her were lost with 40 casualties. This was the largest unit sunk by the enemy. Four small landing craft were lost, 22 ships and small craft were damaged by shell fire, mines, and underwater obstacles during the opening phases of the operation

As a result of the days operations, 60, 150 troops, 6,737 vehicles and probably about 50,000 tons of stores were safely ashore. Naval losses had been, in addition to LST 282, four ship-carried small landing craft sunk by gunfire or bomb; six LCTs damaged by shell fire; two LCTs, five LCIs, one British motor launch, and five small landing craft damaged by mines; one LCT and three LCIs damaged by underwater obstacles; and one sub-chaser put out of action by a runaway drone.

ANVIL - DRAGON



All told, 974 ships took part in the Invasion of Southern France. Of these 851 were naval manned — including 543 American, 266 British, 35 French and seven Greek vessels. Careful routing brought them all into the right place at the right time. (Official U.S. Navy Photo).



THEN & NOW — here's Clifford L. Legerton, 817 Gates Ave., Norfolk VA 23517 who is the person responsible for our being able to give the Navy-side of Operation Anvil-Dragon. Cliff sent a copy of Admiral Hewitt's complete story, plus many glossy prints that he took while serving with 8th Naval Beach Battalion - the crew that put-us-ashore on Green Beach 9/15/44.

"Then" photo - Cliff Legerton, in 1943 a young 20 year old navyman - and "now" photo, is active in his own 8th Beach Bn. Association, and is an associate member of the 36th Division, and has added several of his 'mates' to our group. He has our sincere thanks!

**EIGHTH
BEACH BATTALION**



**"Keep it rolling"
AMPHIBIOUS FORCE**

PART TWO

A SWEEP FROM THE SOUTH



Wild Texans Invade Again . . .

SALERNO AVENGED!



THE troops that had fought for Naples, had spent their rest periods and pay there, were leaving Italy through that same city. Naples had been taken ten months before by the Allied Fifth Army. Now its liberators were going, as they had come, by sea, to strike a second blow across the water bulwark of the continent. It is not recorded with what emotions the men left Italy. Very few had ever liked the place particularly, for their primary associations had not been with pseudo-prosperous Naples, but with the numbered hills and the blood-soaked valleys and the shell-raped fields and the stinking rubble towns.

The night preceding the departure had been spent north of the city, in a fertile, dust-surfaced area near Gualiano, the same place which they had left to sail for the Anzio beachhead. The atmosphere had been unwarlike; the men had sat around and joked and played cards. Some had written letters, but very few; because that had been done before. Most of them had tried to act very normal, but even veteran troops are nervous before attempting the unknown. They had sat around by their packs and rifles and gas masks and done the same routine things they had done twenty times before and would do twenty times again.

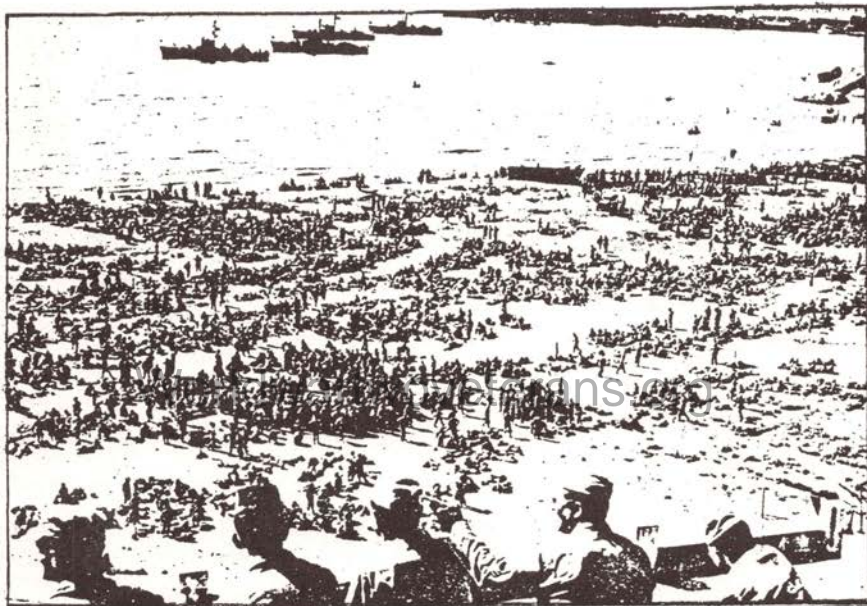
But, despite the unspoken excitement, the majority of the men had slept. The day had been long and there had been a lot accomplished. They had slept and got up to early whistles, eaten hurriedly, mounted the trucks and waited as the tree-high dust clouds settled and the sun got hot.

As always, there was waiting. Then the long convoys jerked and rolled down to the docks, and the troops got out and lined up on the docks, trying to act casual, and waited some more.

The columns were checked, as they had been double-checked before. Then the men arranged themselves and their loads, climbed the gangways of the LST's and LCI's and troop carriers, and went into the holds.

If there were any regrets for the departure, the troops felt them as they lined the rails of their vessels and watched the coral-green-grey shore, or the slowly assembling fleet, each ship taking its place and signaling its final message. Venturing out into the uncertain is always

THE SWEEP FROM THE SOUTH



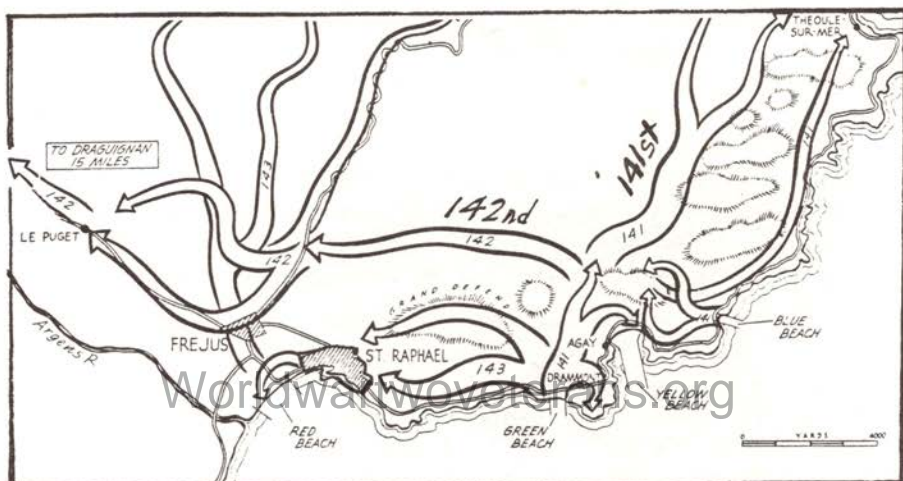
POZZUOLI - north of Naples was the staging area for the Southern France Invasion (same place we used for the Anzio caper). T-Patchers get ready to line up in columns, climb the gangways of the LST's, LCI's and larger troop transports, carried their loads across decks, and went into stuff holds.

a chore after any sort of familiarity, and Italy, foreign, disliked Italy, the home of eleven months of discomfort, could not have appeared as lovely before as it did to those men gathered on the decks.

The 36th Division was afloat the eleventh of August. The men learned of their destination on the thirteenth. For the first days, as the ordered assembly of vessels moved out across the sea, the tension subsided. Navy men and soldiers met and compared rumors. GI's sunned themselves and read or performed their shipboard duties, slept in the shadows of small landing craft, between the complicated gear, and in the stacked, cramped beds that filled the fore holds. The ships passed between Corsica and Sardinia to enter the last leg of the invasion journey. The tension slipped in again. Maps and charts and aerial photos were studied; scale models of the approaches and beaches were examined. The complicated briefings were begun, platoon by platoon. The months of planning and the weeks of filling in every detail were brought down to the final phase, with every squad learning its mission, every man discovering the smallest part of his participation in the most precise of all military operations.

Even the greatest of intangibles had not been overlooked, for the selected divisions were not of any uncertain quality, but composed of

Initial Attack Waves of Alpha, Delta And Camel Touch Down At 0800, 0802 & 0803



men who, during campaigns which have since been described as the most terrible through which American soldiers have ever fought, had been tested, who knew their power, whose groups were unified; these were the finest veteran troops.

ON AUGUST 13, the following message was flashed to Major General John Ernest Dahlquist in his war room aboard the command ship:

D-day, 15 August 1944; H-hour, 0800 hours saw the 141st Infantry Regiment land on the extreme right flank of the Seventh Army, spearheading the 36th Division.

There were three Division beaches, identified only as Red, Green, and Blue. Reconnaissance had shown the presence of many formidable underwater obstacles, a shoreline encrusted with casements, an ingenious defense mesh calculated to intercept a landing at its most vulnerable point – when supporting fire had lifted and before the infantry could bring its weapons into play.

Red Beach, sandy and admirably situated in the San Raphael bay, was the finest landing site.

Farther east, Green Beach was a potential trap, flanked by an abrupt cliff and stone retaining wall on the left, a jutting barren rock formation on the right. There was only a single narrow dirt road leading to the main coastal road, which ran under a railroad bridge; blowing the bridge would jam all vehicular traffic. Behind the beach rose an irregular slope, broken by an easily-defended granite quarry.

Blue Beach was little more than a deeply-indented cove, behind which rose the Rastel D'Agay, razor-edged and formidable, a

THE SWEEP FROM THE SOUTH

precipitous formation which commanded the entire Division landing area.

The 141st landed on beaches Blue and Green. The Germans, good troops with a leavening of second-rate forces, possessed excellent defensive positions. Not all of them had been knocked out by the preliminary naval and air bombardments, and those that were left fought tenaciously, making full use of their advantageous positions. There was bitter fighting through the streets of the small towns and up the exposed slopes to root out the well-entrenched enemy.

The 143rd Infantry Regiment followed the first assault waves onto Green Beach as soon as its immediate defense positions had been cleared. Disregarding the battle raging not five hundred yards away, it swung off the beach to the west and the pastel-colored summer resort towns on the road to San Raphael. Its mission was to pinch off the defenders there as the 142nd Infantry Regiment sailed in to Red Beach.

The 142nd never landed on Red Beach. The demolition boats were unable to force a passage through the underwater obstacles that lined the bay. The formations of landing craft were forced to put about and make for Green Beach.

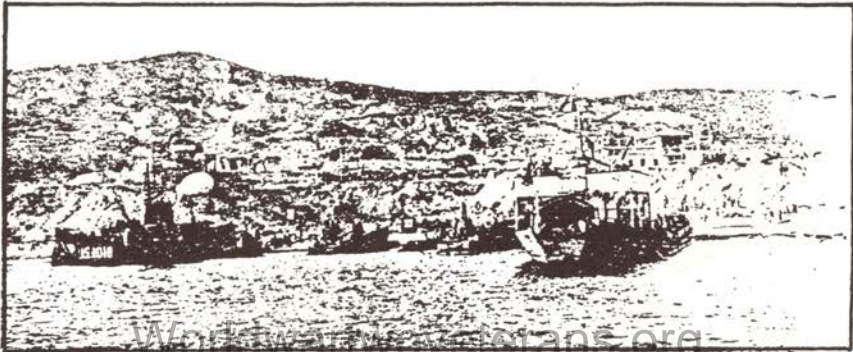
Beach Green became the only Division landing site. In less than ten hours, twenty thousand troops were finally put ashore there, over a boulder-strewn area less than eight hundred yards long and fifty yards deep; the entire strength of an infantry division, reinforced by heavy artillery and combat engineers, tank and tank destroyer battalions, signal and quartermaster attachments, was landed on Green Beach.

It was a magnificent accomplishment, for the landing strip and its approaches were too small and too shallow to afford adequate space for other than the assault echelons and their immediate reserves. Shuttle convoys of small vessels and dukws raced in and out, bringing in material, while the larger ships edged in one and two at a time to land their heavier cargos. On this one beach rested the success of the Division's invasion and across it were put every vehicle, every gun, every piece of necessary equipment, all the tons of supplies.

There were casualties. With the landings so confined, the Germans were able to mass their forces, but the Riviera invasion was not the debacle of Salerno, where the 36th received its baptism under fire. The regiments cleared their first objectives by 1600. Nine hours after the initial landings, the beaches were secure.

The strongest opposition came at the flanks of the beachhead. The 143rd had driven to the left, towards San Raphael. Easy and Love Companies ran into trouble.

T-Patchers Land At Green Beach



Official U. S. Navy Photograph

UNLOADING on Green Beach of Camel Assault Area — photo shows two LCTs, two LCMs and a DUKW. Note beach markers, barrage balloons, and first aid station on beach. The hill beyond the steep embankment and quarry were heavily cratered by Allied bombardments against Nazi casements facing to seaward.

Easy Company found the Germans barricaded in a large courtyard. They had machine gun nests all over. Behind these were heavy concertinas of barbed wire fronting a house which sheltered mortar positions. It was impossible to get at them without presenting a silhouetted target. Pfc. Lewis H. Rose, Conneault, Ohio, climbed the high stone wall in front of the court and fired twelve boxes of ammunition at the enemy, thirty yards away. Cradling his machine gun in his arms, he fired until his gun barrel burned out and his heavy leather gloves caught fire.

Pfc. John Neves, Fairhaven, Mass., led a tank up to the wall. When it was halted by a trap, he blew out the obstacle with twelve pounds of dynamite. For six hours, the mortar and tank support and the riflemen fired away, literally blasting the Germans from behind the wall. The courtyard fell and the company stormed into San Raphael.

Love Company edged into position near German barracks on the outskirts of the town. Capt. Zerk Robertson, Merkel, Tex., worked his platoons forward until they had surrounded the encampment. The next morning, after a short fire fight, a German battalion commander surrendered with one hundred of his men. But a large group had slipped out of the trap and set up positions several hundred yards away. There was constant activity and firing. Tech. Sgt. Thomas Wooldridge, Royse City, Tex., squeezed the enemy out, with one squad to supply a solid base of fire while the others worked their way in from the flanks. For three hours they fought. Then the Germans surrendered. Love Company had killed a dozen of the enemy, knocked out two machine gun nests, taken 244 prisoners.

THE SWEEP FROM THE SOUTH

Meanwhile, on Green Beach heavy artillery, ammunition, special units were unloaded as rapidly as the ships could be brought into the limited landing space. At dusk, the Germans staged their only successful air raid on the fleet standing offshore. A glider bomb from a low-flying plane caught an ammunition-loaded LST. The ship blazed up rapidly. Shouting to his engineers to stay away, Capt. Thomas B. Gautier, Charlestown, S.C., raced into the water to give aid, braving exploding ammunition and fire and flying hot steel. His men followed and from sundown to midnight they worked, swimming, using makeshift rafts to get to the ship and back with over one hundred injured men.

CAMPAIGNS MAY MOVE BY WEEKS OR MONTHS, but invasions move by hours and days. No matter how successful may be the outcome, the first few days of a landing are like the first seconds of aerial flight; they determine the success of the operation. There is no comparative success in an invasion. It is, tactically speaking, either a success or a failure. So, on August 16, although the beaches had been secured and the inland positions consolidated, the battle for the primary objective, the establishment of a firm beachhead, was still on.

Red Beach was reported open for clearing parties; Frejus was taken; the 143rd Infantry Regiment cleared a road block at Broulouis after a stiff fight with infantry and tanks. Contact was made with the 45th Infantry Division beachhead, on the left flank. On the right flank, the 141st Infantry Regiment continued to press eastward to



GREEN BEACH — D Day — Traffic jam of 36th Division trucks, jeeps and Medics coming off LST 285. In foreground, bulldozers from 540 Engineers smoothing off rocky parts of this "Quarry Beach". Comdr. J.P. Graff USN, CO of 8th Naval Beach Bn. was in charge of this operation. (Official U.S. Navy Photo).

INVASION OF SOUTHERN FRANCE

make contact with a force of French commandos operating in the Cannes area.

NINETEEN HUNDRED PRISONERS had been taken by noon, August 17, and, as the lines extended, growing numbers were brought into the Division cages. They were taken under many varied circumstances.

A large number were taken at Callian, at the eastern tip of the beachhead. Item and Baker Companies of the 141st were in the town, straddling the only major route along which the Germans could bring reinforcements from their reserves near Cannes. They had a fight on their hands protecting the flanks. Supported by tanks on the line, by tank destroyers, by naval artillery and heavy land guns, they had fought house-to-house through part of Callian, been forced to withdraw, then fought their way back. Only after two days of bloody close combat was Callian secured. Its garrison, except for six officers and two hundred men who chose the PW cages, was wiped out.

Many prisoners were taken more easily, however.

Company A of the 143rd Infantry Regiment, led by Lt. Henry Kahn, Allentown, Pa., attacked German positions in a valley. Concentrated fire greeted the T-Patchers as they jockeyed into commanding positions. Then every gun on the hills—machine guns, mortars, rifles, tommy guns—opened up simultaneously on the enemy. Pvt. Heinrich J. Strohaecker, New York City, called to the Germans to surrender. There was no reply. The barrage continued for another quarter-hour. Even the ammunition carriers popped away with captured pistols. That was too much for the Germans, and their commander sent word



German P.O.W.'s being marched off Green Beach . . . LST 49, in background was 'first LST's to hit the beach on D-Day, with Commander J.P. Graff USN (now retired) C.O. of the 8th Naval Beach Battalion. (photo by Cliff L. Legerton, Norfolk VA). Cliff is an associate member of the 36th Div. Assn.

THE SWEEP FROM THE SOUTH



SAN RAPHAEL, target for the 36th at the Invasion of Southern France, Aug. 15, 1944 - and the many celebrations by the French citizens cheer the men of 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion (attached to the 36th) roll through the downtown streets. In foreground is a member of the 36th MP Platoon who handled traffic. (Photo by T-Patch Staff Photographer).

that he was willing to surrender provided that the Americans treated him with the respect due his rank.

"What the hell," said Lt. Kahn. "We've got nothing to lose being nice to a first lieutenant. Tell him to come up."

He came up.

"Holy cow," gasped Lt. Kahn. Able Company had bagged a full colonel. The colonel was followed by a major, who was followed by three captains, who were followed by a string of lieutenants and one hundred and fifty men.

THE SEVENTH ARMY BEACHHEAD, firmly consolidated along its entire span, sprang into violent life when Task Force Butler pounded north towards Lyons. Hastily organized on D-plus-three, Task Force Butler was made up largely of 36th Division components: the Second Battalion, 143rd Infantry Regiment; Baker and Charlie Companies, 753rd Tank Battalion; Charlie Company, 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion; and one collecting platoon and clearing platoon of the 111th Medical Battalion, plus reconnaissance, armored artillery, and ordnance units.

The 36th Division charged after it, carrying the right flank of the army around like a hinge to block the only German escape routes to the northeast. Under the command of Brigadier General Robert I. Stack, two battalions of infantry and a battalion of artillery—the advance guard for the Division as it drove parallel to the Rhone River

INVASION OF SOUTHERN FRANCE

THE "T-PATCH" MAKES HISTORY! Handset Paper Hit Street on D-Plus 3

First Yankee Rag on Riviera, the D-plus 3 T-Patch was rushed off the presses—pardon us, press—70 hours after the Public Relations Section had stomped ashore.

Task Force PRO, led by dashing, roundish Capt. Sumner S. Wilson, headed into Frejus, stopping only once to round up prisoners. Shelled and bombed Frejus had one printing plant but the typesetters had taken to the hills and the pressman was working out with the Maqui.

Duty-bound in the most romantic newspaper traditions, Pfc. Antonio Amosato raced back to San Raphael and rounded up a printer while Pvts. Bob Sieger and John Hyman corraled every big-time correspondent for copy.



The First Yank Rag etc. was set by hand, without lights or power. It cost all of 15 dollars. One thousand copies were run on the huge flywheel press with great difficulty, only after gasoline and a portable Kraut motor were found. After copy one thousand, the press—a good built-in Mannheim model-quit. But its Germanic loyalties came too late. Journalistic history had been made.

THE SWEEP FROM THE SOUTH

Valley – cleared Digne, pressed through the mountains, and arrived at Sisteron, reeling off ninety miles in fourteen hours. With the 142nd protecting the long, lengthening flank of the army, the 143rd Regimental Combat Team lanced deeper into enemy territory.

This was a dangerous, gambling attack. In one day the Division had increased its lines of supply and communication by one hundred miles, and it continued to press its advantage by slashing at the German rear areas with speed and vigor. CP's moved hour by hour. Every column was mechanized and reinforced by armor, high-power anti-aircraft weapons, and mobile artillery. Every unit gave trucks for a Provisional Trucking Company to augment the overworked Quartermaster Company. Jeeps and trucks and prime movers were pressed into extra service; drivers worked twenty and twenty-four hours a day, leaden-headed, numb-bodied from the fast, hard runs to the beaches; mechanics performed miracles to patch the wearing vehicles.

"22 August 1944," reports the official journal, "elements RCT 143 had occupied Grenoble without resistance."



Grenoble Goes Wild With Joy!

"Welcome!" cried the Grenoble newspaper in a front-page article. Welcome!

Yesterday, without warning, we saw them suddenly rising up at the far end of the Cours Jean-Jaures . . . those well-built boys in khaki, those strong, calm fellows who in 1918 had shared with the Poilus in horizon blue all the sufferings of battle, all the joys of victory.

At first no one dared to believe it. The Americans? They are here? Already? They are here? At last, astride their funny little jeeps, perched high on their heels, reminding one of the far west, piloting their

INVASION OF SOUTHERN FRANCE



General Sherman tanks, henceforth so well-known along the Route Napoleon.

The crowd massed all along this fine avenue, just as it used to do in the good old days of the Tour de France. What a glorious Tour de France is this . . . the wildly enthusiastic crowd, which had shouted its welcome to the liberating troops of the FFI, triumphant with its tricolors waving in all the streets of the town, found fresh vibrant voices to shout an enthusiastic welcome to the big attractive giants.

Welcome to you all! You who have come from the distant provinces of Illinois, Ohio, Alabama, or Texas . . . Welcome to the citizens of New York and San Francisco, you all who have come after a stage in our North Africa to help France get rid of a nightmare which has lasted four interminable years, and to aid her to rediscover her true soul.

Welcome to Grenoble, our town. Welcome to the Dauphine, our province."

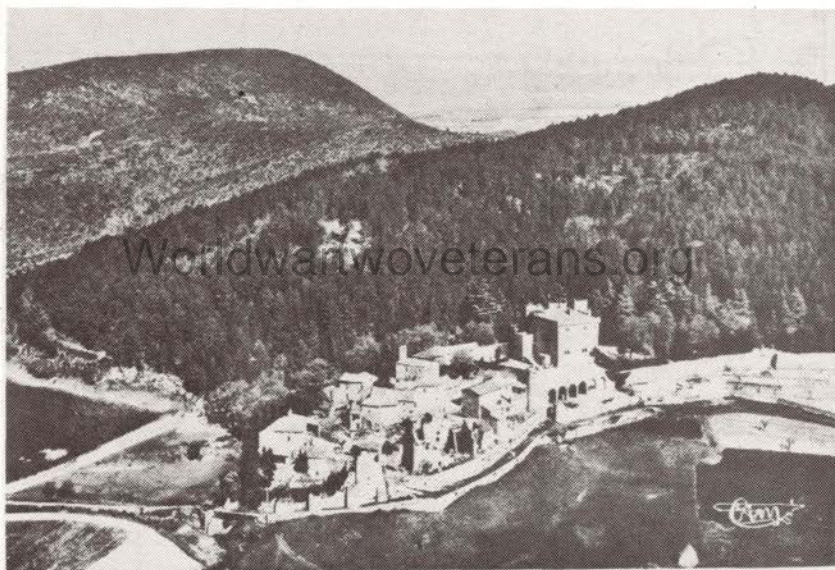
But the 36th Division left Grenoble as rapidly as it had come. A build-up of enemy forces was reported in the vicinity of Montelimar. Artillery ammunition was low, infantry was needed. The 36th Division was assigned the mission of dealing with the enemy threat and made for a time responsible for virtually the entire sector from the Rhone to the Swiss and Italian borders.

The Division was already in contact with the enemy at three widely-separated points, near Grenoble, near the Rhone, and at Gap. Its troops were scattered from Grenoble to Digne. It had less than sixty per cent of its organic transport, and neither army nor corps had supply or transportation elements available. The first decisive battle of the campaign was beginning.

On the 23rd of August, the Division began to move its forces to meet the enemy at Montelimar.

THE SWEEP FROM THE SOUTH

Joe Dine Remembers d'Andigne Chateau



MONTE LIMAR

Dear Editor: War Is Hell, but a nice place to visit isn't so bad. **Here's the Chateau of the Count and Countess Charles d'Andigne, Le Coucourde, Condillac, France.**

That's just over the hill from MONTE LIMAR, where you will recall we had a real nasty fight. This fabulous chateau started out as CP for 143rd Infantry, then it got promoted, in order to the CP for 2nd Bn. 143rd, then 36th Division Hqs., when the big brass moved in.

At the time we were there, the Count, who had been a member of the FFI (French Underground) was in a German POW camp. But none of us shall never forget the total aplomb of the Countess, who never surrendered a bit of her hospitality, charm and good manner, even under heavy shelling.

JOE DINE, 55 Franklin Terrace,
Box 2168, Vineyard Haven,
Martha's Vineyard, MA 02568.
(Co F 143rd & Div. Hqs.)

PART THREE

FRENCH VILLAGE HONORS 36th DIVISION

Drammont Ceremony Recalls Invasion of Riviera Year Ago

Though most all the old Texans with their high-points had already gone back to the states, when the rest of the 36th were still in Germany, we were fortunate enough to obtain a copy of the **T-Patch 36th Division News, Vol. 4 No. 14 printed in Germany.**

Dated Sunday August 19, 1945 this 6 page Tabloid carried six pages of data about the first Anniversary of the Invasion of Southern France (Anvil/Dragoon) with banner heading:

DIVISION MEMORIAL IS DEDICATED, Drammont Ceremony Recalls Invasion of Riviera Year Ago.



E. Pat Singleton of Springfield IL was kind enough to send to us the glossy photos shown on the next three pages and the information has made this story possible. He has our thanks.

Shown here (at left) at center, Pat Singleton, and his buddies of Co. I 143rd, Pfc Thurman O. Mobley (left) of Jamesville NC, and Pfc. Brack Center of May KY. Pat now resides at: 2133 Holmes Ave., Springfield IL 62704.

Evidently, two men from each company were invited to the Monument ceremony, as Pat said he and Sgt. Marler represented Co. I 143rd at the Dedication.

The letter and schedule of the trip are shown on the following pages. Read on

Drammont Honors The 36th Division



Drammont France, Aug. 15 1945 - The permanent and temporary monument, with Mass being said on the altar. French troops at the left, with men of 36th Division in front and to the sides. (Photo from Pat Stapleton, Springfield IL, of Co. I 143rd Infantry)

General Dahlquist Invites Troopers To Participate In Ceremony 9/15/45

A MESSAGE FROM THE COMMANDING GENERAL:

Dammont, Frejus, San Raphael, Rado D'agay, Green Beach . . . Names all that bring back memories to you men of the 36th Infantry Division who are returning a year later to the scene of our landings on the beaches of Southern France. Names that call-to-mind the crowded days on the LCI's, the amazement at the tremendous Naval support and the final tense minutes before 0800, 15 August 1944.

But this year, unlike last, we go to the Riviera as guests. The citizens of the town of San Raphael have invited the Division to the ceremonies they have planned in honor of the first Anniversary of D-day. And their invitation was gladly accepted for it gives us an opportunity to pay homage to those men who came ashore with us there to later give their lives to their country. We shall unveil at Green Beach on the 15th of August a monument to those who are no longer with us. It is fitting that a monument will be dedicated in the presence of the people whom these men of the Division fought to free and in the presence of their comrades.

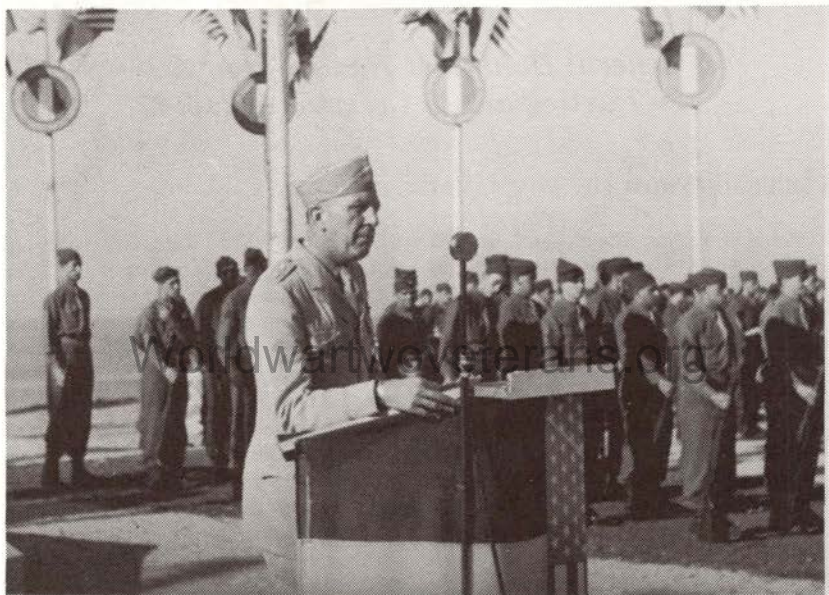
JOHN E. DALQUIST
Major General, U.S. Army
Commanding General

FRENCH VILLAGE HONORS 36th

09 August	0800	Leave for Nancy, arrive in evening
10 August		Free day in Nancy
11 August	0400	Leave Nancy by train for Riviera
12 August	0800	Arrive Nice Recreation Area
14 August	0800	Assemble at Nice for trip to San Raphael
	1200	at Green Beach for rehearsal of ceremony, then to San Raphael for sports, swimming,
	Afternoon	boating, dinner in town, block dancing and party.
	Evening	Remain in San Raphael as guests of various French families for night.
15 August	0800	Ceremony at Green Beach, unveiling of monument
	1200	Picnic lunch in vicinity Green Beach
	1330	Return to Nice
20 August	0800	Board train for return trip to Nancy

To all you 'high-point' men whom had already returned to the states by Aug. 1945, might wished they had stayed over a while, in order to make a trip like this to the Riviera on Anniversary of our landing at Southern France.

Our thanks to Pat Singleton, 2133 Holmes Ave., Springfield IL 62704 (Co I 143rd Infantry).

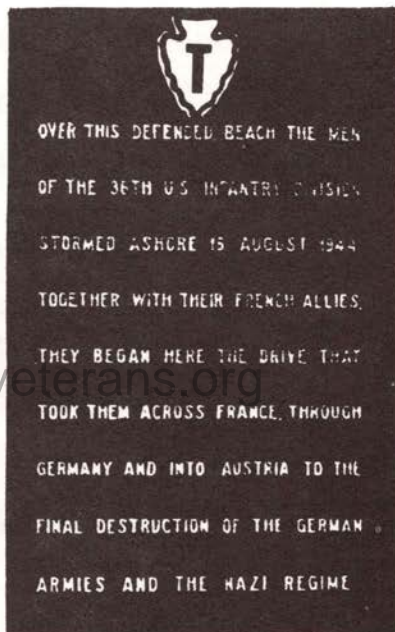


Commanding General, 36th Infantry Division, Maj. Gen. John E. Dahlquist gives opening address at ceremony at Drammont. He adds that the base for the monument is made of granite taken from the beach, while the plaques were made from German artillery pieces in the Reich by German labor.

Drammont Honors The 36th Division



Saluting the monument which commemorates the landing of men of the 36th Division on Green Beach at Drammont is Lt. Arthur M. O'Conner, Jr. of 111th Engineers who supervised the construction of the structure.



Above left: Maj. Roswell K. Doughty, Asst. A.C. of S., of G-1, presents a resume of the landing operations following the start of the ceremony. Wording of the two plaques, this one in English, the other side is etched in French.

Memorial Monument As It Looks Today



Here's the same Monument as it looks today . . . on the same location (Green Beach) near Drammont, which is a few Ks east of San Raphael, the largest town in our invasion area on the Riviera. Photo made in 1975.

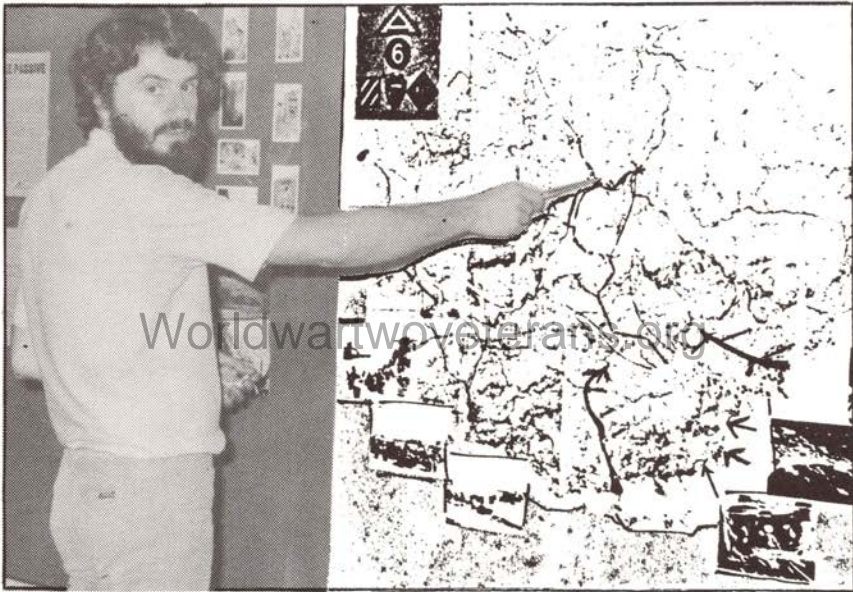


Look close and you'll see the German Pillbox, marked with X, northwest of landing near Dramont. Photo above is same from north . . . evidently the Germans abandoned this, as it is still intact. This ought to bring back some memories for those T-Patchers who hit the beach on this . . . the 3rd invasion for the T-Patchers.

NOTE: These photos were sent to Gen. Albert B. Crowther of San Antonio, our G-2 during WWII. Crowther explained that these pix were sent to the late Claude V. Birkhead (our first WWII CO) and were then given to him by Mrs. Birkhead who could not identify the T-Patcher who had made these photos on a post war visit to Southern France battlefield area. We are happy to have these photos for our files, as we did not know we had such a monument in our honor at this site. If you visit France, this would be a good one to visit. Over and out.



Young Frenchman of Digne Builds Own 36th Museum



GUY S. REYMOND, 6 Cours DU Tribunal 04000 Digne, France is a real T-Patcher booster. He's been an associate member since 1981, has bought all the books on the 36th that have been published, and has a fine museum of WWII artifacts, and lots of maps, photos and stories about the Fighting 36th.

JAMES C. GENTLE, of Philadelphia, Col. Ret. from 2nd Bn., 143rd sent a copy of the June 1980 T-Patcher to GUY S. REYMOND, 6 Cours du Tribunal, Digne, France (04000), and now we have a NEW member of the 36th who writes to LENWLK "I was not even born when the troops of 36th liberated the City of Digne (Southern France) on Aug. 19, 1944, four days after the invasion of the Rivera by the 36th, 3rd and 45th Divisions".

"I'm 34 years old, and became interested in the 36th Texans and started contacting men of your association some time ago", Reymond continued. Among those he wrote to—Amil Kohutek, Jack Hawkins, Bill MacGibbon and Jim Gentle, and it was his reward to start received several letters from Gentle.

"The citizens of Digne have not forgotten the 36th, so I made a display of my collection of documents etc. and was presented in lobby of City Hall. My Collection covered 9 show-cases and 15 panels and was viewed by hundreds of people," Reymond said. For an added chuckle—Guy wanted to know the meaning of "Le T-Bone" the newsletter of San Antonio Chapter ground-out monthly by ole Mac Acosta, a 'hot' tamale journalist.

"My dream is to open a local MUSEUM covering the history of my Country in World War II", he added.



The Heroes For Conspicuous Gallantry..

CONGRESSIONAL
MEDAL OF HONOR WINNER

PVT. WILLIAM A. CRAWFORD

WorldWarTwoVeterans.org



CRAWFORD, WILLIAM

Rank and Organization: Private, 36th Infantry Division. *Place and Date:* Near Altavilla, Italy, 13 September 1943. *Entered Service at:* Pueblo, Colo. *Birth:* Pueblo, Colo. *G.O. No.:* 57, 20 July 1944. *Citation:* For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at risk of life above and beyond the call of duty in action with the enemy near Altavilla, Italy, 13 Sept. 1943. When Company I attacked an enemy-held position on Hill 424, the Third Platoon, in which Private Crawford was a squad scout, attacked as base platoon for the company. After reaching the crest of the hill, the platoon was pinned down by intense enemy machine-gun and small-arms fire. Locating one of these guns, which was dug in on a terrace on his immediate front, Private Crawford, without orders and on his own initiative, moved over the hill under enemy fire to a point within a few yards of the gun emplacement and single-handedly destroyed the machine gun and killed three of the crew with a hand grenade, thus enabling his platoon to continue its advance. When the platoon, after reaching the crest, was once more delayed by enemy fire, Private Crawford again, in the face of intense fire, advanced directly to the front midway between two hostile machine-gun nests located on a higher terrace and emplaced in a small ravine. Moving first to the left, with a hand grenade he destroyed one gun emplacement and killed the crew; he then worked his way, under continuous fire, to the other and with one grenade and the use of his rifle, killed one enemy and forced the remainder to flee. Seizing the enemy machine gun, he fired on the withdrawing Germans and facilitated his company's advance.

THE SAN ANGELO NEW YEARS EVE BLOW OUT

By Del Kendall

It was the 'wildest' New Year's Eve blowout you'd ever seen — circa — Dec. 31, 1943. You and the rest of your outfit — were taken out of the line and moved in a tented area, just evacuated by the 45th Division Thunderbirds.

'twas near the village of Sant' Angelo, where you were being re-fitted with fresh new men (replacements) and materials, with a possibility that we would make an "end-run" at a place called ANZIO (which Gen. Mark Clark changed this to read — RAPIDO RIVER; but on with the story.

Oh, the day started out fair enough with everyone going about their duties, as the men had been told, and once the details were taken care of, they could have the afternoon off.

That night was New Year's Eve and the troops were gonna 'celebrate', something they hadn't done in a long long time. There were parties planned for just about every tent in the Company area, as some of the men took-off for the small hilltowns nearby to 'scrounge' and barter for anything to eat or drink.

Late in the afternoon, it turned colder with gusty winds and pelting rain. Some of the men were now back from the scrounging, and their combat jackets were bulging with loot. You could hear the clinking of bottles as they walked into their tents.

A jeep pulled up unloading wine, some apples and a box of nuts. It looked like it was gonna be quite-a-party. One of the men left the tent to meet an old Pizon coming into the area. You looked, he was leading a mule. The GI hollered, "hey Pizano, vinnie kwa, here, over here".

The old man nodded. There before you stood the old man and the mule, with the goddamndest, biggest wine bottle you'd ever seen in your life, lashed on a blanket. The cork stopper was as big as a coffee pot. The GI smiled and said, he'd ordered it yesterday and there was about 25 gallons in the damn thing, and if some SOB breaks the bottle it'll cost him 5 more bucks, cause bottles are scarce in these parts, and it was the only bottle the old man had to his name.

The giant bottle was brought in and placed by the tent's center-pole, over four foot tall, in all its dark red beauty within, a

The San Angelo New Year's Eve Blow-Out

wonderous sight to see. The men couldn't believe their eyes. Oh, it was gonna be a GREAT party alright!

Chow was called a little earlier that day, due to the threat of more rain, and also to give the men on K.P. a chance to finish early and join in the fun. Already some of the men had started to celebrate as they horsed around in the chowline. "Hey Joe, come on over, we gotta game goin, no limit". "Did Fat Boy get back yet? Said he knew where he could get some real booze". "Hey Boots, I'll trade ya two bottles Marsala, for your Dogo Red". "Willy, hey Willie, don'tcha be pissant'n around. Where the hells those ceegars y'promised". "Bloaty Bill, I swear I ain't got cher comic books, Nickelnose was read'n em". The messkit washline emptied in a hurry, as lightning flashed about and thunder boomed across the valley, like a barrage of Long-Toms let loose. The men raced thru the puddles to the small comfort of their tents, as it started to pour.

Someone said, "Let's get this show on the road", and as he tilted the giant bottle, the other men lined up with canteen cups. There were cheers all around. "Hey Sham, this is good vino Multi-buono." A coupla guys came in for a drink out of that giant bottle they'd heard tell about. "Jeez, wouldja lookit the size of the thing. Whereja get it?" A Coleman lantern hissed overhead from the centerpole, as the men stood drinking.

Suddenly there was a great roaring sound, like nothing you'd ever heard before. The men turned, looking at each other uneasy, and the wind struck. Whoosh, your ears popped. The tent ballooned like it was leaving the ground and as someone grabbed the centerpole, the sides blew in and out. Guy ropes flailed about like something alive. A coupla guys grabbed a pick or shovel and ran out to batten down the windward side of the tent.

The rains hit pounding the tent with the sound of a drum roll. It was over with as quickly as it started. A dead calm settled in, and all up-and-down-the-line of tents men were out, righting a fallen tent or pounding stakes into the muddy ground. Out of the dark, someone wailed, "Mama mia whatta night, c'mon over'n have a drink". The party started up again and so did the slashing rain.

The contents of the giant bottle were disappearing under the onslaught of the two fistful drinking. There was a card game going on, while two men sat trying to harmonize in a drunken key. Others sat shooting-the-bull-about-where-to-get-the-best-lay-in-Napoli.

Someone lay snoring on their sack, their New Years already over with, as the loosened side of the tent fanned over him, first in and then out. Stakes wouldn't hold any longer, the ground was too wet, as a few men sloshed around trying to keep a roof over their heads. A wet head pops in. "You guys got any extra stakes or tent poles?"

The San Angelo New Year's Eve Blow-Out

There's nine tents down already. Stupid bastards snoring and singin' under em. Whaddaya gonna do?" Someone says, "F-k'm".

The winds continued to howl like a Northern outta the Panhandle as the night wore on. Soon two men dancing around the giant bottle when Sham hollers at them, "Watch it you crazy galoots. You break that Godamn bottle and your ass belongs—CRASH! a flying heel of a boot sends it into pieces on the dirt floor.

The two dancers stood there gasping and dumbfounded, in a puddle of wine and broken glass, as a couple of men crawled in under a side of the tent. "Jeez, what the hell happened?" The driver snapped, "Oh these drunken assholes were clownin around, and I just got through tellin' em to take it easy, fer Chrisake. Now lookit". He stormed out of the tent. The two culprits, with an empty ration box picked up the broken glass, and left without saying a word.

Someone in the card game shouted. I gotcha, I gotcha right by the short hairs". Someone brought one of the men from the tent in. "Guess where I found this stupid sonofabitch. He'd fallen in the garbage pit and was sleeping like a baby". The wind slammed into the soggy tents with gale force, as hail now beat a tatoo overhead. The tent was still standing at least, as you crawled into your sack.

It was still an hour till midnight. The card players now gone, you closed your eyes. Someone was cursing in the wet darkness. "Whyncha pound those stakes in like I showed ya?" Between the gusts of wind, you could hear another voice now, singing,at night are big and bright....then laughter. You fell asleep as the wind moaned a low dirge to the coming New Year and the gnarled old olive trees stood guard in the storm swept night.



Q Was it the Anzio or Ardennes-Alsace battle Star that was bestowed on the Division after we came home in '45? What was the date?

A

BOTH were awarded 'after' the war ended, exact dates I don't know, but after I checked the Pentagon in 1953 (after I was assigned to CIA) they had added Ardennes and Anzio

This is part of a new idea from Del Kendall in a letter to Vincent Lockhart. WE think it is a good one, so ask your questions to ole T-Patcher of the QUARTERLY. We'll try to run down the answer for you - starts with the next issue: Vol. IV 1984 Summer edition No. 1, and subscribe NOW! See pages 78 and 79 this issue.

“The Battle at Oberhoffen”

By Martin F. (Rocky) Robinson
Co. A 142nd Infantry

The first platoon of Co. A 142nd was assigned one section of OBERHOFFEN to clean out. Houses were on both sides of the streets, our objective was to go to the edge of town.

We knew the Germans were well-equipped to defend this town, tanks, machine guns covering all the streets. Plus, snipers galore and box mines everywhere. We've have to “dig” them out, one by one, house by house.

We used more hand grenades on Oberhoffen than anyother town we had previously “taken” . . . and we had to take our objective three-times, before we could hold it.

We called for air support, but by the time they got there, we had already taken our objective back. We were, of course, bombed and strafed by our own planes. Luckily, this aerial encounter was not accurate.

Co. A 142nd captured over fifty Nazi prisoners, and we went in with only 28 men, and came out with 10. We lost all our squad leaders, wounded or killed. One was my dear friend, Staff Sgt. EMIL DE LEAU, who knocked out two machine guns and captured 15 or more prisoners. He had killed numerous more. This was not the ‘first-time’ Sgt. De Leau performed such action of courage, many times before Oberhoffen, France.

Alot of brave men passed through Co. A during the 16 months I served with the first platoon. S/Sgt. De Leau was one of the best. He was awarded the C.M.H. posthumously for the battle action at Oberhoffen.

SGT. EMILE DELEAU, JR. (K.I.A.)
CONGRESSIONAL
MEDAL OF HONOR WINNER



Emile Deleau

(Read complete story as published in the Vol. II, Number 1, Spring 1982 issue of the 36th Quarterly).

'Rocky' Robinson Was Eye-Witness To Action By Emile DeLeau At Oberhoffen



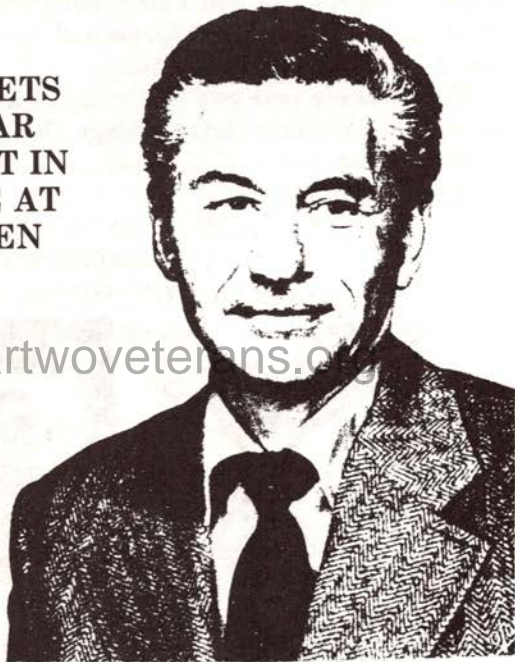
Photo above: Rare photo of two buddies of Co. A 142nd from scrapbook of Robinson . . . here's 'Rocky', acting platoon leader and C.M.H. winner (KIA) Emile DeLeau, one of the fifteen heroes of the 36th that were awarded the highest honor - "for conspicuous gallantry".

ROBINSON GETS SILVER STAR FOR HIS PART IN THE BATTLE AT OBERHOFFEN



Thanks to:

Martin Robinson,
18 Circle Drive,
Arnold MO 63010
for this great
story.



Silver Star Award For Martin Robinson



FRANCE - March 13 1945 - S/Sgt. Martin F. Robinson receives Silver Star from Maj. Gen. John E. Dahlquist at a ceremony in the Duntzheim Area.

CITATION (Silver Star)

MARTIN F. ROBINSON, 37 615 900, Staff Sergeant, Company A, 142nd Infantry Regiment, for gallantry in action on 8 January 1945 in France. Sergeant Robinson, acting platoon leader, as assigned the mission of bringing up the right flank during his company's attack on high ground. About half way up the hill the platoon encountered heavy enemy rifle and machine gun fire, and engaged the enemy in a fire fight which lasted approximately 30 minutes. During this time Sergeant Robinson skillfully controlled the advance of his platoon, although it was frequently necessary to expose himself to the enemy fire. By his skill and courage he led his men through to their objective and materially aided them in killing eight of the enemy and capturing 14. Entered the Service from Poplar Bluff, Missouri.



How I Celebrated V.E. Day

By Ray Lee



On May 8, 1945, we were in Kufstein, Austria. The war was over for us. Everything was in a turmoil for everyone, but we in the Postal Section didn't have a lot to do. We finished our chores early in the afternoon. Most of the fellows scattered over town. The streets were crowded with people just wandering around.

Charlie, PeeWee and I were setting on the steps of this old hotel we had taken over to set up shop. We were looking at a box of good things to eat PeeWee had gotten from home. Charlie and I tried to get him to open it. Finally, PeeWee said "if you will get those three dolls that are coming towards us to share it with us, I will open it." Charlie and I, not wanting to lose our Good Conduct medals, hesitated. But when we saw the girls do the "About Face" at the corner, Charlie said, "I'll break out the Champagne I've been carrying for a long time if you'll get them to our party room." Since I was the only one that could talk to them, I decided "what the heck," this is V.E. Day! So, I invited them to come to our party. They didn't answer — just lifted their chins a little higher, but when they got to the corner, they again turned and came back, but didn't enter the hotel until the next time. They ran up the stairs and down the hall to the room I told them to go to.

Everything was going fine. These blond beauties seemed to be having the time of their lives. In my broken German I did all the translating. Then just as the party was getting a glow on, all the goodies gone, as well as most of the Champagne, one of the cuties whispered to me that they must go to the powder room. I told them where it was — down the hall to the head of the stairs. They went down the hall but instead of going to the rest room, they hit the stairs and disappeared into the street. We never could figure out why these Cinderella's left so hurriedly, because it was still daylight, a long time until the stroke of midnight!



Forward Observer Ray Grossman Was Eye-witness to Action by CHM Winners - Bernard Bell and Gerald Gordon

Dear Editor:

Last year you asked me to submit a story on the fighting at MITTELWHIR, Alsace-Lorraine France involving two (2) of our C.M.H. winners: Bernard Bell and Gerald Gordon.

You had previously stated that obtaining additional information about half of our 15 CMH winners was extremely difficult. I hope my story about the SCHOOLHOUSE episode will bring to light some of the exploits I witnessed with these two brave soldiers.

I joined Btry C 131st as F.O. in Italy as a second Louie; then as F.O. with Btry C 133rd in France and Germany as 1st Lt. I did receive a Silver Star for my part of the same action as Bell and Gordon. Also got the Purple Heart w/cluster during my tour with the 36th.

I joined the Military Government, Germany '45-'47 and US Allied Command, Vienna Austria 1947-1952, retired as Lt. Col. Army Res. 1977. Now reside at: 3686 Kieffer St., Oceanside CA 92056 (that's near Camp Pendleton).

Regards, RAYMOND GROSSMAN

FIFTEEN T-PATCHERS WON THE C.M.H.



Vol. I 1981:

1. Edward C. Dahlgren
2. Arnold Bjorklund
3. Homer L. Wise
4. Charles H. Coolidge

Vol. II 1982:

1. Emile DeLeau
2. Thomas E. McCall
3. Chas Commando Kelly
4. James M. Logan

Vol. III 1983:

1. Stephen R. Gregg
2. Morris E. Crain
3. Bernard P. Bell
4. William J. Crawford

Coming:

1. Ellia A. Weicht
2. Gerald Gordon
3. Silvestre S. Herrera

INSIDE THE WRECKED SCHOOLHOUSE AT MITTELWIHR



By **RAYMOND D. GROSSMAN**
131st & 133rd F.A. Bn.

When a single engagement with the enemy produces two C.M.H. winners, and a Silver Star, it is worthy of the most complete coverage. The record may never be complete because of the unusual circumstances attending the mini-battle.

Inside this battered schoolhouse at Mittelwihr, from beginning to end was found to be an artillery FO from Btry C 133rd Field Artillery Bn.; Sgt. Bernard P. Bell, a squad leader of Co. I 142nd Infantry Regiment and PFC Gerald Gordon, a medic attached to 143rd. Ordinarily, the 133rd FA Bn provides direct artillery support to the 143rd.

On or about 12 December 1944, Capt. Kopf, CO of Btry C 133rd told me it was time to relieve FO Lt. Phil Rafferty, and shortly, with my FO team, we were underway.

As we approached the small village, we were aware of a great deal of enemy action. Upon entering the deserted village there were many shattered buildings to be seen and a steady volume of artillery, mortar and small arms fire to be heard.

Joe Allen, my jeep driver got us as close as possible, then he parked the jeep in a defiladed position alongside a bombed-out building, and we made our way to the schoolhouse to relieve my fellow FO, Rafferty. I shall never forget the words and expression of Phil's face as he looked up and exclaimed, "Boy, am I glad to see you."

Very quickly, he explained the situation, pointed out the known enemy positions, gave me his firing charts and departed. Before he left, Rafferty told me that the schoolhouse was occupied and defended by a squad led by Sgt. Bell and a fighting-medic, named Gordon.

For the next three days this old schoolhouse was my OP during this time until we made our way back to friendly lines, my men and I were in constant direct communication with the Fire Direction Center of our battalion for sending fire missions. Some included targets, literally in our front yard, such was the 'closeness' of the foe.

During this engagement, the enemy hit us with so many weapons

INSIDE THE WRECKED SCHOOLHOUSE

from so many directions, that no one man could present a true account. Besides the winners of the CMH, there were many others worthy of awards.

In the course of directing a fire mission from a closed window, a machine gun sitting only a few hundred yards from us put a round through the window, putting fragments into my left ear, eye, and upper lip. Fortunately, except for temporary discomfort and a closed left eye there was no serious injury. Shortly thereafter I moved to a position by an open door on the ground level which was being manned by a squad member. Suddenly a grenade landed between us. The concussion knocked us both down, but after landing it bounced towards the infantryman. Later they told me that more than a score of grenade fragments had torn him up and killed him.

From my position as the FO, I could see that everyone was determined and aggressive. Time after time, some of the men had to crawl out and run down telephone lines that had been torn apart by enemy explosions and splice them while under observation and fire from the enemy. On one occasion, I watched while a German calmly strapped a bundle of explosives on his shoulderpack and prepared to dart across the short distance separating us. No sooner did he reach the middle of the road, when one of our magnificent riflemen blew him into two parts with a bullet in his explosive laden backpack. Whoever that was certainly should have been honored, but like so many others, who knows?

Bernard Bell and Gerald Gordon

During the night, about sundown we would hold our strategy meetings, Sgt. Bell, PFC Gordon, and myself. Although he was not even an infantryman, PFC Gordon impressed me with his inspirational words and actions. He was everywhere and I am most happy that he later received our highest award along with Sgt. Bell. It was through the leadership of Sgt. Bell and the inspiration of PFC Gordon that we were able to turn back repeated counter attacks by our German 'SS' foes. At one time the situation became so critical that the order "fix bayonets" was given. The only time I ever heard this order. Luckily, we did not have to complete this action.

The last time I saw CMH winner Gordon was on our next to last night meeting. As we sat there with the enemy guns pounding away, feeling very tired and desperate, Gordon reached into his jacket pocket and pulled out a small pocket Bible. He opened it in a random manner while we watched him. As he looked at it, his eyes brightened and he exclaimed, "We have nothing to be afraid of, It

INSIDE THE WRECKED SCHOOLHOUSE

says right here 'Thou shalt be saved!' " As he put the Bible back, all our spirits lifted and we really believed we would all make it. Then he went on to say that inasmuch as the elements on both our right and left flanks had either been driven back or pulled back (I believe they were elements of "K" and "A" companies) he was going to infiltrate the enemy lines and bring us help. Shortly thereafter he slipped away in the darkness and was never seen again. (They say he was found at the end of the war in a hospital in England. How he got there might be quite a story).

Meanwhile, our situation was worsening. Ammo was running short and my radio communication batteries were going dead. On the morning of our last day in the schoolhouse, a few men had tried to make a run for it, and we had seen a German tank, bearing machine guns firing at them. At noon that day, I met with the men who were left and explained that since we were now surrounded it was time to try to get back to our own lines. Each person decided on what to take and what to leave and we got ready to make a run for it.

There was a small house on the rise between the German and American forces and we decided to make this our first objective. We slipped out individually and all of us arrived safely at our Rendezvous some 800 yards away. For some reason, the tank that had earlier been barring the way had moved just before we made our breaks.



CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL OF HONOR WINNER

PFC. GERALD GORDON, with the medics attached to the 143rd, in the heat of the German attack at Mittelwihr, ripped off the red-cross arm band, grabbed a rifle and tore the German line apart when he saw that the krauts were about to overrun his company. Reported missing in action, Gordon was found at the end of the war—in a hospital in England. His home is in St. Joseph, Missouri.

But we were still not out of danger. No sooner had we secured the house (probably in the vicinity of Beblenheim) then we found ourselves in a cross-fire as counter-attacking Americans carried on a

INSIDE THE WRECKED SCHOOLHOUSE

fierce-fire fight with the Germans (SS Troops) who were now in complete control of Mittelwihr.

After a brief but heavy firefight, the firing died down and we were able to stand up and move around. As we sat there wondering what would be our next move, one of our men spotted an American tank between us and the American forces. One of my FO team Joe



T/SGT. BERNARD BELL, platoon leader of "I" Co., 142nd. Holed-up in a wrecked schoolhouse with five of his men, Bell held out against repeated enemy infantry-with-armor attacks at Mittelwihr. His action in defense of a key position helped stem the German advance. President Truman awarded Bell the CMH in a special ceremony on the White House lawn.

Allen volunteered to go to the tank, make contact and get word of our location to the other Americans, since we had been completely out of contact since noon.

Some of our infantrymen took up positions to keep the enemy heads down while Joe moved towards the tank. Shortly before they were to make contact, the tank and Joe disappeared behind a rise and we never saw or heard from them again. (Joe was listed MIA but I still don't know if he ever made it) (There were reports that Germans had captured and manned some American tanks and were on the loose within our lines).

Trapped between the German and American lines, under continual fire, we waited until darkness and then made our individual dashes to the safety of American lines. Thus did end the siege of the schoolhouse.



*At 101,
Dr. Ogden
Is Oldest Living
T-Patcher*

Trenches a faraway memory

By **MIKE DOUGHERTY**
Regional Staff Writer

ELECTRA — For only the second time in the past 64 years, Dr. W.H. Ogden, 101, will stay home and celebrate Veterans Day quietly Friday.

From 1919 through 1981, the Electra physician and other members of the medical detachment of the 142nd Regiment of the 36th Infantry Division met to celebrate Armistice Day, now known as Veterans Day.

When detachment member Gene Montgomery died over a year ago, Ogden and John Butts, formerly of Wichita Falls, were left as the only survivors of the unit. They decided to call off the annual meeting.

Butts now lives in a nursing home in San Antonio.

"Most of us in the medical detachment were from Texas," Ogden recalled, "so we met at Camp Bowie in Fort Worth the day we were discharged from the Army in 1919, and decided to meet every year."

"We got together every Veterans Day in Wichita Falls except one. That year we met in Oklahoma City. In the earlier days, we had around 100 members coming to the meetings."

Besides the commanding officer, four other doctors and himself, Ogden said there were about 145 men in the medical detachment.



Photo by Mike Dougherty

*Dr. W.H. Ogden, 101, . . .
. . . in World War I uniform*

Of their action in World War I, Ogden is modest except to say "we were on the Hindenburg line, the toughest place in the whole war to be. When we got (the Germans) out of there, we chased 'em across the Seine River."

Ogden still lives at his home in Electra with his wife of 62 years, Inga, a native of London. The two met in Louisville, Ky., in 1921 and married later that year.

He graduated from medical school at the University of Louisville in 1907. Inga moved to Kentucky with her family in 1906. The two didn't meet until Ogden, while attending a medical meeting in Louisville, walked into the doctor's office where she worked.

Born in Coal Hill, Ark., on March 12, 1882, Ogden moved to Electra in 1911 from Toyah, in southwest Texas. He practiced medicine in Electra until 1979, when he retired at the age of 98. Until that time, he made house calls and drove to the hospital every day to visit his patients.

• Dr. Ogden's favorite pastime these days is visiting his farm on FM 369, 5 miles northeast of Iowa Park. The farm is managed by the Ogdens' only son, Henry, of Wichita Falls, a veteran of World War II and a retired teacher.

This is a reduction of a large story about Dr. Ogden as printed in the Wichita Falls Record-News Nov. 12, 1983, was sent in by EDWARD THOMPSON (36th Div. MP Platoon) of Rt 2 Box 28, Wichita Falls, TX 76301. If you have Bernice Maxfield's Camp Bowie 1917-18 Fort Worth, you'll find a story about Dr. Ogden on page 31.



TRIO HAS A DATE WITH FATE

Francis A. Cervellera
Co. I, 143rd Regt.



Fate taps us on the shoulder perhaps once in a lifetime. While some persons heed its advice or warning, others shrug it off, never knowing the outcome of that passing moment.

It all began at the 1980 Reunion of the 36th Division Association at Dallas, Texas. This event was a memorable one for all T-Patchers, because the famed 100/442 Neisi Regimental Combat Team had been invited to meet and greet the assembled T-Patchers, who were considered blood brothers before, during, and after, the famed lost Battalion story in Oct. 1944.

A Young Frenchman, Two Amer/Italians Meet For First Time in 40 Years

Mr. Serge Carlesso had also been invited by both organizations. Serge was a WW-2 amputee, a French Native of Bruyeres France, a resistance fighter defending his home town at the tender age of 15. Another casualty present, was Anthony 'Gags' Gagliardo, presently of Largo, Fl., then resident of Co. G & F, 143rd. Regt., 36th. Div., completing the three ring circle, was (yours truly) Francis A. Cervellera.

Serge had visited the United States extensively during this vacation period, and his last leg of the journey would be to visit Florida, where he was to deliver personally, a G.I. Canteen Cup lost by Mr. Light while a member of the 45th. Inf. Division at Bruyeres France in 1944.

Gagliardo and Cervellera came to the reunion because of the 100/442. It was also their first Reunion, and all were strangers to each other. Speaking a little French, and lots of Italian, the three compared notes of their experiences in, and around Bruyeres.

Fate stepped in and tapped the three huddled casualties on the shoulder in an unbelievable story that occurred in October 1944, and opened the hearts and minds of three heretofore strangers.

Bruyeres, Epinal and Laval Revisited — October 1944

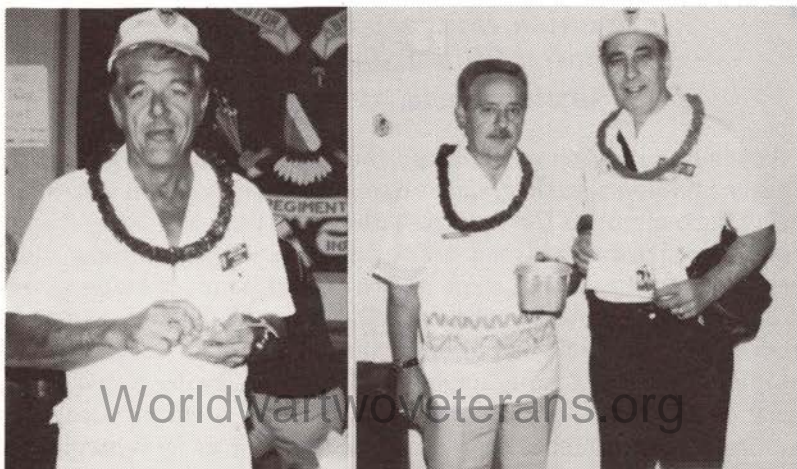
Cervellera had been wounded twice during the Italian Campaign in 1943, and on Oct. 2, 1944 received another wound to the left hand, on Oct. 4, he would be permanently knocked out of the War by still another wound. Gagliardo checked three wounds into his Service Record, with the most memorable one taking place on Oct. 10, 1944.

Serge Carlesso, had good reason to remember Oct. 10. He lost his leg during the bitter fighting that took place in the Town of Laval. Cervellera remembers vaguely that on the night of Oct. 1, 1944, the 3rd. Squad, First Platoon of Co. I, 143 Regt., was ordered to make a morning attack on the Town of Laval.

In the dense forest area of the Vosges Mountains, the unit had not been supplied with Rations and were low on Ammo. During the night, the men dug their fox-holes as best they could at the tree line edge of the forest enclosure surrounding the Town. I Company had been told that no enemy were in the town, but would lay down a Mortar barrage at 6:30 A.M., just to discourage anyone there. The men knew better, and many dug their holes deeper.

At morning light, the scene shocked the men. The Town of Laval with its Church steeple in the center, lay open as a bowling alley. The woods were on three sides of

TRIO HAS A DATE WITH FATE



FAMOUS TRIO - Anthony 'Gags' Gagliardo, Mr. Serge Carlesso of Bruyeres, France and Francis (Hingeback) Cervellera meet again after 40 years at D/FW Reunion.

their dug-in positions. It was to be a head-on assault. Cervellera looked to his Fox-Hole buddy Bill Dennenbaum, and both whistled and said "Holy shit, its that time again." Promptly at 6:30 A.M. the Mortors started spitting out their shells.

I Company men were watching the barrage plaster the Town, wishing that somehow everything would blow away. In a half hour, it would be the Town or them that would be blown away. Somehow, out of all that noise, the sound of incoming enemy shells became a reality, The men suddenly realized that out of the peaceful looking village, the enemy had done it to them again. They were there, waiting!

As Cervellera and Dennenbaum were watching the Weapons Platoon Mortor section pour shells into the Village, an 88 shell burst close by, hitting Cervellera in the palm and buried itself in the embankment of their fox-hole. The fragment missed his heart by 6 inches. Having a premonition of being wounded during this attack, being low on water to cleanse the wound, and not wanting to waste his First-Aid Bandage, Cervellera did what was done during WW-I, according to his Father. He urinated on it.

He also wrapped the wound with his dirty handkerchief, and prayed to live thru the attack to better care for his hand: With their exposed positions clearly marked by the tree line forest clearing, I Company took some heavy casualties that morning.

Somehow, someone up-stairs at the Battallion level, called off the attack. Another Company would take that peaceful looking, no enemy inside Village.

I Company packed up and moved on to another round of wooded mountain climbing, to make a circle and attack another town or village. Names did not mean a thing. You could place a quarter on any spot of the map, and cover a dozen little Villages and Towns in the immediate area . . . However, history remembers well, the towns of Bruyeres, Epinal and Laval. Gagliardo and Carlesso remember Laval. Tony "Gags" was a BAR man with F Company, 143rd. Regt. . . . at that time. He remembers the house window that he was firing his BAR from. He was outside, blasting away as fast as he could load. One SP vehicle was playing hide and seek on a hill. It would open fire on their positions and disappear, reload and fire again and again. F Company casualties began mounting. Tony "Gags" was blasted from his BAR position. and received his 3rd battle wound, but not yet out of the War. After receiving medical treatment, weeks later, returned to join G Company until VE Day, May 1945.

TRIO HAS A DATE WITH FATE

Reunion Banquet Is Setting For Swapping Wild Tales of Action And Purple Hearts At Epinal Area

At the Reunion Dinner Banquet, the three casualties were now intensely huddled together, questioning each other about dates, and trying to remember the names of those battlefields. Tony "Gags" remembered some railroad tracks near Laval, Cervellera didn't recall any, but knew that some had to exist because of being wounded on Oct. 4th by a large caliber shell. "It sounded like the Anzio Express coming in, their had to be a railroad near by," Serge Carlesso listened, and took a table napkin and began drawing a map of the Laval area. Cervellera handed Tony "Gags" another piece of a napkin and asked him to draw a map of the area, as he remembered.

Both finished drawing their version of the area. Carlesso's was a certainty, being a Native of that area. "Gags" had to come from memory . . . 36 years is a long time.

Cervellera took both table napkins, turned them around a few times, starred at the scribbling and clearly marked hills, town, SP hiding, the house, and then whistled softly. "The damned things are identical to each other." Everyone looked at each other, smiled, then laughed and slapped each other playfully on the back. They all had been together somehow, at sometime in their lives, thousands of miles away from each other, drawn together by a Division Reunion.

Serge Carlesso explained his part of the fighting on that fateful Oct. 10. As a young lad of 15, the remaining men in the surrounding villages had formed a resistance group known as the FFI (Free French of the Interior).

Serge remembers the SP firing and disappearing, he was caught in a cross-fire between the enemy and American duel. He swore that the railroad tracks were there, ran thru the area where Cervellera thought one had to be. Serge was wounded by that same SP firing on American positions. As a result, his leg was amputated at an American Army Hospital later on in Epinal, the same hospital that Cervellera was receiving care for the 4th. Wound of Oct. 4, 1944.

At the end of the Reunion, Serge, "Gags", and "Hingeback" shook hands, and pledged to keep in touch with each other. They all did, both by mail, and long distance phone calls to and from Largo, Florida, Bruyeres, France, and Silver Springs, Florida.

TRIO HAS A DATE WITH FATE

EPINAL, FRANCE — FOUR YEARS LATER

On a Monday, May 16, 1983, Cervellera, his wife Terry, and daughter Marie shook hands again, hugged and kissed Serge Carlesso, and his wife Monique. **The scene was Epinal, France. Long time friends were once again reunited by past experiences.**

Call it Fate, yes, I firmly believe in it . . .

It is of human nature to forget the pain. One remembers the experience of the pain, but not the actual hurt. Nature protects us that way, otherwise, women would not have babies, nor would men go to War again. While pain is forgotten, the War flashback scenes still occur, often muddled by time, unbelievable that one could survive such terrible happenings. Were they real, or imagined dream nightmares of old war movies? How about the wounds, they certainly were real. The pieces of flesh were still missing. They were left in Italy and France, in some forgotten place that few people heard of.

During the Italian Campaign of 1943-44, Cervellera had not been able to wrangle a pass to visit his birthplace, and family relatives in southern Italy. **"You're in the Infantry, and this is a goddam War, no time for visiting,"** smiled his C.O., and that was that, for Cervellera. As time began to fly by, and the flashbacks increased in their intensity, so did the yearning to know also increase. His Aunts, Uncles, 1st and 2nd cousins began asking when he would visit them. **"Don't wait until I'm dead"** said one Uncle. **"My house is your house,"** said Serg Carlisso . . . **"Come, we await you and your family with open arms" . . .**

The decision to visit France and Italy was made in August 1982, for the trip to commence in May-June 1983. Four weeks of hectic travel, all on borrowed notes . . .

Any one can do it, all one has to do is take out their trusty pen, and sign his name with a bold flourish of **"What the heck, you only live once" . . .**

The experience was the best stroke of Cervellera's penmanship life.

Ole 'Hingeback' Represets M.O.P.H.

Another thing had occurred. Visiting the US Military Cemeteries at Epinal France, and the Sicily-Rome Military Cemetery at Nettuno-Anzio, Italy was just the right theme for the **Military Order of the Purple Heart's National Organization**. They promptly appointed Cervellera as Aide-de-Camp to the organization, representing its National Commander, Don Arthur. A Floral Wreath with the purple ribbon of the MOPH inscribed, would be presented at each of the final resting places in both countries.

Serge Carlesso, with his wife Monique, certainly extended themselves towards our comforts, and hospitality. The adage of "My house is your house" became a reality in every sense and meaning. Their custom-built home was built on a hill overlooking the Town of Laval in the nearby valley. Bruyeres was a short 5 minutes away. The tourist signs suggests the best possible camping sites, and ski areas. The flashbacks of scenes start to come alive as Serge weaves his small auto over, thru, and around hills, mountains, and villages. The names suddenly become familiar. The heart starts to pound faster. **"Serge, show me the church steeple in Laval, and I'll show you where I was hit"** said Cervellera. The road sign had a cross on the word "LAVAL," indicating that you were leaving the village limits. The railroad tracks suddenly popped up. They led straight for Laval. There was the Church steeple in the center.

FRANCIS CERVELLERA is Editor of THE SURVIVORS, publication for Military Order of the Purple Heart of the U.S.A., Inc., Charles F. Schmidt Chapter 466, is active in many other activities of the MOPH. His address: 18253 S.E. 24th St., Silver Springs FL 32688.

TRIO HAS A DATE WITH FATE

Cervellera now looked for the hill mass that his Company had dug in on Oct. 1st, 1944. **"There it is,"** he shouted to a smiling Serge, who was now nodding in acknowledgement. **"Yes, the Americans came over that hill from over there,"** he pointed in a sweeping motion. There is the Village of Laval. **"Over there is the house that Tony Gagliardo was wounded."** The house had since been rebuilt, it still stood out as a lonely piece of real estate, where the Americans had possession of it, and the enemy wanted it. Cervellera tried to re-create the scene of Oct. 1944, seeing Tony "Gags" with his Bar, trying to fight, yet survive . . . **"Gags" was 20 years old at that time. Cervellera was 20 . . . how time passes us by . . . if those houses, hills and villages could only talk.**

The motor journey with Serge continued. In the center of Bruyeres, tacked onto building, a sign stated that this road was dedicated to the memory of those heroic men of the 100/442 Neisi Regimental Combat Team, who liberated the Town of Bruyeres. The patriotic feeling towards the Neisi by the townspeople were fantastic.

100/442nd RCT Visit Friends At Bruyeres

"Every year, when the 100/442 visits Bruyeres in October, it is a great holiday for us all" stated Serge. **"We open all our homes to them, and have a big parade, much celebration" . . .**

The tour continued up the steep mountain slopes surrounding Bruyeres. The mountain had healed itself. The trees had grown tall and reached up into the heavens. The deep cut ravines and slopes twisted and turned. One wondered, how could man have battled under such conditions. At the top, the small auto trail became narrow. A 100 foot picnic area was cleared, graveled, and had a few tables scattered about. It was then apparent that this God-Forsaken place was here for a purpose.

"Over there, came the first enemy tanks, up that small trail" . . . "Over there, your Engineers built the road, much was destroyed, lives, ground, trees, everything" . . .

"War is terrible, we pray that it must not happen again, nobody gains."

On a raised platform, **we pray that it must not happen again, nobody gains."**

On a raised platform, in the middle of the area was a double Plaque, one in English, and a duplicate in French. **The Lone Star of Texas was placed in the center of the cement monument.** The inscription commemorated the Neisi 100/442 Regimental Combat Team in coming to the rescue of the **"Lost Battalion" of the Texas 141st Regiment, October 1944.** The blue Lone Star was slightly faded, Serge sensed the embarrassment and said **"It is still winter time here in the forest, the townspeople come here every spring and clean up this area, make it look real nice . . . we paint the Star" . . .**

Terry, Cervellera's wife, looked at the forest, the mountains, the valleys, and said, **"How could you guys climb all these mountains, and still fight".** Cervellera shook his head in wonderment, and answered, **"I don't know how, but we did" . . .**

Winding down the mountain trail again, Serge stopped at a fairly large farm house. **"This is the home of Mr. and Mrs. Roberts, it was the first house liberated by the Neisi."** The introductions were made, and pictures taken of the Roberts. Their home was used as an OP by the 442nd. Serge showed us the partly filled fox-hole that was dug the evening before the house was liberated. It was still a fox-hole to an ol' Infantryman; only time had left it open about one foot below ground.

If one let himself dream, you could still see the tired, sweating, scared G.I. digging away into the night, probably not even seeing the house in the darkness of War.

Many years after the War, a Neisi visited the house, and asked Mrs. Roberts a question, **"I recall that evening when we came into your home, and you were pregnant."** **"Yes,"** said Mr. Roberts, **"Here is my son, 30 years old" . . .**

TRIO HAS A DATE WITH FATE



BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

FRANCIS A. CERVELLERA Co I 143rd Inf.

Born in San Giorgio, Taranto, Italy 20 March 1924, the Son of Salvatore and Adalorata Cervellera. Father emigrated to Pittsburgh, Penna., in 1913. Enlisted and served with the AEF in France 1918-1919 with the 2nd. Inf. Division. Reemigrated to the USA in 1926 and reunited with wife and son in Pittsburgh in October 1929. Two of other sons deceased, Michael, 2 years old, Michael 49 years old.

I was named Francesco Antonio (Americanized to Francis Anthony) graduated from Connelly VoTech High School as Journeyman Machinist, Tool & Die Maker.

Met pen-pal from New York, both corresponded with each other during overseas duty, Theresa M. DeLizza. Got married 7 Feb. 1948, raised 4 children, Sal, Michael, Albert, Marie. Grandparents to two boys and 2 girls to date.

MILITARY SERVICE:

First 18 year old draft - 19 March 1943. Basic Training-Camp Joseph T. Robinson, Little Rock, Arkansas. Arrived overseas 20 Aug. 1943 at Algiers, North Africa. Joined the 36th Inf. Div., Sept. 1943 at Salerno Beachhead, Italy.

Served as Machine-Gunner from Sept.-Dec. 1943, Rifleman and Squad Leader from April-Oct. 1944. Demolition Team Leader for Invasion So. France.

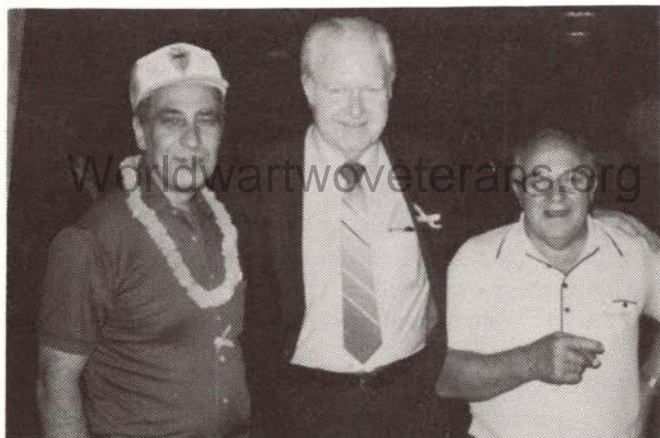
Wounded in action 4 times, twice at San Pietro, Italy, twice, Vosges, France. (Dec. 10, 1943, 6:30 a.m. and 7:00 a.m.) (2 Oct. 1944, and 4 Oct. 1944-Med.Evac., 5 Oct. 1944).

Reassigned to Limited Duty as a result of physical condition, to the 9th Army Air Corps.

MILITARY AWARDS & CITATIONS - Co. I, 143 Regt. 36th Div. and 9th AAC/1st. TAC.

Combat Infantry Badge, Bronze Star Medal (Meritorious) Purple Heart Medal, w/3 Oak Leaf Clusters, Good Conduct & Victory Medals, ETO ribbon w/6 Campaign Stars, w/Invasion Arrowhead (So. France) Occupation Medal, (Germany) (AAC), 2 Presidential Unit Citations.

Honorable Discharge - Point System - 27 Oct. 1945.



Ol' Hingeback, Francis Cervellera meets again his former platoon leader, Harold Hancock of Dallas, and old buddy Michael Guidice, Latrobe PA at D/FW Reunion, all served with Co I 143rd



“THE FIRST DRAFTEE”

By Bill Steger, Dallas TX
(1919 - 1982)



Yardbird Bill Steger at Camp Bowie Texas 1941, and the young 220 lb. warrior with a buddy of the 111th Quartermaster Regimental Hqs.

I registered for the draft on Oct. 2, 1940 at the early age of 21. My father was in charge of all registration in Dallas, County and **“believe it or not,”** I was one of the 1st numbers 56,000 drawn out for my **“one year of service”** with dear old Uncle Sam, received my notice on Dec. 24th 1940 (nice Christmas present) to report on January 13, 1941.

Most of the other lucky ones were a good deal older and wiser to the world-of-living than me so they all celebrated the night before and were not in very good shape the next morning for physicals and swearing in ceremonies. The Sgt. in charge handed me the envelope full of papers and said I was in charge of this group. They loaded us on Santa Fe railroad (top secret Mission) and shipped us off to camp. That night, the train going down thru Duncanville (where I had a farm) and then to Cleburne and next morning we unloaded at dear old Brownwood, at Camp Bowie.

At Reception Center they gave us all I.Q. tests and processed out classification cards as to civilian jobs and assigned us to Army units. Lt. Kelton was Division Classification Officer at that time from the AG Section. (I later served under him for 3 years). After my civilian

THE FIRST DRAFTEE

job in the grain business in Dallas, they assigned me to the 111th Q.M. Regt.

Col. Earnest O. Thompson was division QM and several of us went to his Regt. for assignment. I weighed 220 at the time and was hard as a rock, so Col. Thompson came down the line and tapped me on the shoulder and said, **"This is a good man for Service Co."** When we arrived at Service Co. area Capt. "Hammering" Clewis was Top Dog and Lee Allison was his Lt. First thing they asked was, **"Is there anybody who can use the typewriter,"** and (I was chosen as Co. Clerk).

Judge says - "Join the Guard or serve time at Gatesville . . ."

The cadre of National Guard personnel were from east Austin and I understand the Juvenile Judge had told most of this bunch to join the National Guard or go to Gatesville (the reform school). They chose the National Guard (**We selectees called them the DEAD END KIDS!**)

By not having a Co. Clerk they had not been paid since Nov. 25, 1940 and my first job was to prepare payroll and get the Co. records in order. All of this, as private grade 7 working for the total sum of \$21.00 a month with 6.60 for GI insurance and 5.00 for laundry I didn't have too much travel or expense money. After 4 months as Co. Clerk I was promoted to Corporal (54.00 a month) boy I was feeling high and wealthy.

Fred Massengill was our Sgt./Major, but he wanted to go to OCS, so when he left I was promoted to Regimental Sgt/Major, and I was in HIGH COTTON with six-stripes!

A change in T/O came about, and I was allowed to take a Warrant Officer examination (and it was tough) but I got it, a WO Jg - and was assigned to the Division A/G, with Col. MARVIN D. STEEN at Camp Edwards.

The Col. said my orders were already written and he handed my orders to me, he had transferred to his Section in Division HQS. - Nov. 1, 1942 and assigned me to be Major John J. Deane's asst. Deane a regular Army Sgt. from WWI (was as rough as a boot) and knew the army regulations backwards and forward. He really got me 'on the beam'. I thought I had been good in the QM Rgmt. and Battalion, but I started **"all-over"** again under Major Deane.

Col. Steen was sent back to the states for medical reasons and Major Deane was promoted to Lt. Col. Div. A/G. Later Deane was sent back for medical reasons and Major Kelton became Division A/G. I received a battlefield commission at Salerno and was able to appoint another good enlisted man as WOJO.

THE FIRST DRAFTEE

As Lt. in the A/G section and because we were short of officers; I became the Division Personnel Officer, and received requisitions from the units and ordered the replacement personnel of officers and EMS for the Division, but had to make trips to the replacement depots to pick up the new personnel and the return to duty of the hospital patients who were returning to their units.

After we landed in Selarno we had a 'new' bunch of replacements that we had received in Africa, but they had not been trained with their combat units and we left them in a special company to join us after our landing. The day Naples fell, I was sent to the big city to receive our new men. Cosmo D. Smith of Telephone, Texas was my driver and we went in a recon car with our bedding rolls to pick up the new men.

We received our personnel and took them to the old race track in Naples (which later became the REPO-DEPOT). After getting the men settled, ole Cosmo and I went downtown Naples to spend the night.

Wandering around the Via Roma, I bumped into Col. Buster Morman, formerly of 111th QM Regmt. but was then with 82nd Airborn, Hqs in Naples. He asked where we planned to spend the night.

I replied, **"we dropped off our bedrolls and packs at the big, beautiful Naples Post Office, and that's the best we could do."**

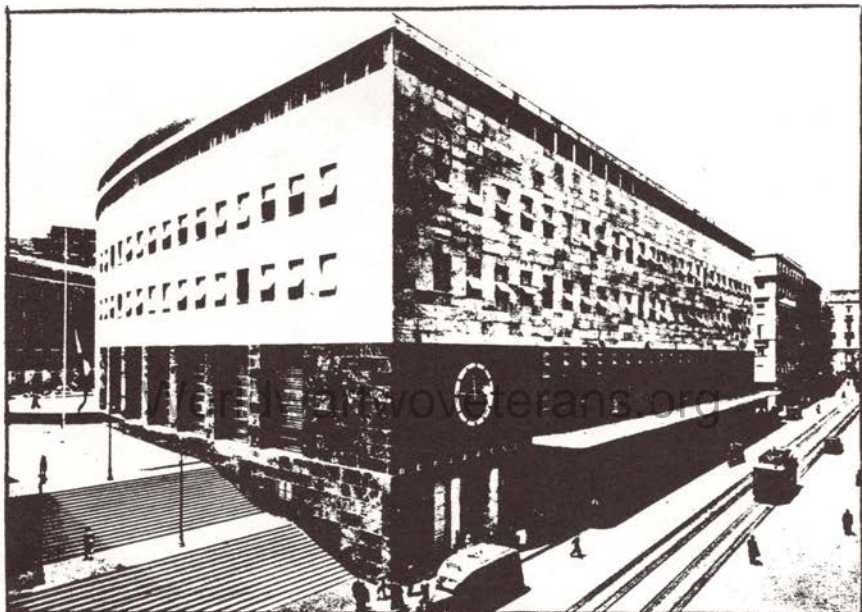
Col. Morman insisted that we join his group, as the 82nd had taken over a small hotel near there, and sleep in a good bed. We agreed that was for us!

"Hey, Steger," hollered Cosmo, **"this is neat, complete, and all-reet"**. We sacked out early, and dreaming on deep slumber, we awoke with the damnest explosion WHAM BANG!!! We knew it was nearby, but decided it was one of the KRAUTS heavy-heavy artillery shells.

Next day we got the news. 'Lady Luck' had been nice to us. We were told it was the POST OFFICE (only blocks away).

ED note: This story by Bill Steger has been in the works for several years. It had been our privilege to know Steger from those early days, since I too, was a 'first draftee', but Steger was one day ahead of me arriving at Camp Bowie. We had asked him back in 1980 when the Quarterly was just beginning, to write a story about what went on in the A/G Section. Shortly afterwards, he had a stroke. He continued to make the reunions. I kept asking him to get-going. Believe it was the insistence of his dear wife, Ruth who kept prodding him to finish it. And, this he did. But only shortly before he passed away in August 1982. Ruth Steger had it typed and sent to me last fall. She has our thanks, and had done, what many wives could (or should) do before 'time' runs out on us.

THE FIRST DRAFTEE



Benito Mussolini, like his partner-in-crime, Hitler - did alot of things to capture the masses . . . like "making the trains run on-time," and grandiose stadiums and buildings, like the Naples Post Office, which was really quite a fabulous structure. Most T-Patcher saw the aftermath of this nefarious act by the Nazis.

Later I read what LIFE Magazine had to report, in their Oct. 1943 issue: NAZI MINE KILLS 100 AT NAPLES POST OFFICE. **"On Oct. 7th in Naples, The Germans perpetrated one of the great horrors of the war. The fancy new P.O. built by Mussolini 1933, was loaded with Allied soldiers and Italian civilians. In the basement a delayed-action mine, left by the Nazis when they evacuated the city, EXPLODED."** LIFE Photographer Robert Capa and Acme News Photographer Charles Corte, who were in that area, had these emotional words: **"Those sonsabitches, those goddam dirty sonsabitches".**

Looking back now after 40 years, I feel that Col. Buster Morman, was more than just a friend to offer his place, over a-night-at-the-Post-Office-Bldg. He probably saved the life of a couple of T-Patchers from Texas . . . who could have been GONE WITH THE DUST!

THE FIRST DRAFTEE

THE ADJUTANT GENERAL SECTION IN ITALY



QUALIANO ITALY, Aug. 1944 - Adjutant General's Section, 36th Division: seated from left - Otto Anderson, Hilmer Gembler, Bill Steger, Harry B. Kelton, Lt. Col. Deane, Joe Gawinski, Vincent Lockhart, B. F. Abbott, Gerritsen.

Back row: Donald McClenahan, Edgar Gatewood, Temple Allen, Bill Hasbrook, () Uterson, () Sschiedell, Ross Talbot, Luther Johnson, Ralph Brigante, Jerry Frangella, Bill Banks, Thomas Fleming, Ray Pfeffer, Harold Schwartz, () Nuetts, Gilbert Nelson, Jim Jenkins, Francis X Brauer, Wilson Clark and Dick Pratt.



Above left: Bill Steger and his old pal, Penn Jones at the AVG 36th Division Hqs. somewhere in France. Photo at right: Major Harry B. Kelton of San Antonio.



HAPPENINGS AT SELASTAT

By W.J. BAXTER

On the evening of 12 Dec. 1944 the Germans were about to make one big effort to regain Selastat. At this time a sector of this town was held by Co. B 142nd. Inf. Rgt., 36th Div. who knew nothing of the Germans' plans for the future.

The Company CP was in a two story house with concrete porch and lead-up steps and housed Co. HQ, Cooks, Drivers etc.

K.O. Pitner and W.J. Baxter, occupants of this house, with the urge to do something when the sun went down, started out on a "**Vino Patrol**". After scouting several houses, with no success, ended up in a wine cellar trying to convince an old man that wine in this cellar had to be tested. The old man, understanding no english, waved his hands and mumbled something that we did not understand.

After "**Taste-Testing**" a number of bottles we decided to go back to the CP and make a full report, with evidence to back it up.

This was approximately 10:00 p.m. and at this time one of our outposts had been captured and the enemy was moving up for a daybreak attack. **We did not know that a red-alert was on at the CP as we came walking down the street laden with liberated supplies.** The CP was dark and quiet and as K.O. tried the door, with his arms full, one bottle crashed to the concrete porch and sounded like a 105 going off, and got about as much results. The door flew open and there was Capt. Dewey Mann. I think he had his gun drawn on us, and he proceeded in no uncertain terms to tell us that **a damn war was going on!**

Of course the rest is history; at daybreak, after a hard shelling, the Germans swarmed in on Co. B with hard fighting going on all day. When the battle was over we still had Selastat, 333 prisoners of war, and a Presidential Unit Citation.

Worldwartwoveterans.org
Dear Editor:

Enclosed is a story that Woodrow Baxter gave me quite sometime ago that depicts the light a humorous side of that terrible life in combat. Here we were about to be run over by the Germans and these two guys saunter in nonchalantly loaded with bottles of wine. However, it is memories such as this that make other more terrible memories more bearable. Incidentally, K.O. Pitner and Woodrow Baxter were two fine leaders of men. Both of them were granted battlefield commissions.

Dewey Mann, 2105 21st St.
Nitro W. VA. 25143
Former CO of Co. B 142nd



OPERATION TRACKDOWN



Were You At Lyon?

Prof. Chemin Seeks
Identity of 36thers
Who Liberated His town

WorldWarVeterans.org



EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
DEFENSE ATTACHE OFFICE
American Embassy, Box C
APO New York 09662

U-009-84/OPSCO

12 March 1984

36th Infantry Division Association
c/o Mr. Julian H. Philips
1117 Pandora Drive
Houston, Texas 77013

Dear Sir:

This office is attempting to assist a French citizen, currently a Professor of French Literature at the Congolese University Marien Ngouabi in Brazzaville, to come in contact with the surviving members of a group of American soldiers who liberated his village in September 1944. As you can see from the attached correspondence, we were referred to you by the Department of the Army Center of Military History.

Professor Roger Chemin (the blonde-haired boy in the pictures) would appreciate it if the attached photographs X were published in your association newsletter, or other form of publication. If any of your members can identify the soldiers, please contact Professor Chemin at one of the following addresses:

Professeur CHEMIN, Roger
Universite Marien Ngouabi
B.P. 2107
BRAZZAVILLE
Republique Populaire du Congo

Professor Roger CHEMIN
c/o American Cultural Center
American Embassy, Box C
APO New York 09662

Your assistance in this endeavor is appreciated.

FOR THE DEFENSE ATTACHE:

Richard W. Flowers
RICHARD W. FLOWERS
CW2, USA
Operations Coordinator

OPERATION TRACKDOWN

This is an amazing story, which we received recently from Julian Philips, and it arrived just at press time, so we figured it would be appropriate to spread the word about this young 5 year old lad, ROGER CHEMIN, a French citizen, now a Professor at the Congolese University N'Gouabi.

Prof. Chemin sent six glossy prints of the 'soldiers' who liberated his village of Saint-Priest, on Sept. 4, 1944, and then camped two or three days on his grandfather's farm. He then sent this material and his story to the American Embassy. After some time for research, Richard Flowers forwarded this to Julian Philips of Houston

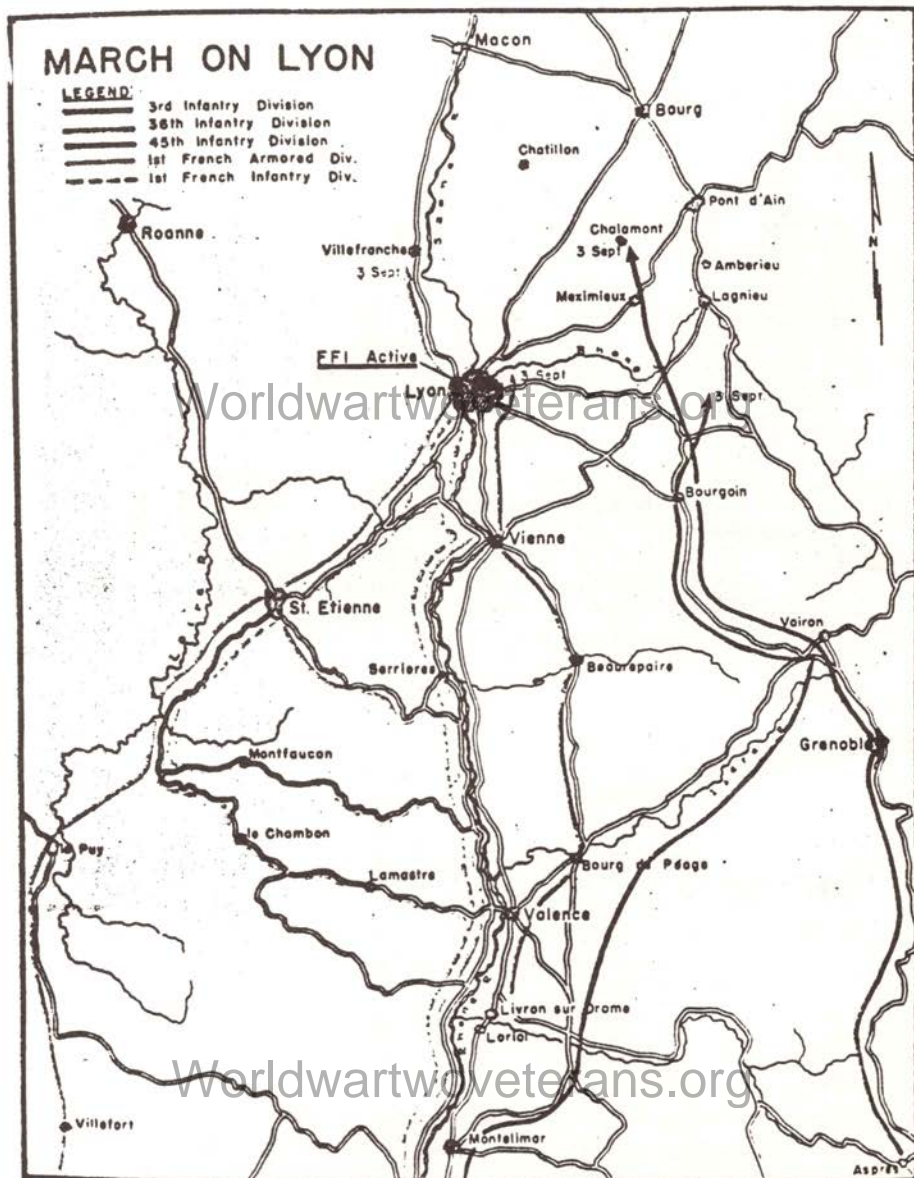
BELOW: Here's page 255 from Report of Operations, THE SEVENTH UNITED STATES ARMY, In France and Germany, 1944-1945 (In three volumes) covers the action regarding Prof. Chemin request for info about the men of the 36th shown on page 61.

evacuated. Early in the afternoon the patrol reported that Lyon was clear, up to the Rhone River where the Germans were covering the approaches to the city by fire. At 1700 hours, General Butler instructed the 36th Division that it was not to enter the city of Lyon, but that officer patrols and liaison parties should be sent into the city to maintain contact with the FFI and French Army B approaching Lyon from the west. Pockets of Germans still held out between the Rhone and Saone, although the city had been virtually liberated. American troops were kept at the edge of Lyon in order that the French could claim the prestige of liberation. Then a small force, consisting of one platoon of infantry and one platoon of tanks, was placed at the mayor's disposal to "help keep order." In cooperation with the FFI this patrol neutralized the German pocket in the town's northeastern section between the two rivers.

Meanwhile, on the west bank of the Rhone, the French II Corps was moving up along two routes against practically no opposition. On 2 September reconnaissance elements reached the outskirts of the city without contacting the enemy. As the main body moved up, advance elements extended as far north as Villefranche, more than 15 miles above Lyon, and occupied high ground in that area. On 3 September the 1st French Infantry Division entered Lyon and deployed along the entire perimeter of the city west of the rivers. At the end of the day the division began to regroup to assure law and order; but this precaution was unnecessary, for all was calm.

While the French II Corps and the American 36th Division were engaged in and about Lyon, the American 45th Division was in contact with the German rear guard in the Meximieux area. The French were moving up the west bank of the Saone along Highway 6 toward Macon, Chalons-sur-Saone, and Dijon. The road junctions at Meximieux and Bourg-en-Bresse became of primary importance to the Germans for use in their withdrawal north through Besancon to the Belfort Gap. At Meximieux, on the road and rail net running northeast out of Lyon, the 11th Panzer Division was aggressively defending the flank of the retreating forces. By blowing bridges and establishing roadblocks the Germans hoped to keep the main body of the Allied forces south of the

OPERATION TRACKDOWN



THIS MAP of "March On Lyon" was also included to help in reviewing the action that took place on Sept. 3rd when the Fighting 36th was in that area. The VILLAGE OF SAINT-PRIEST - ten miles EAST of Lyon.

Prof. Roger Chemin was mixed up on proper identification, as he recalled the "32nd" instead of "36th", but that was caught by Richard W. Flowers, CW2 of Embassy of the United States of America.

Who knows, if we can TRACKDOWN the identity of these men, maybe we can ask Prof. Chemin to come all the way from BRAZZAVILLE, Republique Populaire Du Congo . . . to one of our Annual Reunions. Maybe.

OPERATION TRACKDOWN



Of the several 8 x 10 glossy photos sent in by Chemin, this one was the best, that is showing 6 troopers and most of the Chemin family. THIS IS the kind of story that could make the 'wire services' IF we can TRACKDOWN at least one of the troopers.

Now you have the story. We hope that some one out there in T-Patchland will recognize, and identify some of these men. We have not been able to track down the unit designation of 36th men . . . so this is the only direct route to unravel this 'mystery' now 40 years old.

Prof. Chemin did not identify all civilian in the array of photos, but we are positive that the old man seated is "grandpa". The white-headed lad is Roger Chemin (about five) and six of the (T-Patchers) with members of the Chemin family, aunts, sisters, uncles etc.

A similiar photo of Chemin and other 36thers will be published in the May 1984 issue of the T-Patcher Newsletter in order to cover all the membership.

This caper is called "OPERATION TRACKDOWN", and if you have any clues - send it to:

Julian H. Philips, LtC (Ret)
11017 Pandora Drive
Houston TX 77013
(713) 673-7746



KURTZ REMEMBERS

"TURKEY DAY" 1943

Buddy Killed By Shrapnel While
Both Were Huddled Together

Dear Editor:

Recently I was thumbing through the March '81 issue of the T-Patcher and noticed the recollection of Henry Von Hollen (Co. C, 141st) of "Turkey Day" 1943.

Page 16 — T-Patcher, MARCH 1981

Henry Von Hollen Has Vivid Memories of Eating Turkey In Rain

HENRY VON HOLLEN Jr., New Yorker,
served with Co. C, 141st recalls TURKEY
DAY 1943 in ITALY.

"It was raining like mad, we were fed a turkey dinner standing in the rain. How well I recall, we stood on a hillside eating our turkey dinner from our messkits and rain water ran off our helmets into our chow. You had to eat fast, otherwise you would wind up with a meat can full of soup. Despite of all, we were happy to get this traditional Thanksgiving American meal." (lifted from Le T-Bone).

This brings back vivid memories of "T" Day that year. The night before, all hell broke loose at the OP of 1st Bn, Hqs Co, 142nd. For some reason Corps artillery (155 Long Toms) laid a barrage on us killing four and wounding eight.

I was radio operator for our Bn. CO., Major William B. Mobley. (Lt. Col. Gaines J. Barron had been taken prisoner during a German counter-attack at Alta-villa). One round fell very close to me and Rocco Vitacco (Brooklyn, N.Y.) where we were huddled together among the rocks for protection. Vitacco was killed instantly, his body shielding me from the shell fragments. I received flesh wounds but the shell explosion was so great I was in a state of shock.

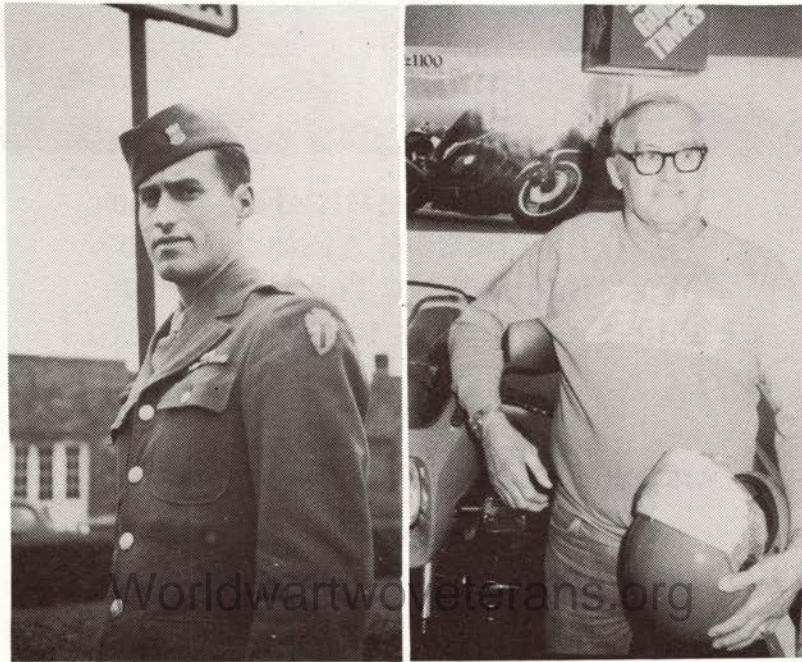
Kurtz Remembers "Turkey Day" 1943

After dawn on "T" Day, I was carried downhill (Camino-Maggiore hill mass) and hauled to an Evac hospital, where I had my turkey the next day.

I later was sent to a hospital in Bizerte, where I received my first Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster for the Purple Heart.

In action at Altavilla on Sept. 12th., I received the Purple Heart Medal and the Silver Star Medal. I returned to my Battalion just in time to see the Air Force bomb the Abbey of Monte Cassino. I am enclosing two photos of myself, Then (1944) and now.

Noel Kurtz
1704 Kenwood Ct.
Decatur, IL 62526



THEN & NOW . . . Here's Noel Kurtz of 1st Bn. Hqs. 142nd, somewhere in France 1944 - and an athletic, young-looking motorcycle racer, standing in front of his fancy Kawasaki GPz1100.



SAN PIETRO



**“A WAR REMEMBERED” Film
Of Action by 36th At San Pietro
Was ‘Banned’ By Top Brass For
Public Showing, as too Horrible . . .**

**By C. N. ‘Red’ Morgan
Amarillo, Editor of The High Plainsman
Newsletter**

I enjoy the privilege of being on Charles “Bugler” Stinson’s mailing list. Bugler edits the **“Company G Review,”** the official newsletter of Co G 142nd Inf (Carl Matney’s Raiders). I counted the number of people that Bugler mentioned in his last newsletter. Something of interest on 93 individuals was included in the body of the letter. This is what I consider a real NEWSletter. Thanks, mainly to Bugler’s untiring efforts, there are 176 T-Patchers on the G Co roster. Not all of these T-Patchers were in G Co, but, as Bugler puts it, “All served, supported, walked with or had a loved one in G Co.”

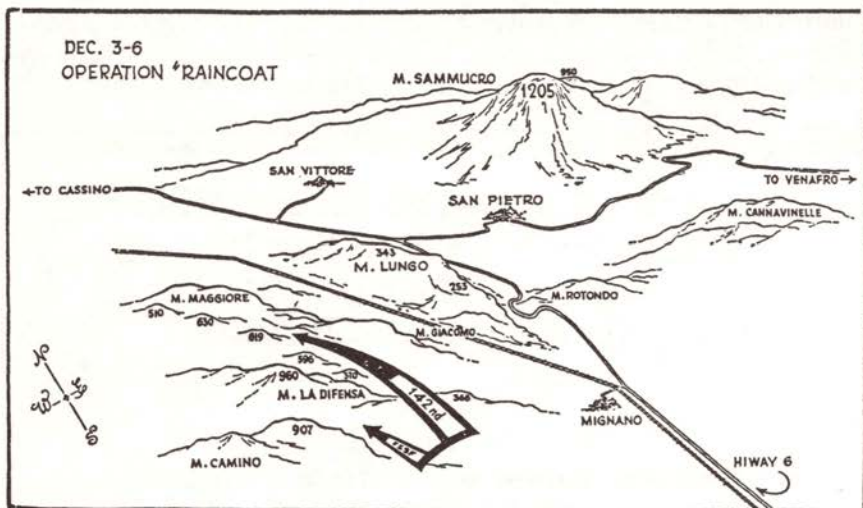
Each unit of the 2nd Bn 142nd Inf is represented. If you served in the 2nd Bn at any time, you have a 99% chance of seeing a familiar

John Huston's Film On San Pietro

name in the "Company G Review."

More from Bugler: "Quite by chance, on Sunday, March 13, I was watching PBS TV and picked up the program, "A War Remembered!", narrated by John Huston, the veteran film producer. Mr. Huston was attached to the 36th Division as a young war reporter and made actual films of the "Battle for San Pietro."

After the film was over, Mr. Huston came on to note that he had made the actual film in December 1943 and brought the film back to Washington soon after the fall of San Pietro for the Army Brass to view. He was shocked for they banned it for public showing because they thought it was too horrible for the general public to see. If I understood Mr. Huston right, this was the first time the film was shown to the public."



Dec. 3 - 6 1943 Attack on Camino hill mass by the 142nd Infantry Regiment and First Special Service Force. Mount Sammacro, in background is approximately 4,000 ft.

Many of the members of the High Plains Chapter participated in "The Battle for San Pietro." This was a 36th Division operation. All units were involved. Many of our artillerymen were taking their turns as forward observers with the Infantry and suffered the same vulnerability and hardships as the Infantry. The firing batteries were little, if any, better off. They were exposed to the same weather, constant counter-battery fire and frequent visits by the Luftwaffe. In spite of this they continued to deliver that very necessary and welcome artillery support.

The viewing of this film will probably bring back many unpleasant

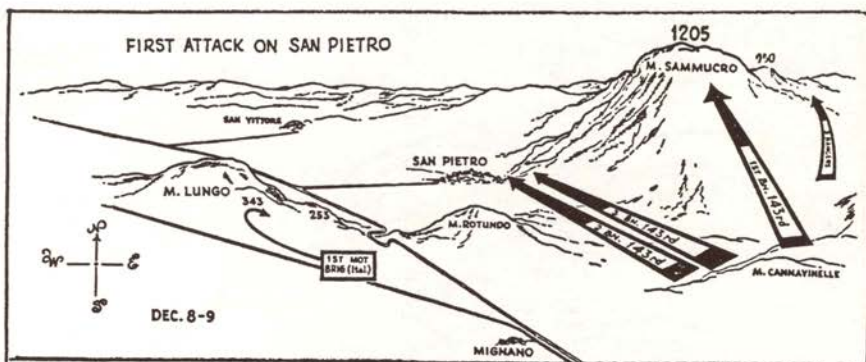
Fighting 36th Historical Quarterly

memories to those of us who participated in this action. I know that some of our members were wounded in this action.

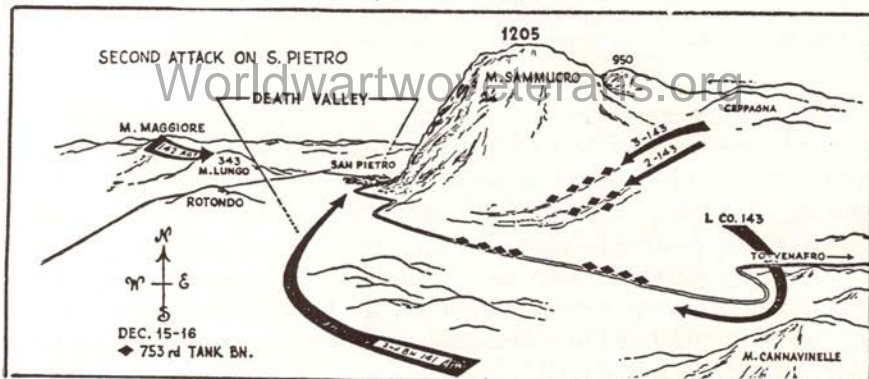
Our first Life Member of The High Plains Chapter, then 1st Lt Charles M. Beacham was severely wounded in a direct attack on San Pietro. Captain Homer Spence (now deceased) was severely wounded on Mt Camino. I am sure there are other members of the High Plains Chapter that were also wounded in this operation.

I am looking forward to seeing this film again. It should prove to be an interesting experience, especially with Joe Gill and others present for comments.

If you get a chance to do so, it would probably be very helpful to read Chapter III of the book, "The Texas Army, A History of the 36th Division in the Italian Campaign," by Robert L. Wagner, prior to viewing the film. This book is now out of print. Col Vincent Lockhart, author of "T-Patch to Victory" has suggested that it might be a good idea for the 36th Division Assn to look into reprinting this book as well as General Walker's book, "From Texas To Rome."



Dec. 8-9 Attack by 143rd Infantry and support group.



Dec. 15-16 36th Division and elements of 753rd Tank Bn. against Mt. Lungo and town of San Pietro.

John Huston's Film On San Pietro

His Documentary Still Considered A Classic Film of World War II

JOHN HUSTON is some sort of star in the galaxy of Hollywood Directors and Writers. He has many great movies to his credit, and in 1941 was commissioned a Major in Army Pictorial Service, made 3 documentaries, "SAN PIETRO" was used in later stories about this bloody battle involving the 143rd Infantry Regiment.

36th's are glad he choose this one, as it is a WWII classic. HUSTON later in 1948 won an Oscar for his direction and screenplay, "The Treasure of the Sierra Madre."



John Huston

"BATTLE OF SAN PIETRO" By John Huston Video Cassette Player Available for \$19.90

BATTLE OF SAN PIETRO - John Huston directed, wrote and narrated this war-time documentary for the U.S. Government. At great personal risk, he and his six-man camera team recorded the savage battle between German and American forces for the tiny, yet strategic, village of San Pietro in the Liri Valley of southern Italy. The War Department wanted an up-lifting propaganda film for the folks back home. What they got was an unflinching document of the slaughter of over 1100 Americans and countless Germans and civilians. The Pentagon tried to suppress its release, but General George Marshall overruled, and we now have available probably the best documentary to emerge from WWII.

(28 Minutes) #A24 (B&W) \$19.90

HOW TO ORDER:

For T-Patchers to order this video cassette:

Name of film: **John Huston's "Battle of San Pietro."**

Specify whether wanted on VHS or Beta.

Mention the 36th Division.

Enclose Check or Money Order made payable to TV Cassette Corporation of America in the amount of \$19.90 (17.95 plus \$1.95 for postage and handling) times number of cassettes desired. Mail to:

**TV Cassette Corporation of America
Canaan St.
Canaan, N.H. 03741**



CONFESSIONS OF A YARD BIRD - 1941

How did I inherit Camp Bowie? Sometimes I think it quite possibly was a combination of that sign of Uncle Sam's pointing and saying "I want you", a little patriotism and the thought of years of being in the social system as a 4-F.

Quite frankly I must admit it was the notice I received saying "Greetings". One didn't ignore that cheery little note.

Camp Bowie, King of the Boondocks, Mother Nature's biggest mistake, a rolling vista of knee deep mud, Pyramidal tents that I am finally convinced were built for chicken farmers. The salary, it must have been a drain on the treasury, \$21.00 per month. Recreation? On \$21.00 per month?

Not much drinking went on but for some reason they quit stocking bay rum at the P.X. and the mess sergeant kept his extracts locked up.

In retrospect I look back on some things that happened. This soldier was in the latrine in a sitting position and a lieutenant walked in. The soldier jumped to attention with his drawers around his ankles and saluted. That must have presented a heck of a spectacle to the officer. I think he didn't know whether to laugh or turn away in disgust.

Another soldier used to play aeroplane at 3:00 o'clock in the morning running around between the tents with all the sound effects. He finally was discharged. Some said he was off his rocker and one guy said he thought he was a genius. We asked him, "Why?". His answer was, "He's out, isn't he?".

Of course the rifle, ammunition, machine guns, grenades and artillery were indispensable but the lowly helmet never attained its' deserved acclaims. It could be used to make coffee, soup, stew, dipping water, hold water for shaving, sitting on, etc. In extreme emergencies it could be worn.

Slit trenches of course were necessary. When filled they resembled graves. The natives thought so, too, and placed flowers on them.

When we shipped overseas we smuggled a German Shepherd dog aboard and he was with us a long time after we landed. Always wondered what happened to that flea-farm.

Terminology used in the army amazed, confounded, and puzzled me. When I went on my first march, the drill instructor kept yelling, "HUP TOOP THREEP FOAP". I whispered to the guy next to me "What the hell is he saying?" The guy said "He's counting!" I

Confessions of a Yard Bird



thought it was his own language and he didn't want us to know what he was saying. I surely didn't! "Ten Hut" was another little gem.

As far as nutrition is concerned, I think S.O.S. will always be remembered. For the uninitiated, S.O.S. resembled a "meadow muffin" and had acquired a distinct taste after passing through the hands of confused cooks.

All recruits remember the rifle range and "Maggies Drawers". Squeeze the trigger, don't close one eye, etc.

If a soldier said "My piece is in excellent condition, I have computed the windage, I am thoroughly familiar with the muzzle velocity" you could figure he couldn't zero in on the posterior of a male member of the bovine family.

The opposite extreme was the soldier who said "Whers mah gun? Wer're goin' to thu farin range". If the technical questions were asked he probably would have said "I don't know what chu are talking about, I'll just far once then I'll know what to do."

"Our boys are coming home, Glory, Glory". Patriotism and appreciation were rampant. What can we do for our boys? Well the first thing they did when we wanted to rent a house or apartment was to charge us \$50.00 or \$100.00 plus the rent for the privilege of having a place to stay. Everything was still rationed but air. I think that if we had stayed away for another year they would have rationed that.

I just put something down when I thought of it so there is no real continuity, I just wanted to share some of my memories with you'all.

Henry B. Anthony,
7213 Hadley Drive, Dallas TX 75217
Service Company, 142nd Infantry



NEW BOOKS

MONTE CASSINO

BY
DAVID HAPGOOD
AND
DAVID RICHARDSON


CONGDON & WEED, INC.
NEW YORK

Founded by St. Benedict fourteen centuries before the tragic year, the Abbey of Monte Cassino was Europe's most illustrious monastery. During the Dark Ages it had preserved much of the West's written archive. Itself a work of art, the abbey housed countless treasures.

On February 15, 1944, American bombers obliterated Monte Cassino. It was the cruelest of ironies that the Allies should destroy an emblem of the civilization they were fighting to save.

What was done that day has been disputed ever since. The bombing has been variously called a blunder, a military necessity, even a war crime. But only now is it possible to tell the full story.

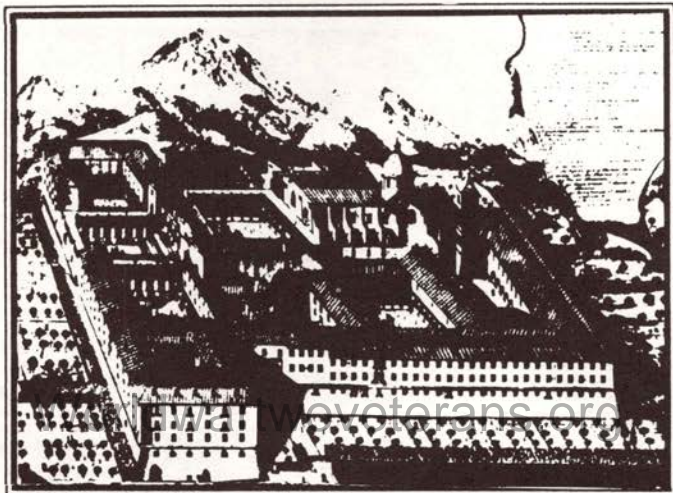
In the winter of 1943, stalled in the freezing mud of the valley below Monte Cassino, far short of Rome, their objective, the Allied troops became obsessed with the abbey. Was it a German fortress? Were scouts in its towers, calling in Allied positions to German artillery? Or had the Germans honored their pledge to leave the abbey alone?

Mark Clark, argued passionately that the bombing was needless, but in the end gave the order to bomb. The British general, Harold Alexander, feared that not bombing might cost him his job. The

AT LAST - The full story behind one of World War II's Most Disputed Events - The Day American Bombers Destroyed The Great Abbey . . . so says the sub-head on the jacket of this book, by David Hapgood & David Richardson.

The above text is taken from the dust jacket, which is written by the publishers to explain the text and why you should buy the book. Read on!!!!

MONTE CASSINO



ABOVE: The Abbey of Monte Cassino, in a seventeenth-century engraving.

New Zealander, Bernard Freyberg, demanded the abbey's destruction as the price of his troops' fighting on.

While they argued, others awaited their fateful decision: the German general, Frido von Senger, himself a lay Benedictine, fighting with brilliance in a cause he despised; and the monks in the monastery, isolated on a mountain surrounded by combat, pleading for their ancient home with a pope, Pius XII, who gave only the most perfunctory help.

Intertwined with the story of the soldiers and the monks is the first full account of a strange wartime episode: the soldiers of the Hermann Goering Division who saved priceless artworks by moving them from the abbey to the Vatican—but diverted fifteen cases of masterpieces for a birthday present to Goering.

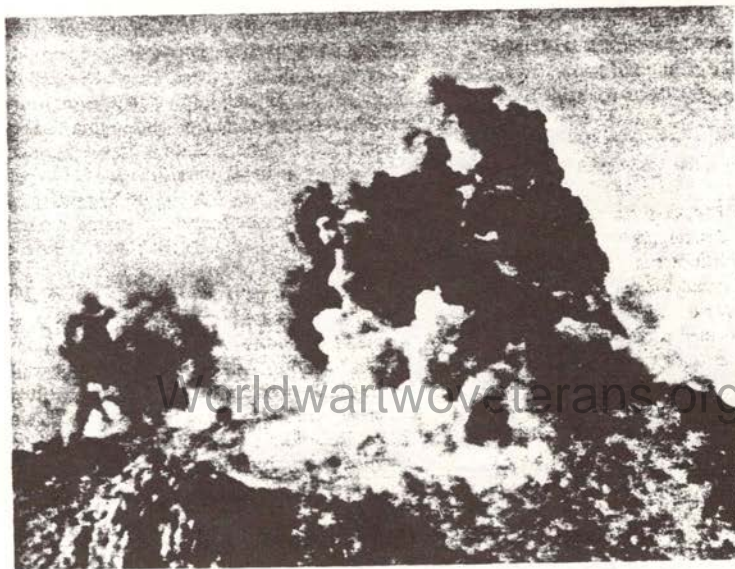
Monte Cassino is based on recently available information: a British government report kept secret for thirty years (an other military documents now declassified); the monks' wartime diaries; interviews with participants, including the last surviving officer at German headquarters.

Here, on the fortieth anniversary of the tragic bombing, is the surprising truth behind one of the most difficult ethical decisions ever occasioned by war.

About The Author—

DAVID HAPGOOD was the principal author of *The Murder of Napoleon* ("History at its most electrifying."—*Newsweek*. "First-rate." —*The New Yorker*) and other books. He has been the editor of *Focus* and a writer and editor for *The New York Times*. DAVID RICHARDSON has been fascinated by the Monte Cassino story since boyhood, when an uncle, chief of staff of the U.S. Air Force in Italy, told him of the bombing. He has spent the last ten years researching the real story.

MONTE CASSINO - BOOK REVIEW



By dropping over 550 tons of high explosive from more than 200 Allied bombers (bottom), the Benedictine abbey on top of Monte Cassino was destroyed (top). US Army and the Imperial War Museum.



A Benedictine goes home.

Book Review

MONTE CASSINO

It has now been forty years since we saw this great monastery destroyed by the American Air Force.

Many stories have been told by the writers who had personal axes to grind or some person or position to protect or perhaps exploit.

Monte Cassino is the first published true story of the Abbey. The battle surrounding it by the Germans the Americans, the Italians, the French, the English, the New Zealand and the Indian troops, and, lastly the Polish Corps is only a backdrop for presenting the Abbey from its beginning to its destruction.

The authors make no attempt to place responsibility for tactical errors or mistakes of commanders. They tell the story in brief form and leave it to the reader to form an opinion.

The mountain and the Abbey on its summit were generally considered observation points. This is the first information given that the main observation post was near the head of the Rapido River on the slope of Monte Cifalco. This explains why, in spite of smokescreens and other attempts to hide our activities, the Germans were always able to pinpoint any military object within reach of their artillery.

This observation post was never compromised.

This book, I consider, is, **at last, the full, true story of the Monte Cassino.** Whether one was involved in the events of 1944, the book is well worth reading by all students of history.

Oran Stovall (111th Engrs)
Bowie Texas 76230

Monte Cassino
by David Haggood and
David Richardson

Published by
Congdon and Reed
\$17.95 244 pages with
maps and pictures.

MONTE CASSINO - BOOK REVIEW



ABOVE: This is how the Monte Cassino looks today, all completely restored to its original beauty . . . high on a mountain side, a real treasure from the past.

WE have taken the liberty to print the Bibliography of the Monte Cassino book, in order that you can get an idea of the vast source of material that has been written about the Abbey . . . a story that will capture the excitement of historians for the next 100 years.

By the year 2000, we feel sure it will still be the one story, of which no one has ever been able to decide . . . was it . . . **A MILITARY NECESSITY - OR A WAR BLUNDER?????**

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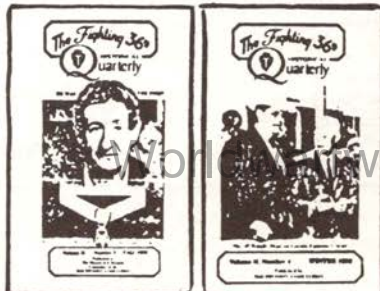


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The cost of this venture, like everything else has started climbing again, so the tab goes up to - \$15 per year. In fact the old price of four issues for \$12 per volume, didn't quite cover it, and then we have postage and envelopes, wrapping etc., it's still a break-even deal, even if we sell 'em all.

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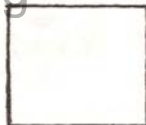
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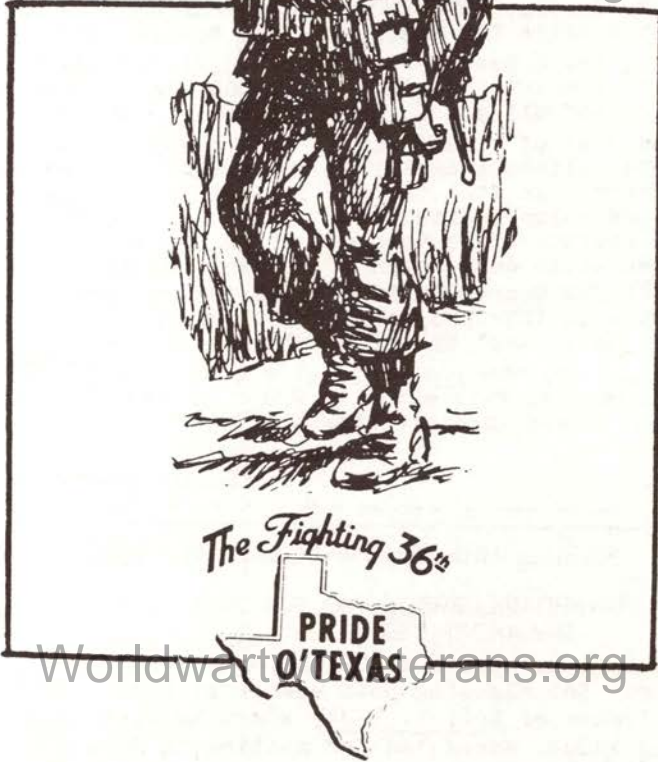
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