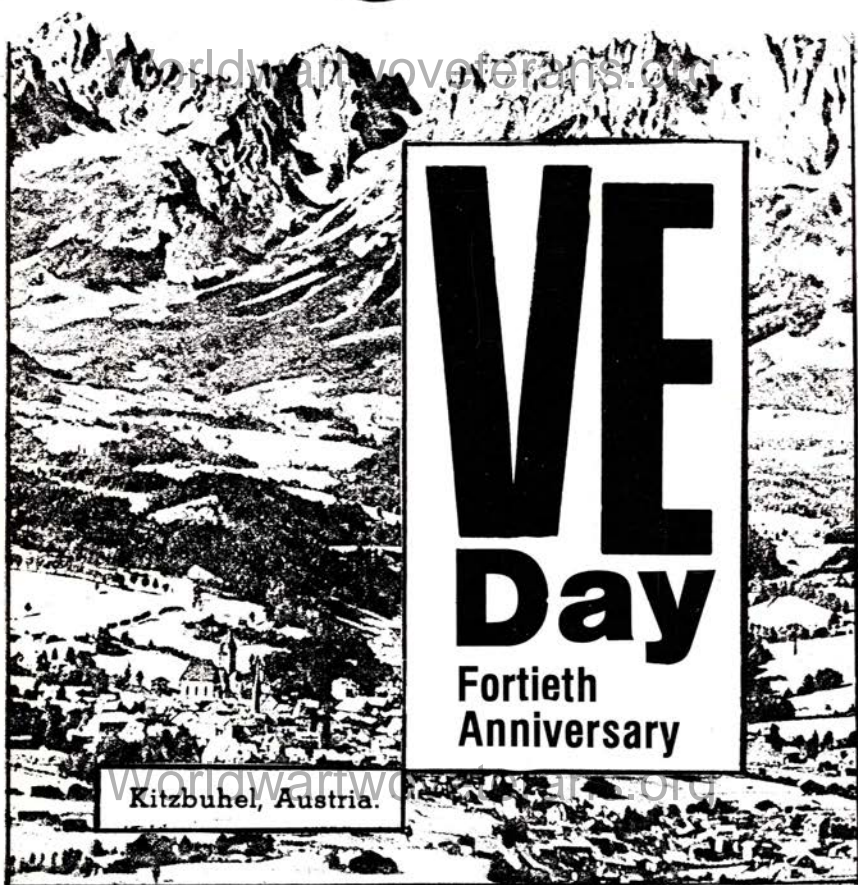


The Fighting 36th
 HISTORICAL
Quarterly



Vol. V No. 1 - Spring 1985

Published by
The Historical & Records
Committee of the
36th DIVISION ASSOCIATION

Worldwartwoveterans.org

Worldwartwoveterans.org

The Fighting 36th



HISTORICAL QUARTERLY

Worldwartwoveterans.org



Worldwartwoveterans.org

This is "T-Patchland" - Home of the Brave!
Our almost 4,000 members, live in every one
of the above 48 - Hawaii and Alaska.

Vol. V No. 1

Spring 1985





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

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.

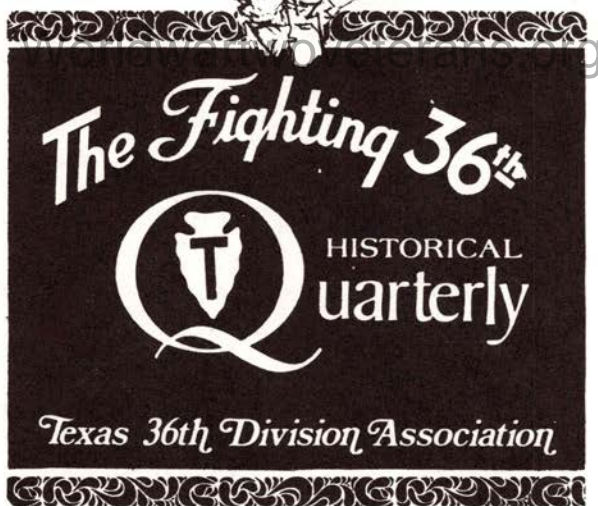
Worldwartwoveterans.org

The Fighting 36th



Vol. V No. 1 -

Spring 1985



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.

Worldwartwoveterans.org





Editorial Advisory Board

- Vincent M. Lockhart, Div. Historian, El Paso TX
- C. N. Red Morgan, 142nd Amarillo TX
- Charles Stimson, G/142nd Plainview TX
- Woodrow Baxter, B/142nd Coleman TX
- Dewey Mann, B/142nd Nitro W VA
- Del Kendall, A/T 143rd Muskegon MI
- Oran C. Stovall, 111th Engrs Bowie TX
- Shelby Krouse, B/142nd Independence MO
- Roy D. Goad, D/143rd Temple TX
- Charles Beacham, 141st San Antonio TX
- George Kerrigan, A/142nd Chicago IL
- C. A. (Chum) Williamson 143rd, San Antonio, TX

Editor/Art Director . . . William E. Jary, Jr.

P.O. Box 1816, Fort Worth, TX 76101

(817) 738-1467

(correspondence regarding manuscripts, comments pro or con should be sent to the editor)



SUBSCRIPTIONS:

Renewals, or new subscribers —

Mail To

LEONARD WILDERSON, P.O. BOX 2049,
MALAKOFF, TEXAS 75148

CONTENTS

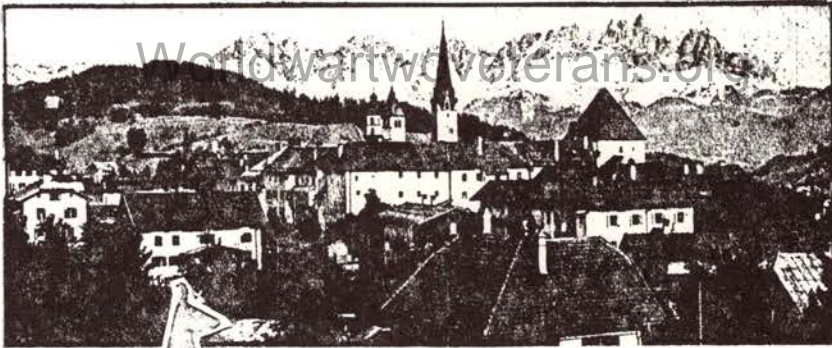


Vol. V No. 1 - Spring 1985

1. COVER STORY - V-E DAY - 40th Anniversary;
Group Visits Kitzbuhel on May 8th 1985..... 6
2. One More River, by Donald D. Barnett,
111th Combat Engineers..... 18
3. George Nettleton - Killed or Wounded
Fifty Nazis, submitted by
daughter, Patsy Nettleton Stokes..... 22
4. The Man With The Rifle (36th Scrapbook)..... 27
5. The Day I Killed "Buck" West,
by Julian (Duney) Philips..... 28
6. Escape From Altavilla, Submitted by
Dr. Larry Sparks, son of Carroll Sparks..... 40
7. "Blue Eyes Brown", or The Champagne
Campaign, by Sam F. Kibbey..... 46
8. The Lemberg/Bitche Sector, by Robert
J. Martin, 3rd Platoon, Co. B 142nd..... 56
9. Conway Foster Discovers The French
Quarter (Training Trips Can Be Fun)..... 62
10. The Saga of the ONE FORTY THIRD,
by William Kiessel, Co D 143rd Inf..... 67
11. The Waskow Legend Part II -
More stories from the troops..... 70
12. Nazi Propaganda For The German People,
36th Scrapbook of Captured Material..... 76

COVER STORY

may 8 '45 VE day



Kitz bühel Tirol-Vorarlberg

THIS WAS THE DAY . . .

Close your eyes and think . . . fireworks on the Fourth of July, jackpot at Vegas, winning the Kentucky Derby . . . we win! May 8, 1945 is the DAY we had waited for (since 9-9-43) when we were baptised-in-fire at Salerno, and NOW, 555 days later we have VICTORY IN EUROPE!

This great day — May 8, 1945 was not the end of WWII, but it was the END of the war for all the valient T-Patchers who fought in Italy (and IKE promised us we would not be sent to the Pacific).

Someday, maybe in year 2045 — the State of TEXAS may declare a legal holiday for MAY 8th, honoring all the Texans who fought in the ETO. Bully!

Kitzbühel

800 m sur le niveau de la mer

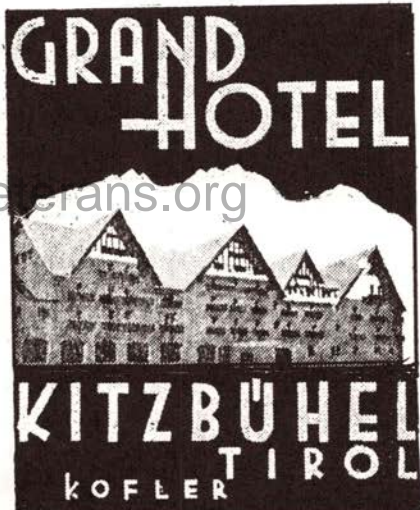


IRONIC it was, that the Division that was called the 'hard-luck' division, would end up at war's end — at most fabled hotel in all of Europe, with a bag-full of captive Germans, unlike anyone else in the ETO. The Fighting 36th got 'em all. (Almost) . . . but we had in hand — the 'BIGGEST' Nazi of them all (Hilter's gone) — we're talking about HERMANN GOERING (O' Fatty).

THIS EVENT of the capture of Goering was one of LIFE Magazine's biggest stories . . . and here's a quote: "He is sullen and defiant, then pensive and remote, then smug and slightly simpering, and finally depressed but not rependant."

Think about it. How losy can a human being be?

Note: An in-depth story about his nefarious character will be featured in a future issue of the 36th Quarterly.





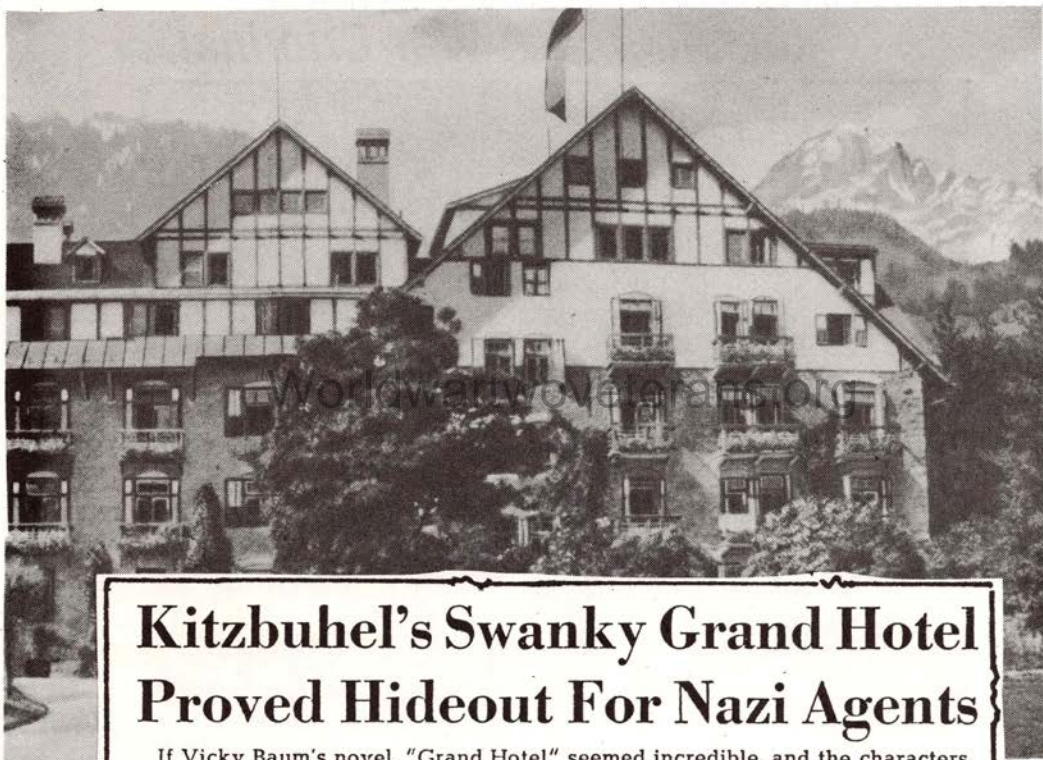
GRAND HOTEL • KITZBÜHEL

As shown here on this two-page spread is a pre-war photo of the Grand Hotel as depicted in a 1939 travel brochure (that just happened to be among a collection of such that we latched onto in Strassburg).

The story on next page was published in (overseas) T-PATCH, May 20, 1945) was written by ace feature editor, Pfc John Hyman (one of the best we ever encountered).

Everybody likes "intrigue" and stories about spies, double-agents etc. Your editor is no exception, and did some quick research. The great super MGM movie "GRAND HOTEL" featured JOHN BARRYMORE, GRETA GARBO, with Lionel Barrymore, Jean Hersholt and a new one, named Joan Crawford — was released in 1932

Maybe someday we can see a rerun on the late-late TV show or HBO. As a caution to our readers — we nope not to give the impression that "all" the division was at the GRAND HOTEL on May 8, 1945. It's a biggie, but most of the division was scattered all over the immediate area on that date.



Kitzbuhel's Swanky Grand Hotel Proved Hideout For Nazi Agents

If Vicky Baum's novel, "Grand Hotel" seemed incredible, and the characters, bizarre, then the Grand Hotel in Kitzbuhel, which served as Division CP last week, should prove even more fantastic.

When the Division took over the spacious Tyrolean lodge, no less than 47 members of the Serb quisling government were living in the beautiful interior. The most infamous of the group were the Nedic brothers, renowned as two of the cruelest Nazi agents in the Balkans.

As a British correspondent, an expert on Balkan political problems, glanced over the list of collaborators nabbed in the hotel, he let out a low whistle and said, "My, but how Marshal Tito would like to get his hands on these chaps. Tito sure owes the 36th a great big thanks for this little group."

The Archbishop of the Roumanian Church, a man of the cross who associated with the men of the swastika, was there. To counterbalance another high-ranking ecclesiastic, the Grand Patriarch of the Greek Orthodox Church, was interned there after four years of imprisonment. He had previously been sent to a concentration camp because he refused to yield to the Nazi godless philosophy.

A pre-war hotel register displayed autographs of such celebrities as: The Prince of Wales, Mrs. Sara Delano Roosevelt, Max Schmeling, Edda Mussolini, Lord Rothemere, and the Morgenthau.

In a little movie colony near the Grand Hotel were living such notables as: Maria Cebotari, famous European opera star, who made one picture in the States. "Dream Butterfly"; her husband, Gustav Diessl, famous Austrian film actor and a close friend of Peter Lorre and Fritz Lang; Mrs. Luis Trenka, wife of the famous Italian actor, and author of the novel, "Brothers in the Snow," published in the United States in 1933. Her friends included Ernst Lubitsch, Carl Laemmle.

“Had No Idea He Would Be Considered A War-Criminal”



HERMANN GOERING, NO. 2 NAZI, is interrogated by Major General John E. Dahlquist (back to camera) and Brigadier General Robert I. Stack (right), who effected the capture of the field marshal and brought him to the Grand Hotel in Kitzbuhel, Austria. — Signal Corps Photo SC 231807 taken 9 May 1945.

Goering seemed to have no idea that he would be considered a “war criminal.” When I dismissed him after this talk and told him to be ready to leave in half an hour, he said to my Sergeant-Interpreter, “Ask General Stack if I should wear a pistol or my ceremonial dagger when I appear before General Eisenhower.” I knew he would never see the Allied Commander so I said, “Das ist mir ganz wurst.” Literally this means, “that’s goose liver bologna to me” but it is German slang for “I don’t give a damn.” As this was the first Goering knew I spoke German, he was a bit surprised and startled.

When we started back for the American lines, I took only Goering, General von Epp, Colonel Fegelein and the Adjutant, leaving the rest of the party and the Florian Geyer Division in charge of the half platoon of the Rcn. Tr. I took Fegelein and the Adjutant because they might make trouble for the lieutenant. I had no difficulty being recognized at the American lines but the S.S. Adjutant

went nuts and attempted to escape. One of the drivers killed him.

36th Division Headquarters had moved forward and was located in the Grand Hotel in Kitzbuhel where I turned Goering over to the Division Commander, General Dahlquist. After another interrogation and lunch, Goering was sent by Cub plane to Headquarters Seventh Army, then in Augsburg. We had doubts he would fit in the miniature plane but we stuffed him in.

Shortly after this incident, some United States columnists ran stories that we had shaken hands with Goering and fed him a chicken dinner. Neither General Dahlquist nor I shook hands with Goering. We fed him a chicken dinner because that was all we had, chicken and rice out of a tin can. The people making the criticism never saw any Germans with weapons, never killed any Germans, never took any German prisoners. We did.

Robert C. Stack

T-Patchers Celebrate Fortieth Anniversary of V.E. Day at Kitzbuhel, Austria May 8, 1945

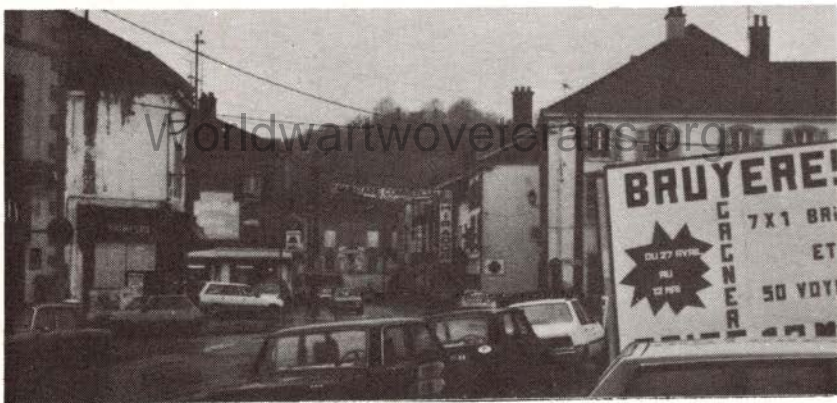
CARL STROM operates a Travel Agency in Grand Rapids, Michigan sends this report of a tour he conducted for 33 T-Patchers for the 40th Anniversary of V-E Day — and to be at the GRAND HOTEL at Kitzbuhel on that same day.

Strom served with Co B 141st Infantry is shown here with a certificate he received for participating in the Battle of Cassino.



In late April, 22 T-Patchers, wives and friends returned to France, Germany and Austria to revisit, after 40 years, the scene of the fighting in the last months of the war.

After visiting Brussels and Ghent, in Belgium and spending two days soaking up Paris's sights, they traveled on to Epinal where they stopped to pay their respects to fallen comrades at the beautiful American Military Cemetery. Traveling by way of Bains le Bains, the old Division Rest Camp, they stopped in Remiremont where some of the "locals" recognized and remembered the T-Patch on their caps. Bruyeres was the next special stop — here Herm Zerger located E Co., 141st's 1944 C.P.



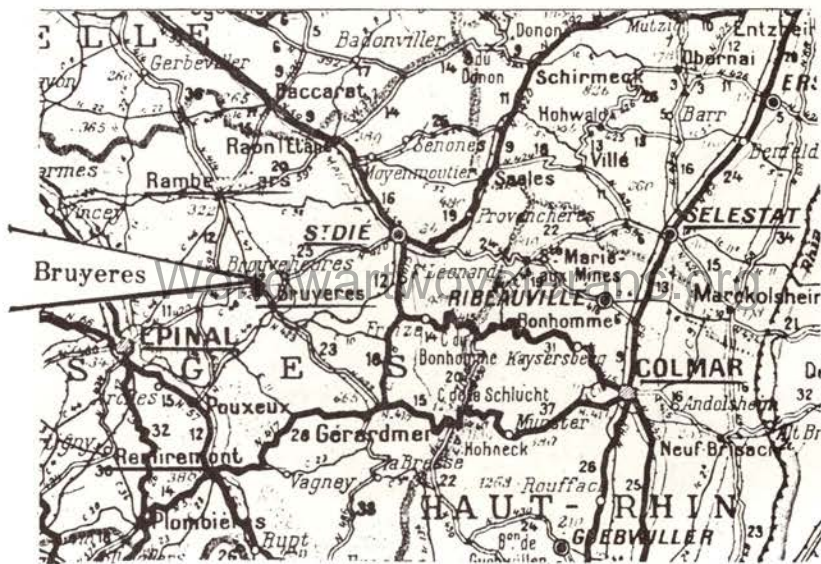
MAIN STREET — Bruyeres, France — now named "Rue De 442nd Infantry" in honor of the Nisei Japanese-American who rescued the 36th's Lost Battalion on Oct. 27, 1944 (one of the great stories of WWII).

Fighting 36th Historical Quarterly

The "piece de la resistance" came, however, when our super motor coach climbed a dirt logging road to the top of the hill above La Houssiere to visit the monument erected to the "heroic 36th Division" by the French people at the site of the Lost Battalion. Five of the participants on the tour were survivors of that battle high in the Vosge Mountain forest.



MONUMENT to the Soldiers of the 36th Division's Lost Battalion — on a mountain above La Houssiere at the site of the 141st 1st Battalion's valiant stand. From left: HERMAN ZERGER, Co I 141st; GERALD PATTON, Medical Detachment 141st; JACK WILSON (kneeling) of Co D 141st, EDWARD DRESSEL, of Hqs. Co. 141st and ART RODGERS of Co D 141st.



V-E DAY — 40th Anniversary

Kaysenberg, Hill 393, Riquewihr, Oberdorf, Worth and Wissemboug were all visited on our way to Schwiegen, German, where the old arch still stands as a guard to the entrance into Germany, but which seemed to beckon the 36th 40 years previous.

After visiting Bitche and remembering some of the bitter fighting there, we stopped in Haguenau where scenes of the fierce house to house combat and the eventual crossing of the Moder Canal were found and amply photographed.



HAGUENAU France — here's the Moder Canal and a scene of fierce battle in late January 1945 when the 36th crossed over . . . top photo.

Above: HAGUENAU — a Memorial to the American Forces which crossed the Moder Canal to FREE HAGUENAU from the occupation by the Nazis. (The legend is in French so we're sorry we can't translate it.)

Fighting 36th Historical Quarterly



BISCHWILLER — brought back a lot of memories of the veterans — (who were there) when action took place in last week of January 1945 — above we have, from left: EDWARD DRESSEL, Lansing, MI, Hqs. Co 141st; Tony SPERACINO, Warren, OH of Co D 143rd; JOHN McFALL of Canton, MI, Co E 141st, and DEL KNECHT, Washington, IL of Co A 141st Infantry. (Photos by Tour Guide, Carl Strom.)

Germany's Black Forest, Switzerland's Rhine Falls and Lucerne, Lichtstein all were visited before our arrival in Kitzbuhel where they would spend time at the site of the final attack of the 141st exactly 40 years to the day earlier. In its' diminished glory, the old Grand Hotel still stands as a reminder of the days of the occupation when it served as the 36th Division Headquarters.

Berchtesgaden, with Hitler's Eagles Nest high above, Bad Tolz, Lenggries, Munich all preceded a visit to the infamous concentration camp at Dachau.

The beautiful cathedral in "rebuilt" Ulm was followed by a stop in Harlingen and a view of German General Rommels' home which had served as Headquarters of the the 1st Battalion, 141, during the occupation. The trip concluded with visits to Heidelberg, and Cologne and a Rhine River Cruise before returning to Brussels and the flight back to the good old U.S.A. 22 T-Patchers, wives and friends now have additional memories, all good ones this time, to add to their previous war time experiences.

NEW HAVEN REGISTER, TUESDAY, MAY 7, 1985



Memories: War's end



Michael Comis, 60, of Hamden had been overseas 25 months.

"We were in a farmhouse and so damned happy" when the fighting ended, he recalled, "but we were also thinking about all of our buddies . . . who had paid the supreme sacrifice."

He was in the 36th Division, also known as the Texas National Guard, which suffered a high casualty rate during 400 days of combat in Italy, southern France and Germany.

Comis was wounded three times. He got his first taste of battle in "Purple Heart Valley" near San Pietro. "I was really scared," he admitted.

The crossing of the Rapido River in Italy was the toughest battle of the campaign, he said, with 800 men in his battalion killed or wounded in the fierce fighting.

A number of important Germans were captured by his division toward the end of the war. The prize catch was *Reichmarshal* Hermann Goering, who was incensed that he was forced to capitulate to a two-star American general.

"He wanted Eisenhower," explained Comis.

V-E DAY — The Day the Shooting Stopped — as recorded above in the clip sent in by Michael Comis, is one of hundreds that appeared in newspapers all over USA on or before May 8th. We regret we cannot print all, and many did not send theirs in. MICHAEL COMIS, of Co F 143 lives at: 354 ICircular Ave., Hamden Conn. 06514 — says he's been a member of the Association since 1973. He has our thanks for sending in this one. Bully!

Here's a Recap of 36th Division's In-and-Out-of-Combat For 555 Days

FIRST AMERICAN TROOPS TO INVADE HITLER'S EUROPA . . . The Fighting 36th

1943

- 9 September 1943 — At 0330 36th Division men stormed ashore on the Paestum beaches near Salerno, Italy.
- 13-14 September 1943 — High tide at Altavilla, Germans threatened encirclement of invading troops around critical beachhead hill town after launching powerful attack on the left flank of Corps. Hasty defense line was held and the beachhead won.
- 20 September 1943 — Division withdrawn for rest; Salerno mission accomplished.
- 15 November 1943 — the 36th reentered line near Mignano. Heavy seasonal rain began.
- 3 December 1943 — In opening attack of winter offensive 142nd Infantry smashed over Mt. Maggiore.
- 7-8 December 1943 — The 143rd Infantry crept up and seized towering Mt. Samucro, one of the highest peaks to be taken by assault in the war.
- 15-16 December 1943 — In a coordinated attack the 36th pushed into San Pietro. Night assault by 142nd won Mt. Lungo, forcing the Germans to withdraw from "the key to the Liri Valley."
- 25 December 1943 — First Christmas in foxholes.

1944

- 20-21 January 1944 — Two terror-packed, bloody attempts to cross the treacherous Rapido River decimated the 141st and 143rd Infantry Regiments.
- 26 January - 3 February 1944 — 142nd Infantry, switched north to French sector, battled uphill to Terelle and Mt. Castellone.
- 12 February 1944 — Enemy attempts to retake Mt. Castellone after three hour artillery barrage. Germans driven off.
- 15 February 1944 — Bombing of Monte Cassino Abbey witnessed.
- 26 February 1944 — Exhausted 36th is relieved from Cassino sector for rest and refitting.
- 11-2 May 1944 — Opening of all-out Allied offensive. Division artillery supported first attack.
- 18-21 May 1944 — Division shipped to Anzio beachhead for breakout attack.
- 30-31 May 1944 — Brilliant night infiltration of entire 142nd Infantry deep behind the German lines at Velletri. Both 141st and 143rd followed up on eight flank, clearing Velletri and breaking the last German line before Rome.
- 4-5 June 1944 — Rome entered gloriously. 36th first to pass through entire city.
- 26 June 1944 — Dash northward nearly 200 miles above Rome is ended as 36th is called back to prepare for a mission to Southern France.

V-E DAY — 40th Anniversary

- 15 August 1944 — D-Day on the Riviera. Division lands near San Raphael and quickly secures large beachhead.
- 22 August 1944 — Seven days after the invasion, the 143rd Infantry sweeps into Grenoble, 200 miles above the beaches.
- 24-30 August 1944 — Battle of Montelimar. Division raced northward to retreating German Nineteenth Army in the Rhone Valley. Littered wreckage of battlefield testified to intensity of collision.
- 2 September 1944 — Lyons liberated.
- 20-23 September — 1944 Moselle River crossed by 141st and 143 Infantries. Remiremont fell to 142nd Infantry.
- 30 September 1944 — Exhausting fighting around Tendon is concluded.
- 19 October 1944 — Bruyeres cleared by 143rd and 442nd (Japanese American) Infantry Regiments. Little progress in the deadly Vosges wilderness.
- 24-30 October 1944 — First Battalion, 141st Infantry, cut off for seven days until contact is reestablished by Nisei fighters of the 442nd.
- 20 November - 3 December 1944 — The 36th drives over the Vosges Mountains through the St. Marie Pass. The 143 secured bridgehead at Muerthe River; 142nd passed through captured St. Marie and pushed to Selestat in the Rhine Valley. The 141st held a lengthy right flank.
- 4-18 December 1944 — Extremely heavy fighting in Seletat-Ribeauville-Riquewihir sector. Germans counterattacked fiercely.
- 25 December 1944 — Christmas spent in Strasbourg area. On this day Division was relieved from the line and 133 consecutive days of contact with the enemy, a World War II record.

1945

- 1 January 1945 — Enemy, in strength, attacked Seventh Army position near Bitche. The 141st was called to meet the threat at Montbronn. Two days later remainder of Division rushed to the scene. Montbronn sector quieted.
- 19-30 January 1945 — The 36th was switched to block the Germans threatening to break out of the Gamsheim pocket above Strasbourg. The enemy made one strong bid and was unsuccessful. Initiative passed to our side.
- 3 January - 11 February 1945 — Division mounted full scale attack once more, ran into bitter street fighting at Oberhoffen, Rohrwiller, Herrlisheim and Drusenheim.
- 15 March 1945 — Opening of Moder River attack and general Seventh Army offensive to pinch out 100,000 Germans in the Saar-Palatinate west of the Rhine. The 143rd took Bitschoffen, the 142nd, Mertzwiller and the 141st, Haguenu.
- 19-22 March 1945 — Through the Siegfried Line — the Germans laid down heavy concentrations of "screaming meemie" fire. Enemy was driven from his strong network of pillboxes and outflanked over the wooded hills.
- 2 April — Beginning of rear area occupation duty near Kaiserslautern.

VE DAY — MAY 8, 1945

- 30 April - 8 May — Into action again, the 36th drove to final victory in the Austrian Alps, capturing Goering, Von Rundstedt and a number of other high-ranking Nazis.

ONE MORE RIVER

by
Sgt. Donald D. Barnett,
111th Combat Engineers



Over the years, as we have had opportunity to get together and reminisce over experiences in the war, most of the stories have probably been told over-and-over. It's a shame that a stenographer was not always around to write them down though.

However, most of us probably had experiences that were somewhat unique which may never have been told at these gatherings. Some things that have only involved a few of us have never been mentioned. These stories need to be told.

I have been attending the 36th Division reunions for about twenty five years and have relived many of the days of the war with the men who were in my company as well as with others. Many of those reading this have had some of the same experiences, and when we get together, we talk about these common experiences. We talk about what sticks in our minds as most outstanding.

We talk about Salerno and how we thought it just might be easy after the announcement of Italy's unconditional surrender, the day before we went ashore. But, it was quite different from what we had hoped! It was as if all hell had been turned loose with all its fire and brimstone.

Then there was Alta Villa with its fierce fighting and the changing hands several times before it was secured. After several days, when our troops had finally secured it, we went in to clear duds, personnel mines, and so forth, and the sight and smell of death was really something else!

ONE MORE RIVER

Then there was the hand-fighting at San Pietro. This involved a long siege of fighting and destruction that left a real impression in the minds of all who saw that.

Who Could Forget Rapido Fiasco

Who could ever forget the Rapido River and then the bombing of Monte Cassino? It was really a sight to have been standing on a hillside adjacent to the Monte Cassino while it was being bombed. My squad had just come down from working on mule trails when the bombing started.

Then, of course, there was the landing at Anzio, the break-out there, and the capture of Velletri which opened the gate to Rome. None of those who were there will ever forget Rome and the great crowds of people yelling and cheering us when we went through town.

We reminisce about the invasion of southern France where we met small resistance and traveled many miles each day until the resistance stiffened as we went farther along.

Reunion With John Lindsey, A Great Experience...

One experience that happened about this time is one that I don't recall discussing as it involved only my squad, and I hadn't seen any of the men that were with me on that occasion until April 24, 1985 when John Lindsay and I got together.

John was my corporal. I was squad leader. We were near Remirement, France which is on the southern side of the Moselle River. A bridgehead had to be established on the Moselle which is a swift deep river that reminded us of the Rapido except that it was not as narrow. On Sept. 20, 1944, my platoon sergeant, Art Bauch, came and said, "Don, your squad has been chosen to go with the 141st Infantry. You'll have to take several hundred feet of rope so you can string it across the river so the Infantry can hold on to it to cross over."

We got the rope and went to where the Infantry was. They had a Frenchman from the area who was going to lead the way to the crossing. We walked several hours that night through a forest that was so dark you could hardly see the man in front of you. The rope was so heavy that each of several of us took coils of it, as much as we could carry, and the man behind picked up the next coils on the roll, and so forth. There were probably about ten of us in the squad that night. Along the way, John asked me, "Barnett, what are we going to do when we get there?"

ONE MORE RIVER



THEN AND NOW . . . John Lindsay, 111th Engineers, lives at 402 W. Jefferson St., Albany, MO 64402 — was one of the best soldiers that Donald Barnett ever knew.

I told him, "I don't know, whatever we have to do, I guess." We were both probably thinking about the Rapido River crossing. As we approached the river, it was getting close to daybreak. Dark forests lined the bank of both sides, and we had no idea what resistance we would find on the opposite bank. but, we had to hurry and get the rope across. John volunteered to go across and scout out where to tie the ropes. He swam across and then returned to get the rope.

The water was very swift and cold. It was about shoulder deep and the bottom was strewn with slippery rocks. He tied the rope around his waist and swam back across, secured the rope to a tree up in the woods, and came back. An infantry officer wanted another rope across, so I started to take it. John said, "Barnett, I'm already wet and cold and there's no use in you getting wet too." So I let him.

Corporal John Lindsay was a very brave young man to cross that river even once, much less three times, not knowing when the enemy might open up on him. He was awarded the Bronze Star for it, but I think he deserved at least the Silver Star!

As the 141st Infantry started crossing the Moselle, I could see why they needed the ropes, as they were loaded down with all sorts of heavy equipment and munitions. They would have drowned in that swift current without something to hold on to.

I don't know how long it was until they made contact with the enemy, but the crossing must have been a complete surprise, because it was some time before we heard any gun shots. Of course, the engineers followed right up to get a bridge built so that trucks and heavy equipment could follow on across.

ONE MORE RIVER

I am proud to have had a part in this job. The 2nd Squad of the 1st Platoon of A Company, 111th Engineers on Sept. 21, 1944 helped the 141st Infantry across the Moselle River. This stands out in my mind and is something most of us have never talked about.

Presidential Citation

After that, the 111th Engineers under Colonel Oran Stoval built several miles of road through mud and rain while under heavy fire by German artillery and snipers. This road was used, among other things, to rescue the 1st Battalion of the 141st Infantry who had been cut off. For that, the 111th Engineers were awarded the Presidential Citation.

A short time later, December 14, 1944, I was captured near Colmar, France and spent the rest of the war in a German prisoner of war camp near Krems, Austria. John was not with us that day. Our entire platoon was killed or captured that morning. John said that when he returned to the front from a rest area and found out that the entire outfit was gone, it was the worst experience of his life.

When I saw John this past April, 1985, after over forty years, it was the first time since I was captured. John told my wife that he had insisted on taking that second rope across that night because he was, "... just taking care of the 'old man'!" He meant me, of course, as I am eight years older than he. It was a great reunion, even if there were only the two of us.

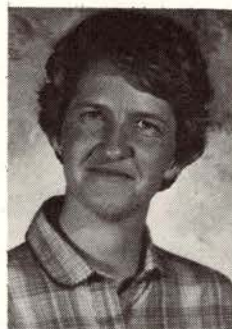
John Lindsay was one of the best soldiers that I ever knew. he never complained about anything. He just always did his job with a smile.

DONALD D. BARNETT, 608 N. Pierce St., Burnet, TX 78611 is a loyal T-Patcher. He's proud to have served as one of Col. Stoval's Engineers, makes most all 36th reunions... and the photo at right of Don and wife was taken at Dallas 1974 Reunion (Dallas Hilton) for the Memory Book. He had a story in Vol. IV, No. 1, 1984 entitled — "The Long Way Home." Read it! It covers time at Stalag 17-B.



"Daughters of the 36th" . . .

**Patsy Nettleton Stokes
sends story of her late father:**



SERGEANT GEORGE E. NETTLETON

Serial Number 37634443

Company D, 142nd Infantry Regiment
36th Division, 7th Army



Dec. 13, 1944 —

The following is an account of action which took place in Selestat, France, as told by SGT. GEORGE E. NETTLETON. He said that the Germans always struck just before dawn. He and his squad of Infantry men were on an out post. He and another soldier by the name of KING, were in a small hole next to a house, with boards leaning toward the house and covering them. When the shells first began coming in, his buddy (King) who wore glasses got his glasses broken. King was told by Nettleton to go into the house with the others, because he would not be of any help if he could not see.

There were a few soldiers upstairs in a two story shack which was located near a forest. He said he was alone in a hole just large enough for him and his machine gun. After the Germans began to hit and began coming into the area, those who were upstairs in the house would holler at him, "Ned, they are coming here, they're coming there." For a while until they were all killed, they would give him directions from where the Germans were coming.

PATSY NETTLETON STOKES, daughter of the late George Nettleton sent in a file on the exploits of her father and after reading all the material, it is a story that should be told. Mostly, it is enlightening to know that the children of the men of the 36th recognize this and want it recorded for posterity. We hope others will do the same. ED.



Worldwartwoveterans.org

ictures taken in the early states of his army service . . . the young and handsome George Nettleton, Co. D 142nd Infantry in summer Khakis, and Cpl. Nettleton in full uniform (center) and mug shot — no dates were given, but his birth date — Feb. 22, 1913 and address on Separation Certificate shows Risco, New Madrid County, Missouri as home address (1947).

He said it seemed that the Germans came in droves. He would patiently wait until they would get as close as possible, and then he would mow them down. Some would be waving white flags or giving a surrender motion, which he motioned for them to go on around, where other soldiers were waiting. He said that this continued all day long. He stayed with his machine gun and killed or wounded all day long, until he was the only one left.

At one time, three Germans that were hunting the machine gun, slipped up on him. They were so close that he could have reached out and touched them. He said that they looked so big with all those straps of shells strung around them. He heard them talking, but could not understand German. In a little bit they walked off a short distance. At this time he wheeled his machine gun around and killed them. After it was over they did not look so big after all.

Worldwartwoveterans.org

He said that about 10 o'clock that night, some soldiers came up looking for the machine gun and hunting whoever was on it. They called out, but he was afraid to answer them. He was afraid of giving himself and his position away. They kept calling out, yet he would not answer. They kept advancing and began to give a password and holler, "Nettleton from Risco." At this point he was sure who they were. His comment was that at that moment he had a most relieved feeling.

When they went upstairs, he said that the American soldiers were blown all to pieces. He said that was one horrible sight. He said

Fighting 36th Historical Quarterly

that the room they were in was demolished, and that the men's bodies were scattered in pieces all over the room.

His comment was that if he had not held out, that the Germans would have taken over a very important location. By holding out those hours of continuous killing and wounding from dawn until about 10 that night the United States Army did advance in the war. After being taken back to camp that night, the following night he pulled guard duty all night long.

SILVER STAR

February 18, 1945 — Orders for SILVER STAR for 12-13-44 action. Shrapnel in left shoulder.

R E S T R I C T E D

GENERAL ORDERS

~~APC #36~~ INFANTRY DIVISION
APO #36, U. S. Army

NO. 25

8 February 1945

* * * * *

I. AWARD OF SILVER STAR. Under the provisions of Army Regulations 600-45, a Silver Star is awarded to each of the following named individuals for gallantry in action:

* * * * *

GEORGE E. NETTLETON, 37634443, Private, Company D, 142d Infantry Regiment, for gallantry in action on 13 December 1944 in France. Although Private Nettleton was a new replacement in Company D, it was expedient, because of the shortage of men, to make him first gunner in a machine gun squad. His squad was in position to defend a recently captured town when hostile troops attempted to infiltrate the friendly lines. Two of the squad members had been killed, several had been wounded, and a heavy artillery barrage prevented the others from assisting Private Nettleton. The other gun crew of the section had been captured by the enemy. In spite of the dangers which confronted him, Private Nettleton determinedly remained in position for more than 12 hours without relief or food. He manned his machine gun alone, remaining constantly on the alert for enemy movement. In spite of heavy shellfire and adverse weather conditions, he never relaxed his vigil, keeping the hostile troops pinned down over a wide sector and killing or wounding at least 50 of the enemy. Entered the Service from Risco, Missouri.

* * * * *

By command of Major General DAHLQUIST:

JOHN J. ALBRIGHT
Colonel, General Staff Corps
Chief of Staff

OFFICIAL:

/s/ Vincent M. Lockhart
/t/ VINCENT M. LOCKHART
Major, Adjutant General's Department
Asst Adjutant General

A TRUE COPY:

Joseph G. Brothers
JOSEPH G. BROTHERS
1st Lt. MAC,
Hosp Plant

NETTLETON — KILLED OR WOUNDED 50 NAZIS

Missourian Killed or Wounded 50 Nazis

Fifty Germans fell dead or wounded before the machine-gun fire of Pvt. George E. Nettleton of Tallapoosa, Mo. as he single-handedly fought off an enemy attempt to infiltrate a town newly won by American troops, it was revealed yesterday.

Nettleton has been awarded the Silver Star for gallantry in action as a result of the action last Dec. 13, his family has been notified.



Pvt. Nettleton

The 33-year-old farmer and cotton gin worker was made first gunner in a machine-gun squad shortly after joining his infantry outfit on the Western Front. Two of the squad were killed and others wounded as the enemy attack began. The rest were pinned down by an artillery barrage. A

supporting gun crew was captured.

For 12 hours, without food or relief, Nettleton remained on the alert. Despite heavy shellfire and miserable weather conditions, he kept hostile troops pinned down over a wide sector, killing or wounding at least 50, the citation accompanying his award reported. The father of five children,

March 19, 1945 — Hit by German "88." Shrapnel in left arm and right hip. STAFF SERGEANT STEPHEN YARKOSKY was killed and Nettleton assumed his position. However, credit for this was never recognized. This is the position Nettleton was in when he was hit. Once hit, he began crawling off, he noticed that his left arm would not work. A tank pulled up about that time to offer assistance. They put him in the tank and insisted that he drink Cognac for the pain. They told him that if he did not take a drink that he was going to pass out.

95th Evac Hospital — March 20, 1945 — From there he was transferred to Paris, France. he was there for 3-4 days. He was taken out at night to board a plane for England, but the plane had a flat and the trip was postponed until the next morning.

First surgery on left arm for shrapnel wound. 65th General Hospital, England. (Liter patient-body cast).

April 6, 1945 — Order for OAK LEAF CLUSTER to the PURPLE HEART. Second surgery, third and fourth surgery.

July 10, 1945 — Departure from 65th General Hospital, England (Aboard the Francis Wise Slinger). Arrival in the United States. Halloran General Hospital, New York. O'Reilly General Hospital, Springfield, Mo.

NETTLETON —

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

On another occasion he told about a time that they were dug in, and the Germans found them. The Americans were forced to surrender to the Germans. They had no other choice. The group was taken prisoner and before starting their march to "Jerry land," a real good friend by the name of Everett P. Hodges got hit in the side of the head and his eye popped out. The Americans were forced to march out and leave Hodges behind. Shortly after their march began, the Germans missed one of their wounded officers. So two Americans were picked out to go back and get the officer. He said that he did not want to go back as they were being very heavily shelled. But he and another soldier were told to go back and get the German Officer. As they began crawling back, they heard the guns of what turned out to be Company C. Company C had come in from the rear and began attacking. This is one time that he was rescued from prison camp.

On another occasion he was captured twice in one day and escaped both times.

Lastly, the discharge papers do not reflect that he was hit three times. He only has 1 Oak Leaf Cluster with his PURPLE HEART. He said that things were so hot that one time that they did not have time to report it.

Written by
Edith A. Nettleton
(Widow of George E. Nettleton)



SONS & DAUGHTERS of George Nettleton — from left: George G. Nettleton, Clarence R. Nettleton, Joann Koppenhaver, Collen Gregory and Patsy Stokes.

These two sons and three daughters of George Nettleton are proud of their T-Patch father, and rightly so. We are sure there are similiar stories out there in T-Patchland — so send 'em in . . . now!

OUR THANKS to EDITH MIDDLETON (widow) for compiling all this data. Her address: 502 Norman Dr., Malden, MO 63863.

36th SCRAPBOOK



The Man With The Rifle

This is a reduction of a full page, full color ad in a 1942 issue of the SAT EVE POST (a most popular magazine of that era)...the advertiser was - NASH KELVINATOR.

This corporation was many of the biggies who were responding to FDR's message to America that the USA would produce 'thousands of tanks, trucks, trains, ships and aircraft to take the AXIS to their knees. But, please note that "the star" of this message is the INFANTRYMAN...the man with the rifle. He, ultimately would be the one...to win it.

BUT, let's not forget that it could not accomplished without the multitude of material - that our factories would have to produce - for land, sea and air. (please note the stacks of wheat at center, another secret weapon we had that enemy did not have).

Wars of the future will be push-button and quite devastating, but it will still take this man - to occupy it. This is just really a salute to the COMBAT INFANTRY, and long may he wave.

(WEJ)

THE DAY I KILLED "BUCK" WEST

By Julian "Duney" Philips



Ernest E. "Buck" West

On the 25th of November, 1940, when the 36th Division was mobilized into Federal Service, a few Companies were head and shoulders above the others. Capt. Sam Graham, who commanded Co. F, 143rd Infantry, had one of those Companies.

Co. F was from Huntsville, Texas, the home of Sam Houston State College and the State Penitentiary. Capt. Graham was in charge of the Agricultural Department with the college and many of his students taught classes and graded tests for the Guards at the Penitentiary to supplement their income.

Capt. Graham had the college for his recruiting ground and was able to pick and choose the best young men to fill the ranks of Co. F. The money they were paid for National Guard Monday Night Drill helped defray the cost of their education.

2nd Lt. William R. Lynch, Jr. was one of his Platoon Officers and had started with Co. F, received his commission and, on mobilization, was one of the best young officers in the Division.

One of the men who mobilized with Co. F was Ernest E. "Buck" West of Liverpool, Texas. He was married and had a daughter, a beautiful child whom he dearly loved. Buck wasn't any different than the rest of us in the army at that time. All he wanted was to get the war over with so he could return to Liverpool, Texas to continue being a husband and father to the ones he loved.

As soon as Co. F was mobilized, they started losing men. Many received direct commissions and moved to other Companies and Regiments. Then O.C.S. took its toll because of so many fine young college men. There were also transfers to the Air Force plus quotas to fill cadres to start other divisions.

THE DAY I KILLED BUCK WEST

During WWII, Co. F had suffered as many casualties as any Company in the Division. At Salerno, it was over-run by the German 26th Panzer Division. Capt. Carl R. Bayne of Yoakum, Texas and 1st Lt. Julian Quarles of Nashville, Tennessee, were captured with many of the Company. When the dead and wounded were counted, we thought it was more than Co. F could stand.

Capt. Bayne and Lt. Quarles escaped from the Germans by jumping from a train one night on the way to the stockade. They would have spent the rest of the war as prisoners, but were able to return to the 2nd Battalion to fight another day. The men were overjoyed to see them — it was like returning from the grave.

Co. F recovered from the Persano foul up. Replacements were received, trained and made ready for when the Regiment would need their services again.

The Winter of 1943-44 was HELL. Co. F was called upon time and time again, to give a little more, be ready here and push there. In November and December 1943, the Company was up against the 29th Panzer Grenadier Division, a Division seasoned in Poland, Russia and France before being sent to Italy to assist Field Marshal Kesserings defense against the 36th Division at San Pietro. The 2nd Battalion, 143rd Infantry, captured San Pietro forcing one of Hitler's finest divisions to withdraw into the Cassino area.

Again Co. F had paid the price. Dead and wounded were counted and Co. F had again given more than its' share. When the company was pulled off the line on the 23rd of December 1943, there was less than a Platoon to stand proud and tall, to tell the world, "We are Co. F, 143rd Infantry of the 36th Division and we have beaten one of Hitler's best, the 29th Panzer Grenadier Division."

Replacements were sent to the Company from every state in the Union, Officers and NCO's from every walk of life.

One particular NCO was outstanding. He stood 6'3", weighed 190 lbs. and was thirty five years old. He was a regular army Sergeant by the name of Robert M. Patterson. Sgt. Paterson would fit in any place and Co. F could use his talent and expertise.

For related stories: Read ESCAPE in Vol. II, No 1 1982 issue - covers Capt. Bayne and Lt. Quarles dramatic maneuver with the Nazi captors.

Also read Cover Story - Vol. III, No. 1 1983 story about Persano, written by C. A. Chum Williamson when many 36thers of Co F 142nd were captured.

Fighting 36th Historical Quarterly

By Christmas of 1943, Co. F had been in combat just four months. We had made mistakes, had received some stupid orders and we had received officers and men who should never have been in combat. Some officers were afraid to tell a General or high ranking officer an attack would not be successful. As a matter of fact, they were just incompetent.

Co. F trained for a river crossing in January 1944 — not knowing it was to be "The Bloody Rapido." The training was on the Volturno River in southern Italy. The river was wide and deep with a fast current — a good one to train on but a bad one to take.

The crossing of the Rapido River was a disaster for Co. F. Those who managed to cross and stay alive will never forget January 20-21 of 1944. No officer returned. Capt. Bayne was killed and without leadership, there was very little hope.

After two days on the line, on that small, swift, beautiful river, only fourteen enlisted men from Co. F returned to the East Bank. One of these men was Sgt. Pat Patterson who had been captured and escaped by swimming the cold river to fight another day.

Our Battalion also lost one of the men who mobilized with Co. F. This man was loved by everyone who served with him. His name was Capt. Milton Stiffen. When he received word that a few enlisted men had been cut off and needed help, and with disregard for his own safety, he went to their aid and was killed. His body was recovered from a German cemetery in the Liri Valley.

When the Battalion was taken off the line in late February 1944, everyone was put to the task of reorganizing the 2nd Battalion. officers and replacements were received, wounded men returned from hospitals and some of the sergeants were put in for battlefield commissions. We knew it would take a long time before we recovered from the beating we had taken on the bloody river, but with hard work and determination, we knew Co. F would fight again. Approximately sixty days later, Co. F was ready to return to combat when called upon.

Three sergeants had received battlefield commissions to the rank of 2nd Lt. They were Lloyd Williams of Huntsville, Texas, Elmer Ward of Ivenhoe, Texas and the old regular army Sgt. Robert M. "Pat" Patterson. All three went right to work to train the replacements for combat.

The Battle School initiated by Brig. General William R. Wilber for all new officers reporting to the Division, had been discontinued when the General was relieved of duty after the foul up on the river.

THE DAY I KILLED BUCK WEST

He took the blame for everyone else. I always felt just as Gen Wilber did, that the school helped the officers who attended. If it gave the officers a little insight as to what to expect when fighting the Germans and what was expected of them in combat, it was worth everthing that was put into it.

Some of our NCO's who had been wounded and were not shipped stateside, were also reutrning to the Co. from the hospitals to help fill the gaps with the needed leadership. These NCO's were always welcomed with open arms because many were combat-wise and all could help in the training of our new recruits.

In May 1944, Co. F was not the same Company that had left Huntsville, Texas the 25th of November 1940. There were only a few men left who mobilized with the Company. Frank B. Jackson was 1st Sgt. from Fort Worth, Texas, Robert A. Nowell was Mess Sgt. from Hughes Springs, Texas, Ernest E. "Buck" West, our supply Sgt. was from Liverpool, Texas, Elmer E. Ward, the Platoon leader, was from Ivenhoe, Texas and Lloyd Williams was assigned to another job in the Regiment.

Sam Graham was a Lt. Col. in 1944, assigned to 2nd Battalion 142nd Infantry and was making a name for himself. He must have been proud of the men who mobilized with Co. F, knowing they were serving with units around the world, each doing his small part to free the world from aggression.

Co. F received orders in May 1944 to move with the Division by ship to the Anzio beachhead for the breakout. The build-up had started and the Army Commander figured he should take Rome before the Channel crossing.

When we arrived at the Anzio beachhead, we saw the whole area smoked to keep the Germans from observing our movements. We saw basketball and softball being played on numerous occasions, but the one place that put a lump in our throats was the Cemetery — it never seemed to end. Our guide, who was taking us to our area, said there were forty-five thousand bodies buried on Anzio. Civilians and Germans were buried with the Allies — it was a Cemetery for all.

The first night, the Anzio Express welcomed Co. F to the beachhead. We had never had a 16" Railroad Gun fire at us before. It was not firing at Co. F in particular, just firing to harass the allies. I for one, can tell you when you heard it fire it got your attention until it passed overhead. Then you realized how lucky you were that it had missed you. It was demoralizing just to know it was there and

Fighting 36th Historical Quarterly

able to fire on the beachhead everynight.

Orders came from Regimental Headquarters saying the 36th Division would be in reserve for the breakout. Co. F would lead the Division but would follow the 3rd Division on the initial assault. The 3rd Division's objective was to be Cisterna De Latori, the city where the 1st Ranger Battalion had been cut off and destroyed.

The artillery and mortar barrages brightened the sky. They kept firing on all fronts throughout the beachhead, trying to soften the Germans so the Infantry would have a better chance in the breakout.

Co. F lead a Column of Companies and before we knew it, we were at the walls of Cisterna De Latori. The 3rd Division had their hands full with the street fighting that was taking place in town.

As we moved past the West wall of the town, an officer from Battalion Headquarters came to the front of the column and said our orders had been changed. Co. F was to continue to be the lead Company. He asked if I could see the town in the hills that he was pointing to. He said the name of the town was Villettri and that was our objective. He told me when we hit the enemy in force, the Division would support the Company with tanks that were attached to the Division.

Villettri Was Key to Taking Rome

Here was Co. F, 143rd Infantry, on its way to Villettri, Italy, alone once again, but with a promise, "You lead and when you hit the Germans in force then we will send in tanks to help you push through the defensive position."

We headed for Villettri as though it were the only town keeping us out of Rome. Co. F kept pushing through the Germans rear guard everytime it tried to stop our advances. The Company arrived in Villettri before we knew it but soon realized we were up against the Germans in force. They had moved in behind the Company and we had about twelve deaths as we tried to drive into the heart of town.

I got on the radio to Battalion and explained that we had hit the Germans in force, had twelve men dead and many wounded. I asked if they would send in the tanks to support our drive. They replied they would be right up.

The Company Headquarters was set up in a large barn and as I put down the radio to Battalion, I called my two runners so I could send messages to the Platoon to let them know the tanks would be up soon.

The barn, where the C.P. was located, had two large double doors that faced south. As I was talking to my runners, Darold White of Elizabethton, Tennessee, and Jack Down from Miami, Florida, a Ger-

THE DAY I KILLED BUCK WEST

man sniper had moved around to the rear of the C.P. and shot Down in the neck. When his body slumped to the ground, he was dead.

As we pulled him over to the pile of dead, Lt. Elmer Ward came limping into the C.P. He had been hit through the upper thigh, had cut his pants leg open and tied on a tourniquet and was ready to go.

For the next four hours I kept badgering the Battalion to see that the tanks were sent up. I knew by 2 p.m. the tanks would never come into the mess we had ourselves into. Around 2:45 p.m., Battalion Headquarters called to ask if we could get our wounded out with the Company if we were given permission. This meant we would have to withdraw behind the line that Companies G and E had formed south of town. As I received the message, I was mad as hell.

I went back to Battalion with, "When the tanks get here, I can bring everybody out. When are you going to get off your dead ass and get them started? We were told when we hit the Germans in force the tanks would move up to help us drive on through."

We were alone again, as so often the rifle company finds itself. This was not the first or the last time we were told the tanks would help and did not show. It was always OK to push a rifle company into a bad position and never worry about casualties at Headquarters. To them, a death was just a number. But to us, losing a man on the line was like losing someone in our family.

The message came back, "If given permission to withdraw behind the Battalions defensive position, can you bring your wounded?"

I sent runners for the Platoon leaders and by the time they arrived at Company Headquarters I had the withdrawal orders pretty firm. The Second Platoon was to lead the withdrawal, followed by the 3rd Platoon. 3rd Platoon would be responsible for all the wounded to include all litter and walking wounded and the Fourth platoon mortar section. The First Platoon would cover the withdrawal and would have the Fourth Platoon's machine gun section.

So, I started the Company moving to a position behind the defensive line of Companies E and G. Here was a typical situation in an Infantry Regiment — not one Officer from Battalion, Regiment or Division was willing to come forward to see what the situation was like or just kick ass and get the situation moving.

As we were getting the wounded ready to leave, my runner, Darold White, asked if I intended leaving the dead. I tried to explain to him there was not any more we could do for them and I expected they would be buried by the Germans. I felt sad to leave them but could not risk my men's lives to carry corpses back behind our lines. Then he asked if he could take Jack Down's body with us. I knew the two men were close friends so I told him to put a raincoat with hood

Fighting 36th Historical Quarterly

on him backwards so he would not bleed as we walked. White found the raincoat with hood and dressed Down as I had instructed him to do. When Lt. Elmer Ward sent word, the 1st Platoon was ready to pull back. I picked up Private Jack Down, threw him over my shoulder, picked up my Thompson and joined Elmer on the withdrawal. White looked back into the barn as we reached the door and asked, "What will happen to them?", nodding towards the stack of dead Americans. I told him the Germans would be in the barn in five or ten minutes after we left and they would bury them the next day in their cemetery.

As we passed through Co. G lines, Capt. Earl Higginbotham was waiting on White and myself. He had two men take Down from my shoulder and carry him to the C.P. so the grave registration could pick the body up that night. Capt. Higginbotham said all the wounded came through in good shape. Headquarters had ambulances behind his lines to pick them up for the ride to the hospital. Neither White or myself had seen the men of Co. G for a few days so we took this opportunity to take some time to see if any had been wounded or killed in our absence.

When Capt. Higginbotham told us that Co. F Mess Sgt. Robert Nowell had hot meals for everyone about a half mile down the road, I passed the word on to Elmer Ward. Elmer was still limping from the wound he had received that morning but would not rest until he told the Platoon that hot meals were waiting for them. The strain of combat left their faces and was replaced with smiles.

Many had stopped to give thanks unto the Lord for being alive as they trudged through the G Company defensive position. As they moved South away from the lines, you would see a man cross himself, others with tears on their cheeks and openly giving thanks. All were happy to be alive and as they moved South, they felt more secure.

I told Elmer that White and myself would be along in a few minutes and asked him to tell Sgt. Nowell to save us some hot food.

Capt. Higginbotham told us where the Platoons were located, so we headed out to find friends. As we arrived in the 1st Platoon area, Raymond Chargin Elk from Mission, S.D. came running toward us with a smile from ear to ear (He had been one of my Platoon runners on the Radido River). I spoke first telling him I could see the Germans had not gotten my Indian yet. He and White had been my runners in G Company after the Rapido and Cassino operations.

I was transferred to Co. F and could only take one man with me, which had been Darold White. As we were shaking hands, T/Sgt. Mitchell Woods from Houston, Texas, who had been my Platoon Sgt. and,

THE DAY I KILLED BUCK WEST

since I had left, was leading the Platoon, trotted up. It was getting to be quite a reunion but too big a crowd. Crowds made good targets for the German mortars and artillery. I told them to pass the word along that White and myself would come back again soon.

We headed to the 3rd Platoon where Lt. John Yadrich, from Kansas City, Kansas, was Platoon leader. We shook hands with the men, wished John well and headed to Company Headquarters. As we entered Company G. C.P. Capt. Higginbotham was waiting for us, asking questions about the move from Cisterna De Latori to Velletri. After answering numerous questions, White and myself told the group we needed to get on down the road before the chow truck left. We both knew we should have a stack of mail from home and that would help boost our moral. Capt. Higginbotham had also set up this Company C.P. in a large barn where there were large kegs of wine. I saw a few men sampling the vintage which was also good for moral.

The Captain took me by the shoulder and turned me around to face him. He usually had a smile on his face, but this time as he spoke, he showed only sincerity as he said, "Duney, I'm glad that both you and White made it back." He went on to say the Company was running low on 45 Caliber and Carbine ammunition and could we have the Supply Sergeant bring a case of each up the next morning. I told him not to worry that I would see him after breakfast the next day and would have the ammo.

As White and myself arrived in the Co. F area, some yelled, "There's no food left for late arrivals." We headed for the mess line and found Sgt. Nowell with the usual grin on his face and plenty of food for all.

I looked around for our supply Sgt. who usually came up with the kitchen truck. I spotted him helping give out the mail and packages to the Company. I yelled, "Hey Buck." When he turned and saw White and myself he reached for another stack of mail and a couple of packages. He handed us our mail and I had two packages. We thanked him for helping and he said, "Duney, open the packages and let's eat the cookies." I ignored the comment and said, "Buck, Co. G is short on 45 Caliber and Carbine Ammo, would you send a case of each up in the morning on the mess truck? White and myself will see that they get it." Buck said he would see to the ammo but kept bugging me to open my packages so he could help eat the cookies I had received. I stopped and opened the first package and, instead of cookies, there was a cake from my wife. Buck pulled out his knife and cut himself a big hunk of cake and ambled over to get one of Sgt.

Fighting 36th Historical Quarterly

Nowell's famous cups of coffee.

The next morning, a little before daylight, the kitchen truck pulled into the area. Sgt. Nowell and his mess personnel went about their job of getting the mess line ready. Fires were started under the water to wash our mess kits, coffee pots were made ready and the smell of cooked food was a real eye opener. There was also fresh water for the lister bags.

As I washed my face and hands and turned to get a cup of coffee, there stood Buck West. He filled two cups and handed me one and said, "Duney, I've got the ammo for G Company on the kitchen truck." I asked him to take it off the truck so White and myself could take it up after breakfast. He did as he was asked.

The mess personnel finished feeding and Sgt. Nowell was getting all his containers reloaded on the truck. They would be heading back to the Service Company area where the kitchens and orderly rooms were set up.

As the kitchen truck pulled out of the area, I noticed that Buck West was not on it. I did not think too much about it at the time. Around 9:30 a.m., I looked for Darold White because I wanted him to help me take the ammo up to G Company. Just then, Buck West walked up and I asked if he had seen White, that I was ready to go up to G Company. He said, "Duney, I stayed up to help today. Would you mind if I took White's place?" I asked if he really wanted to go because I could get another man to help me. He almost begged me to let him help. I believe it was more of a challenge of going to the Front Lines than anything else.

It was around 9:45 a.m. when we picked up the ammo and started for G Company. Buck asked questions about the fighting in Vellitri the day before and about the bodies we had to leave behind. Before we knew it, we were at the G Company C.P.

1st Sgt. Curtis Hail met us just outside the C.P. and told us to put the ammo just inside. He said he would send word to the Platoons to send a man to get their quota.

Capt. Higginbotham came over and shook hands with Buck and thanked him for the ammo and for bringing it up. The Capt. had been in Co. F when he first came to the 143rd Infantry from 141st, so he knew Buck very well. I asked Earl if they had a pot of coffee so Buck could get a cup while I went out to the Platoon to see the men I had missed the afternoon before. I told Buck to wait in the C.P. and after I said hello to some of the men, we would head back.

There was no rush, so I took my time visiting everyone on the line.

THE DAY I KILLED BUCK WEST

I had stayed longer than I had intended and as I stepped into the C.P. I glanced at my watch, it was 2:45 p.m. John Hadrich was talking to Capt. Higginbotham and an artillery observer. I walked over to say my good-byes and John said, "Duney, stick around, we have a show starting at 3:00 p.m. Our artillery is going to harass the Germans." I turned and started toward the door when one of the Sergeants came over and handed me a cup of coffee and said, "Duney, have a cup with us." The coffee was hot, but I finished the cup, thanked them and, speaking to no one in general, I said, "See you late." I turned to Buck and told him we needed to get back to the Company.

The German Guns Were On Target

As I stepped into the door way, it was exactly 3:00 p.m., and I heard two shells coming in. I felt they would be close enough for me to hit the ground. I fell backwards and, with my right arm, I pulled Buck down on the ground with me. I had yelled at him to get down because I knew the shells would hit close to us.

The Germans were on target and both shells hit the north wall of the C.P. The explosion was deafening but we were protected by an interior wall 8" thick. It took the shock of the rock and shrapnel. We heard the artillery officer and his observation team scream. The two Self-Propels had made a direct hit and they knew it, so they kept pumping round after round into the barn.

I yelled over the noise to Buck telling him we had to find a foxhole to crawl into. Those guns have the range and they are on target and will not stop for awhile.

As I jumped to my feet, I ran around to the back of the barn with Buck just a step and a half behind me. As I rounded the corner, I saw the Co. G 1st Sgt. Curtis Hail and another man standing in a foxhole waist deep. It was snug against the wall and was the only one available. I yelled to 'Roller' (nickname) and asked if there were anymore holes in the area. He called back that there were seven on the other side of an open cultivated field.

Shells were still hitting the C.P. The Gunners were right on target as each shell hit the barn. As two shells hit the north side of the barn, I yelled to Buck, "Let's find those foxholes." We took off running from behind the barn toward the tree line. I heard the Self-Propel fire and I followed the shell with my ears. When I knew it was on us, I hit the ground and yelled for Buck to get down. His head touched my boots as he hit the ground. As soon as the shrapnel passed over us, I was up and running while yelling "Let's go, Buck." I heard the gunner fire the next shell as I followed it with my ears. I told Buck to get down again. The gunner was not after the C.P., he

Fighting 36th Historical Quarterly

had switched targets and was firing at us.

The third round was a repeat of the first and second round and we were still alright. After the shrapnel cleared us, we were up and running again. The gunner fired the fourth round just as we hit the tree line. I followed the round and when I was sure it was time to hit the ground I yelled to Buck to hit the ground too. Buck's head was between my boots as we lay waiting for the shrapnel to clear once more. I was up and running when I felt it was safe, calling to Buck to let's go. I glanced over my shoulder and saw that Buck was still on the ground. I yelled, "Let's go, Buck," but still he did not move.

I turned back to him and spotted a place under his right shoulder blade where a large piece of shrapnel had torn into his back. I could not believe it and kept calling for him to get up. As I bent down, he reached for me with his left arm and when he tried to speak, a big glob of blood swelled up in his mouth. His eyes were glassy and as he tried to speak again the blood came gushing from his mouth. I told him not to talk that I would get a stretcher. I ran on to the Company and picked up the first two Medical Aid men I could find.

I explained what had happened and told them to come with me that I would lead them to Buck. As I knelt by his side (he was still alive), I turned to speak to the Medics and they were not in sight. I had run away from them or they purposely got lost. I told Buck to hang on, that I was going for another stretcher and medics. As I ran into the Company area, I spotted two more medics. After explaining what I wanted, I told them that Buck needed us and if they did not keep up or if they ran off, I would kill them. They kept up and as we got back to Buck he was still alive and the shelling had died down. As we placed Buck on the stretcher, he looked at me and tried to say something, his mouth filled with blood, his eyes were glassy but I knew he was trying to hold on. When we arrived in the Company area to place Buck on a Medical Jeep, his eyes were closed but he was still breathing.

I called out to Sgt. Hail to see how Capt. Higginbotham and Lt. Yadrich were after the shelling. He said Yadrich had been hit but did not think it was serious. The artillery officer and his observers had been killed.

Ernest "Buck" West had been hit with a piece of shrapnel the size of a cup. It had tore into his body just under his right shoulder blade and I could see from the start that it was a serious wound and I did not believe he would survive. As the jeep pulled away taking him to the hospital, I turned toward the C.P. and all of a sudden it hit me as to what I had done.

THE DAY I KILLED BUCK WEST

Buck West was not going to make that return trip to Liverpool, Texas to see his wife and daughter. He would never see the sun rise again. The officers and men of Co. F, 143rd Infantry would never see the grin on his face again or listen to the humor he was known for. The Company had lost their Supply Sergeant, but, most of all, Co. F had lost a friend.

As Sgt. Nowell arrived in the Company area with the kitchen truck and the Company's noon meal, he was told that Buck had been hit and was in a bad way.

Someone came to get me for lunch and asked if I was going to eat. I felt very low and answered that I did not feel like eating. My thoughts were on Buck and I felt there was no way I could ever get over Buck West's death. I felt responsible and was blaming myself because I could have used any man in the Company to carry the ammo chest to G Company, but no, I had to let Buck, who was not used to artillery shells screaming day in and day out. The depression I felt lasted three days, then the world caved in on me. Darold White came over to me at breakfast and said, "Duney, I hate to tell you but Mitchel Woods and Chargin Elk were killed last night." We were supposed to attack in less than two hours and here I was losing two of my closest friends. Mitchel Wood had been my Platoon Sgt. whom I had known most of my life. Raymond Chargin Elk had been my runner in G Company and I had promised to get him through the war so he could return to his wife and son on the Indian Reservation at Mission, S.D.

As I remember those days in the summer of 1944 — the death of S/Sgt. Ernest "Buck" West still haunts me. I have always held myself accountable for his death because I allowed him the honor of helping Company G when they needed ammunitions.

I am sure Capt. Graham looked back from time to time on the Company he had assembled for mobilization into Federal Service with pride. It is impossible to put down all the accomplishments of the men, but as he looked over the roster, down near the end, he comes across S/Sgt. Ernest "Buck" West, K.A. Yes, he had to feel pride because Buck had made the supreme sacrifice, he had given his life to help his friends.

I feel very honored to have known Ernest "Buck" West and I have always felt proud that he considered me his friend.



ESCAPE

From Altavilla

Carroll Sparks, Co K 143rd
Related His Experiences to his Son,
Dr. Larry D. Sparks (West, TX) D.D.S.
"A PROUD SON OF THE 36th"

Worldwartwoveterans.org

The battle for Altavilla has been told and relived for all the T-patchers who participated in it, some forty years ago. This is a remembrance of not only one man's participation in that historic battle, but of his escape through German lines to return to the Salerno beach-head, after being surrounded.

The story is well known of private first class "Commando" Kelly and his exploits in defending a key three-story building in Altavilla: however, this is the sotry of another soldier who helped defend the very same building, T-4/Sgt Carroll Sparks, from the 3rd Battalion of the 143rd Inf., Co. K.

We were cut-off for two days and two nights in Altavilla and were holed-up in a three-story building. The building had walls about 18 inches thick with iron bars across the windows; that is, until the German machine gun fire cut them out. The bulding also had a courtyard or wall around part of it: inside the courtyard we had a 60 mm mortar and a machine gun set-up.

I had carried mortar shells from the ammo dump to the courtyard until they were stacked up like firewood, and later I had a little Italian kid helping me carry belts of ammo for the machine gun. I would carry two belts and the kid would carry one. The mortar shells had powder rings on them, which I pulled off, because I thought that it was packing . . . hell, I didn't have any training in mortars . . . but I was dropping the shells in as fast as I could . . . its a wonder that I didn't blow us up, because I threw my cigarette onto the pile of discarded powder rings.

In the same courtyard, Lt. Yenco had a machine gun set up on a block of concrete about two feet tall, that machine gun was so hot you could feed the belt into it, and it would keep firing . . . there were

ESCAPE FROM ALTAVILLA



**TERRACED SLOPES LEADING UP TO ALTAVILLA MADE
CAPTURE OF THIS OBJECTIVE DIFFICULT**

empty cartridges piled as high as that concrete block. After the battle, and after we made it back to Altavilla, I heard that Col. Barnett saw all those empty shells around the block, and said something to the effect of, "Whee! Somebody was giving them hell, here." German shelling finally drove us inside the building.

I helped Lt. Yenco get the machine gun up to the roof of the building and he started firing again. After a while, I asked the Lt., "Lt., if it gets 'hot and heavy' up here, how in the hell are we gonna get down?" Lt. Yenco, looked at me, and said, "You, know, you're right. Let's get the hell down!" So back inside the building we sent. S. E. Bessire, Largent, and I were in the top story of the building in a small room that had a round window.

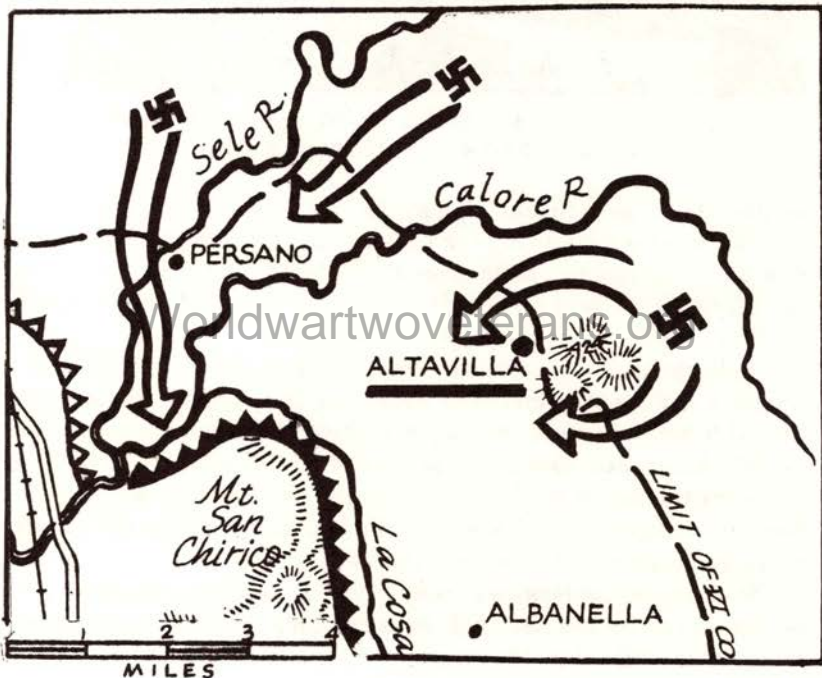
Through binoculars we could see a German digging a gun emplacement on the next hill. Bessire, Largent, and I took turns firing at him while the other observed thru the field glasses. We had

Fighting 36th Historical Quarterly

our rifle sights set on 2700 yards. . . I don't think we ever hit him, but the bullets kicked up dirt all around him. . . enough so that he stopped digging. Then KAWHAM! A shell hit the building close to where we were, and peppered us with plaster from the walls. . . plaster sure does sting when you get hit with it.

The second night (Sept. 14) we were ordered to withdraw by 9 p.m. (2100) because of an impending artillery barrage. So later on the night of the 14th we began to withdraw, and as I recall there were about 40 of us in the building. We made our way out of the building and into the street. A Lt. who was with us found a passageway near a fountain or swimming pool. The passage led to a tunnel underneath the town. When we got in the tunnel there were people, horses, cattle, and everything you could imagine in that tunnel.

The tunnel came out the side of the mountain and as we got out of the tunnel we started carwling single file. Lt. Ball put me at the tail end of the column and told me to "keep it closed-up." As our column of men were trying to escape, a German came crawling thru a fence, Lt. Ball "lowered the boom" on him with his rifle butt. I'm sure it killed him, because his jaw sure did "pop". The German had a small pistol that would fit in the palm of your hand. (Jack Beckworth still has it.)



ESCAPE FROM ALTAVILLA

After that encounter we started off again, with me at the tail end. We were crawling along with one hand stretched out to touch the next man so that we wouldn't lose contact. We moved along a trail until the man in front of me stopped. . . it was dead silence. . . we laid there about 15 minutes, then I crawled to the next man and asked him why he stopped. He said that the guy in front of him had stopped. This went on until I got to about the fifth man who had lost contact with the rest of the group.

The main body of men had crawled on an left us. Apparently the main group had some more stragglers because we were about 50 yards away from some friends who were captured. We could see them when they were captured, in fact, I had given my compass to my friend to hopefully help him get back to the beach, but I saw him taken prisoner that night.

There was about five of us now, and we had a little conference to decide what to do. I told them that I was going down to the beach, "right over there." We could tell where the beach was because there was an anti-aircraft and artillery barrage going on at the time. We decided that sounded like a good idea and began to crawl along a trail that headed towards the beach.

We crawled for what seemed like an eternity, until we heard some bells tinkling. Tinkling bells! Then we heard two Italians speaking to one another. There was a guy by the name of Danny who was with us, and fortunately Danny spoke Italian. Danny listened or eavesdropped on the Italian's conversation. The Italians' said that earlier that day there had been a big tank battle and that there were Germans scattered all over the valley. We were tired, hot, thirsty, and just about spent, so Danny spoke to them and asked if we could have some water. They gave us some water and we rested for a while.

After resting we parted company with the friendly Italians, and began to crawl again until we came to a road. A roll of communication wire was strung along the right hand side of the road, so I said, "We've got troops ahead of us. Here's their telephone wire." So we got up in the middle of the road and started walking toward the beach. Some distance down the road we ran into elements of "M" company spread out in a watermelon patch. Our small band and what was left of "M" company proceeded onward to the beach. Unknown to us at the time, the 504th (AB RGT) paratroopers had been brought in to

Fighting 36th Historical Quarterly

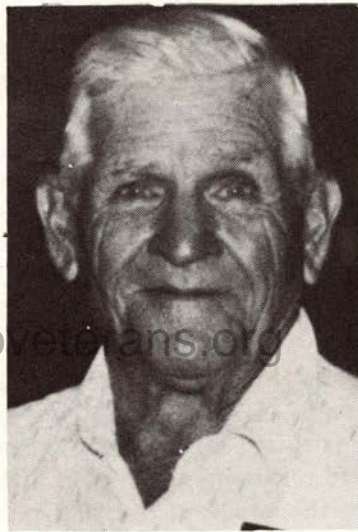
blunt the German counterattack, and were expecting to meet the survivors coming back from Altavilla.

We walked right into the middle of these paratroopers, and I thought, "Oh, hell, we've had it now!" The German paratroopers' uniforms and our paratroopers' uniforms looked similar and at night we couldn't tell. They challenged us with the password: we gave the countersign. It was the wrong password!

Then they started laughing at us, and said that we were two days late with the password. Fortunately for us, the 504th had been told that whoever could make it back would be late with the password. they took us back to an olive grove and let us bed down for the night. The next day we went back to the beach head at Salerno.

One of the men came up and hugged me and said, "Man, I'm sure glad to see you; they told me you got killed on the beach." All I could manage to do was to look at him, grin and say, "Not Hardly."

EPILOG: T/4 Sgt. Carroll Sparks enlisted in the TNG, Co K 143rd in Sept. 1940 at Waco. He was one of eight men left (200) that had made the landing at Salerno, Sept. 9, 1943 that were not killed, wounded or captured — when he was rotated home in August 1944.



THEN & NOW - Forty years separate these photos of T/4 Carroll Sparks, Rt, 5, Box 684, Waco TX 76705. We are delighted to see the interest the Sons and Daughters of the 36th to send these vital stories of their fathers.

Hitler's Mammoth Fiasco

In June 1942, Adolf Hitler decided to build the biggest and most destructive tank in the world. It would crush the Russian tanks. It would be invincible.

Designed by automaker Dr. Ferdinand Porsche, this Nazi King Kong of tanks was 30 feet long, weighed 185 tons and had steel plating 9½ inches thick. Its code name was Mammoth, and it was tried out in June 1944.

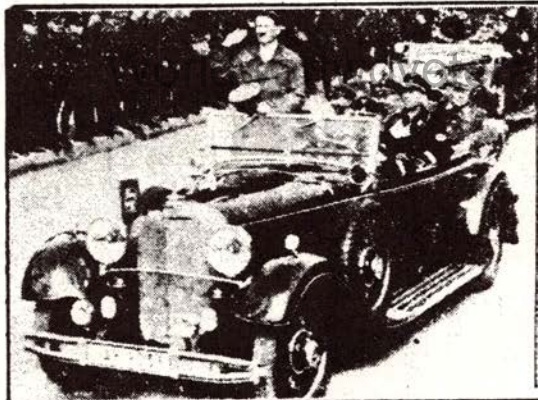
Lumbering through villages on its

test runs, the Mammoth crushed cobblestone streets; its vibrations buckled building foundations and shattered windows. Its bulk proved its undoing. When it left paved highways to travel dirt roads and grass, it sank deep into the earth, immobilized. Hitler built two of these monsters, both destroyed by the Germans at Kummersdorf in late 1944 before they could be seized by the advancing Allied troops.



One of two Nazi supertanks built in 1944 and scuttled that same year to avoid capture

HITLER - The Most Hated Man of the Twentieth Century - Was An Idiot



Even when riding in his armored Mercedes Benz 770-K, which weighed 10,000 pounds and secreted enough small arms and ammunition to thwart any assassination attempt, Adolf Hitler had a constant fear of an attempt on his life. And with good reason, for many people wanted him dead. **To Kill the Devil: The Attempts on the Life of Adolf Hitler** (W.W. Norton, \$9.95) details the many plots to kill the dictator. From bungled attempts by amateurs to sophisticated plotting by his own generals, plans were constantly being drawn up to do away with Hitler, perhaps the most hated man of the century.

"BLUE EYES BROWN"

*OR-
the
Champagne Campaign*

By Sam F. Kibbey

Co K 143rd Inf.

"Hey, 'Brown Eyes,' Sargent Berneeda shouted, "How's your hammer hanging?"

My face flushed. Berneeda and I are talking to two young French girls in a small remote village near the town of Gap in Southern France.

"Que c'est hammer?," the Mademoiselle who seemed to be the older of the two inquired of Sargent Berneeda. She's probably my own age of nineteen. She has an attractive face, a sunshine smile. She is well scrubbed and pungently perfumed.

"Tell these gals, Blue Eyes, about your 'hammer'," Berneeda prodded. Berneeda was twenty-three, dark and squat. He dabbled in taunting others.

"Yes, tell us," the other mademoiselle implored in chopped English. She was a little younger than the other girl. She was more rotund, but her roundness had a pleasant quality about it. Otherwise she is cut from the same cloth. Her scent's the same. Sisters no doubt.

"Oh, you speak English?" I asked.

"Un petite peu," number 2 mademoiselle replied.

There was something almost sensual about the way she demonstrated, by her thumb and forefinger, what constituted "a very little bit."

"A hammer," I said haltingly, "is what a carpenter uses to drive a nail."

"Ah-h-h," said Number One Mademoiselle, "you are a carpenter."

"No," Berneeda interjected, "he tries to nail down every girl he can."

This time I blushed. The girls giggled. Berneeda roared.

"Oh, la la," said Mademoiselle Number Two, "you are a lover then, no?"

BLUE EYES BROWN / CHAMPAGNE CAMPAIGN

I couldn't find my voice. It was stifled by a sudden embarrassment. I mouthed an inaudible "no."

Berneeda said it confidentially, "They don't call him 'Blue Eyes' for nothing."

"Oh, la la," said Mademoiselle Number One, pirouetting coquetishly.

My eyes are not blue. they are green. "Cat eyes" we call them back home. Most folks in Carsonville, Kentucky know how I got taht "Blue Eyes" tag. Acquiring a nickname early in life is like getting a social disease. You never lose the stigma of it.

"The Carsonville Kid"

Over here thousands of miles away from Carsonville, Kentucky you would think I would have escaped the nickname. One mail call in Italy and finito, Benito in that regard.

"And here's a letter," "Red" Harper announced at Mail Call, "for Private 'Blue Eyes' Brown. That's what it says, 'Blue Eyes' Brown."

Ever since then the guys in the outfit have called me "Blue Eyes." All but the officers. They generally call me, "Hey, you."

Life In The Raw Is Seldom Mild

I joined the 36th Division in Italy in June of 1944. Twenty eight days on a Liberty Ship coming over. A short stay in North Africa in a staging area as a replacement; then to Italy and the Replacement Depot at Count Ciano's farm North of Naples. Count Ciano was said to be Mussolini's son-in-law. Big deal, Lucille.

My baptism of fire was not spectacular. I joined the 36th near Grossetto, Italy. The Jerries at this time were mostly fighting rear guard action. Among the captured enemies were Mongolian soldiers, some of whom were the size of jockeys. All of these German "Asiatics" looked bewildered but happy that for them the war was over. There were some bried skirmishes in Italy thereafter. We were chasing an enemy that had suffered ego-puncturing defeats in North Africa and in Italy. After the successful landings at Normandy the GI's had blood and gutted it across France. The war wasn't over yet but it was going our way.

The 36th was pulled off the line in Italy in early Summer, 1944. The otfit was brought back to the Salerno area. We started invasion training. We had a big parade for a grand old man in this European Theatre of operations: General Fred Walker, Commanding General of the 36th, was being returned to the States. I was a mighty proud rooke that summer. I was not mature enough to be brave but too inexperienced to be scared.

Fighting 36th Historical Quarterly

It was hot and hectic in Italy the Summer of 1944. There was still squalor in the Salerno area. The 36th is the Texas National Guard outfit. As they say you ain't bragging when you can do it and the "T-Patchers" could do it. They had done it a Salerno, Cassino, Anzio. They had "plumb" overrun Rome. Viva le 36th, says yours truly.

We set sail across the Mediterranean as part of the invasion convoy from Naples on August 13, 1944. The sky and the sea danced, each arrayed in an abundance of blue and grey.

"Hi ha, Napoleon old boy." I yelled as we sailed past Corsica where Napoleon had been born. I wanted to show the troops that "Blue Eyes" Brown was no small potato intellectually. I'd had a year of college before the war.

Worldwartwoveterans.org

I turned to "Pappy" Dulaney and said, "That's Corsica. It's where Napoleon was born." I paused; then added for effect, "in 1769."

No kidding," "Pappy" replied. "How did he die? Someone run a bayonet up his ass?"

"Pappy" was profane. He was thirty years old and hailed from Buffalo, New York. I'd met him at Fort Meade. We came overseas together, being assigned to a line company in the 143rd infantry at the same time. I was assigned to the Mortar Section of the Fourth Platoon.

"Pappy, you should have respect for the dead," I chided.

"The nly dead I respect is the German dead. If we kill enough of the Jerry bastards I can get back to Buffalo and resume my career as Genesee County cuckold."

"Pap," I said quietly, "I hope we both make it through the war."

"No problem," Pappy replied cheerfully. "The gals in Buffalo couldn't live without me. Fact is I'll need your help, Blue Eyes."

"Pappy Dulaney" Was a Ding-Dong Daddy

On the night of August 14, 1944 the Riviera inertly slept as our invasion entourage stealthily plowed across the Mediterranean Sea. We were approaching beaches once a paradise for tired Parisians; where after dusk, lovers spawned serenely on the sand.

"Pappy" and I were on deck again, he talking of wine and women but mostly of women. I was talking about anything anyone else wanted to talk about. Sgt. Breneeda approached us.

"The guy is nuts, I tell you. The guy is nuts," Breneeda said.

"Which guy?" Pappy asked. "The wood are full of nuts in this outfit."

Nobody called Lieutenant Sad Sack by his surname. The surname was of slavic origin; therefore phonetically translated to Sad Sack.

BLUE EYES BROWN / CHAMPAGNE CAMPAIGN

"What's ole Handle-Bars come up with now?" I asked. The Lieutenant had a handle bar moustache and a tricycle mind, Breneeda always allowed.

"He wants to set up the mortars in the LCIs as we go in and fire from the boats."

"Section 8 material," Pappy said, "A sure fire Section 8 candidate."

"I talked to Sergeant Winston," Breneeda continued, "he promised to take it up with Sad Sack. Sad Sack at least has the wisdom to listen to his Platoon Sergeant. Sarge said he'd get back to me in about a half an hour."

The night descended. The sea yawned, then tossed about restlessly. It was as if God had pulled down the blinds on another day. A baby moon played Peeping Tom as our convoy stole across the sea, scurrying toward a clandestine roundevouz.

The voice was a tenor voice. It was a good tenor voice. It was the voice of Al Powers, a grocery store clerk from Toledo, Ohio. Powers of our Machine Gun Section. He sang gently. The melody lay easy on my ear:

"I walk alone
for to tell you the truth
I've been lonely
I don't mind being lonely
When my heart tells me you
Are lonely, too.

Please walk alone
But send you love
And your kisses to guide me
Until you're walking beside me
I'll walk alone."

A hush enveloped the troops. A lovely, lonely solitude. The melody lingered in our minds as we made our way to where we were to sleep; some on deck, some below deck. Sleep? A brief comatose period was all it could possibly be. Tomorrow the invasion.

Shortly after 8:00 in the morning we were going ashore in LCIs. I gripped the side railin of the LCI. Lt. "Sad Sack" had given up on our setting up the mortars. He was standing erect twirling his handlebar moustache like he was Genghis Kahn, Douglas MacArthur, or John Wayne. Sad to say, Lieutenant Sad Sack was not a person of eminence. As a leader he could barely be tolerated. He inspired loathing.

The United States Navy unleshed a heavy bombardment of the shore line for what seemed like hours. I learned later the heavy part lasted only about 15 minutes. It was a tremendous performance. The United States Navy succeeds as much on its competence as its courage.

"This is it," Breneeda shouted as he leaped from the LCI.

"Roger," I said weakly.

The Saints perserved us. It was easy. The beach was practically

Fighting 36th Historical Quarterly

undefended. Here and there you could hear a splattering of small arm's fire. The Navy continued its bombardment. Bombers pinpointed targets with lethal efficiency. Paratroopers fluttered like butterfly from the sky: gutsy guys with esprit de corps to spare.

After we gained a sufficiently broad beachhead, Sgt. Breneeda said, "Not a single casualty in the Fourth Platoon. That's the way to fight a war. Keep well dispersed, men. We will be moving inland soon."

Lt. Sad Sack strutted by. I couldn't believe it. He had a walking cane in one hand and his 45 Automatic in the other!

"Bucking for the CMH," Sgt. Breneeda confided in me.

I could see "Pappy" Dulaney a short distance ahead with the Captain and the Executive Officer. He was carrying the radio on his back.

"Pappy" turned and yelled to me, "Hey, 'Blue Eyes' I'm on my way back to Buffalo by way of Berlin."

I smiled but it hurt. I had bit my lower lip to the raw as we hit the beach. "Nervous in the service."

We took the village of St. Raphael that night. Our Company was a key unit in the attack. Our Company Commander knocked out a German half-track with a bazooka. The heat caused the shell to fire. It "short fell" directly in front of Al Powers. The explosion stilled forever a beautiful voice. Death is a clumsy dancer.

Al and Pete Mooney of the Third Platoon were the only two casualties from our company on the first day ashore in Southern France.

I didn't learn of Al's death until the next morning. The August sun was fierce by nine a.m. As we traipsed through St. Raphael, then scaled along some hills behind it seeking out German troops I could still hear Al Foster singing,

"Until you're walking beside me

I'll walk alone"

As we drove inland, "Pappy" Dulaney was ecstatic. The war in Italy was never like this one. "Pappy" was a ding dong daddy from the Dumas. You ought to see him strut his stuff. With the FFI (French Forces of the Interior) he was a "galant," un bon soldat. He wooed them with tales of his bravery. It was easy to tell when "Pap" was exaggerating. That occurred every time he opened his mouth.

He flirted with all the Mademoiselles and even the Madames.

"I'm the good Lord's gift to women," "Pappy" would say, "I've got beaucoup cigarettes, chocolate and I believe in love." He light stroked

BLUE EYES BROWN / CHAMPAGNE CAMPAIGN

his thin black moustache. "I grew this to meet the competition," Pappy explained.

One French girl in Sisteron ran her fingers through "Pappy's" receding hair line. "Pap" was all smiles until a slightly older woman, matronly in mood and manner, pulled the blonde by the head of the hair and started slapping her around.

"Pappy" turned to face the citizens of Sisteron and his fellow GIs as if he were at Center State.

"Holy cow, now they're fighting over me," "Pappy" exclaimed.

Make Love To A Bald-Headed Woman?

Other French citizens appear. A pair of clippers gleamed in the sun. A few snips here, a few snips there, and viola! Another girl who had consorted with the German Troops was minus most of her hair.

"Pappy" was not repulsed. "You win some, you lose some," Pappy said, "life's too short to make love to bald-headed women."

Breeneeda and I didn't make it with the two French girls in that little town near Gap. They were from Lyons, France. Their parents had sent them to avoid being in an area heavily garrisoned by German Troops.

"I figure those girls are Jewish." Sgt. Breeneeda said nonchalantly.

"Why do you think that?" I countered.

"Nice figures, sexy eyes, but that oldest girl looks like her nose has been circumcised."

"Sarge," I said, "you're getting more vulgar than 'Pappy' Dulaney."

"C'est le guerre," Sgt. Breeneeda said. "Get a good nights rest 'Blue Eyes.' We've got to liberate the hell out of a couple more towns tomorrow."

Gala Welcome For 36th At Grenoble

Liberate the towns we did as we pressed Northward as part of Task Force Butter. We made it by trucks as far as 90 miles in one 14 hour period. American Paratroopers were swaggering through some of the towns when we arrived there. GERONIMO!

And, then Grenoble. There is no way to describe our entry into Grenoble. The bells of the University rang joyously. The people, good people, people hungry for freedom, cheered us wildly.

Wine flowed as free as the love the citizens of Grenoble had for their liberators. The city, only fifty miles from Geneva, Switzerland, was awash with the tear-filled eyes of a grateful people. Proud members of the FFI sing "The Marseilles."

Everyone was drunk with happiness. Some of us were drunk with wine.

Fighting 36th Historical Quarterly

I passed out at 2300 hours outside a cafe, incautious to the prospect that even in this most beautiful of French cities lurked enemy agents some wearing armbands proclaiming their love for France.

The next morning Sgt. Breneeda dressed me down. "Blue Eyes' you should never let your guard down like that again."

Still hung over I said, "Hell, Sarge, these are friendly people."

"Some of them are friendly to the Germans," Sgt. Breneeda said. Then Sarge added: "The only good German is a dead German."

"Pappy" Gets A Shell With His Name On It

The Champagne campaign was approaching an end. Mainly because the entire 19th German Army was hotfooting it up the Rhone Valley. Nine divisions. That's a lot of Sauerkraut, buddy.

"Okay, gang," Sgt. Breneeda yelled, as we worked our way up a hill overlooking the Rhone Valley, "vacation's over, it's back to the war again."

We had trouble gaining our objective on that hill. The German artillery inundated the area with barrages. The 88s had a guttural sound; the German mortars hissed lethally. I thought of Mama. I prayed to God. I survived it. "Pappy" Dulaney caught a shell with his name on it.

"Pappy" Was One Helluva Man...

The fighting in an around Montelimar intensified. I was in a daze. "Pappy" Dulaney was gone. I would never see him again; never see those beady eyes that tangoed when "Pap" was happy; that seemed to shot forth flames when he was angry. I would never hear "Pappy's" laughter again; that coarse, gasping laugh that challenged you to enjoy the ribald. I would never see that receding black hair that glistened with hair oil when Papa could buy a supply of it in rear areas. "The Valentino Look" Pap called it.

There was no way "Pappy" could have been as manly as he would have you believe. Nonetheless, Pappy was one hell of a man.

That Instinct For Survival Kept Me Going

Near la Coucourde overlooking Route 7, our Battalion is holding the Magranon Ridge. It is almost a comedy of errors. Last night the Jerries passed so close by us that you could hear them talk. You could almost smell the stench of their feet. I couldn't get "Pappy" Dulaney out of my mind. That instinct for survival was all that kept me going.

Breneeda knew how much I was hurt. "Brown Eyes," Breneeda said, "you've got to learn to give your buddies up in this goddamn war. It goes with the territory."

BLUE EYES BROWN / CHAMPAGNE CAMPAIGN

"'Pappy' never meant any hurt to anybody" I said quietly.

"Get even for him, Brown Eyes," Breneeda said meaningly, "Blast a few Jerries into Kingdom Come. Revenge is the name of the game in this man's war."

I said it aloud forcefully, "Some day I'll even the score for you 'Pappy.' Some day I'll even the score."

I became isolated in a group clinging tenaciously to a small corner of Magranon Ridge. The Germans were in front of us; then the Germans were behind us; to the right of us; then to left of us. Grenades and German "potato mashers" were being tossed around like we were playing stick ball. That's what Breneeda said and being from Brooklyn Breneeda had played a lot of stick ball.

There would be a burp gun's staccato bark; then a BAR would furiously answer it. We couldn't set up our Mortars like the day before when, with good defalaid, we fired so many rounds I lost count.

I stayed close to Breneeda. I needed him more than ever with "Pappy" gone.

Breneeda and I, after a barrage came in, reconnoitered the area. It might have been noon. Time didn't stand still; time just didn't matter.

Lieutenant Sad Sack Was Undeniably Dead

As we followed a small path around the brow of the hill we saw him laying there! Lieutenant Sad Sack. He was undeniably dead.

He looked like some animal fallen prey to a predatory enemy. His face has been chewed away by the shell fragments. The handle bar moustache appeared out of place. The face of the dead in combat appear to be colorless, at times their torso is mauled, so grotesquely mauled.

"Well," Sgt. Breneeda said, "No CMH for the Lieutenant. He's earned a Purple Heart the hard way."

"He wasn't the worst guy in the world," I said tentatively.

"No," Sgt. Breneeda agreed, "just the worst soldier." Then Breneeda did something unexpected. He saluted the dead Lieutenant, "You tried, sir," Sgt. Breneeda said, "dammit, sir, you always tried."

We saw several dead Germans that day, Sgt. Breneeda and I. We walked by them cautiously. You never know when a Jerry is playing possum.

"Now, there appears to be a good Jerry," Sgt. would say, "You know what a good Jerry is?" the Sgt. would ask; then before I could

Fighting 36th Historical Quarterly

answer he would say, "a dead Jerry."

As we were turning to return to where we started from we heard a rustling behind a clump of bushes. From the bushes there emerged a German soldier: a wounded, unarmed German soldier. He had a pimply face that was cloaked in absolute terror.

"Nicht scheissen, nicht scheissen," the young German soldier pleaded.

"Shoot him" Sgt. Breneeda shouted, "Shoot the bastard."

"Alles kaput," the young German soldier whined resignedly.

I had my M-1 in hand. "Squeeze off the round," a voice in my head said, "even the score for 'Pappy.'"

There was something that stayed my hand. I froze as if hypnotized. The tenseness left me.

I turned to Sgt. Breneeda, "The war is not his fault, Sarge. No more than the war was 'Pappy's' fault."

"Okay," Sgt. Breneeda growled, "take the Kraut bastard prisoner if that's all the balls you've got."

When we got back to the area where remnants of our Company were entrenched we located a medic. I looked searchingly at Sgt. Breneeda as the Jerry was led away; bleeding rather profusely but under his own powers.

"Don't let it worry you, Blue Eyes," Breneeda said, "You'll get another chance. Maybe the next Jerry won't be unarmed."

"Maybe the next time it won't matter," I said almost apologetically.

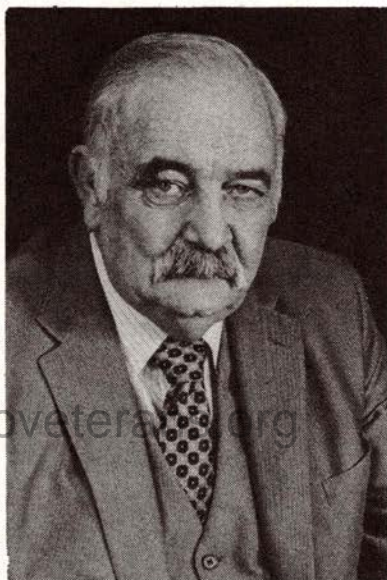
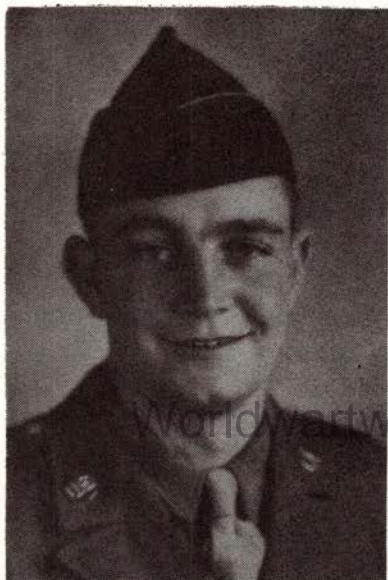
Can't Forget The Mam'selle With Peg Leg

We are now in a little town near Besancon, France. It's autumn. The woodlands are bronze and golden. The war seems far away. We are in Seventh Army reserve. Breneeda is coming on strong, and often, with a classy blonde whose father has only one eye and closes the other to Breneeda and Claudette's amorous activities. Breneeda and Claudette fix me up with her pretty young friend from a neighboring town. She's A-okay but she has a peg leg which tends to tilt her to the lee-ward side. (Any port in a storm anyhow).

Every time our petting gets heavy I yell "T-I-M-B-E-R." Breneeda laughs so hard Claudette is shaken off his lap, with blouse and skirt askew. I throw out my hands, exuding purity, palms forward.

This morning in Laval after chow I was reading the Stars and Stripes. There was a feature in it about the 7th Army's victory at Montelimar this past August.

BLUE EYES BROWN / CHAMPAGNE CAMPAIGN



FORTY YEARS between left and right — Photos of SAM F. KIBBEY - the King of Kentucky Korn. Young and adventurous, smiling and happy in 1944 - and a serious legal eagle, 1984 - when Sam was a candidate for Atty Gen. of State of KY, got defeated, and said...“I was framed”.

“Listen to this, Sarge,” I said to Breneeda, “The entire German Nineteenth Army was practically destroyed at Montelimar. Statistically during the eight day battle the Germans suffered 11,000 casualties and 2,100 vehicles were disabled,” I paused, “Now listen to this,” I added “The Germans lost 1,500 horses at Montelimar.”

“Hilter’s old gray mares aren’t what they used to be.”

“Sarge,” I said with a sudden seriousness, “Do you think I should have shot that Jerry on Magranon Ridge?”

“For the fiftieth time, blue Eyes, you did the right thing. He wasn’t armed. But thinking it over, you did have good reason to shoot him.”

“How’s that?” I said.

Sergeant Breneeda laughed. It sounded a lot like “Pappy” Dulaney’s laugh, “Why the ungrateful Son of a Bitch never did say danke schoen, ‘Blue Eyes’ Brown.”

Sam F. Kibbey
Attorney at Law
2718 Louisa Street
Catlettsburg, Kentucky 41129

LEMBERG/BITCHE SECTOR

**Bob Martin Writes to Men of
3rd Platoon, Company B 142nd With
His Piece of the Puzzle**



Dear Editor:

Sure do like the job your doing on our "Quarterly." In my opinion it's mortar & block binding our membership together and an outstanding aid in the building of the 36th Division Association.

Earlier this year I wrote a letter to the surviving members of record who were part and parcel of the 3rd Platoon of the 142nd's Company B on January 09, 1945. The letter, a copy of which is enclosed, speaks for itself and some have suggested that it might be material for the "Quarterly."

I shall leave it up to you to determine whether it contains material you, as editor, can use. There was a lot of involvement by other units in the Lemberg/Bitche sector in early January of 1945 who might consider this story as "another piece of the puzzle."

In any event, keep up the good work; it is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,
Bob J. Martin, B/142nd
1000-E Valley Road
New Port Richey, FL 33552

THE LEMBERG/BITCHE SECTOR

January 09, 1985

Members of the 3rd Platoon
Co. B, 142nd Inf. Regiment
Fighting 36th Inf. Division

Dear Comrade in Arms:

It was forty years ago this date; a bitterly cold morning on a snow covered slope of a forested hillside near the city of Lemberg, France. Here, the hands of fate were shaping the days of our lives soon to follow the shadowy, early hours which preceeded the dawn of that awesome Tuesday. It is a day we may never fully erase from our minds.

Alsations Villages Have TWO Names

It was only six days earlier that Co. B had arrived in the small French village of St. Louis les Bitche. Without realizing, we had also arrived in the small German village of Munzthal. This apparent contradiction of names came about as a result of the numerous border disputes between France and Germany. Each claimed the village as their own, the French naming it St. Louis les Bitche and the waring, occupying Germans renaming it Munzthal. In the peace treaties following the fighting, the village would be returned to France and, again, renamed St. Louis les Bitche.

And so it was that on Wed. Jan. 03, 1945, the Third Platoon was billited in the industrial row houses along the village's only street, Lemberg Road, across from what appeared to be a large, sprawling factory. St. Louis had been hard hit by both American and German mortars and artillery. Many houses had been badly damaged and the factory had been almost destroyed. We later learned that the factory across the street was a renowned manufacturer of fine crystal dating back to its' founding in 1767. (It has been in continuous production since then and, today, produces and markets under such famous names as Sait Louis, La liqu and Baccarat.)

They Thought We Were Nazis Masquerading as Americans...

As we moved in, commandeering the villager's homes for our quarters, we found them to be cautions, reserved and, in some cases, unfriendly. Later, we learned our first attempst to communicate with them in German was grossly resented. Many of them thought we were German troops returning and masquerading as Americans as had been done earlier on fronts to our west. When our true identity became known, the fears and resentment subsided and, in many

Fighting 36th Historical Quarterly

cases, warm friendship took over. Things were looking up. If only momentarily, we were warm and well fed. Our Company kitchen had been brought forward, Supply had needed clothing and the Co. CP had mail, but best of all, we had a roof over our heads.

All things, however, must end and our brief stay in St. Louis ended on the morning of Fri. Jan. 05. when we moved out; trading the warmth and shelter of a now friendly village for the combat soldiers lot: trudging through the bone-chilling cold of snow filled woods and wind swept fields in wet, freezing clothes and cold "Cs" or "Ks" in a muddy foxhole, if we were lucky.

Little did we know! . . .

By nightfall of Jan. 05, our Platoon had moved into a position recently occupied by units of the 100th Inf. Div. They had been severely mauled by Field Marshall von Rundstedt's flanking movement around the Eastern sector of the Ardennes offensive.

The 141st had preceeded us and we took over their position in relief. The line was stretched, crooked and thin in many areas. We were under close German observation during daylight hours with any movement or sound bringing immediate mortar and automatic weapons fire. The ground was frozen hard and it took two nights of digging (more like scratching) to get our foxholes down to a useable depth.

The night of Jan. 07, our pioneer units came up to string wire which we hung with ration cans containing a few stones or empty cartridge cases, hoping their rattle would tip us off to any infiltrators. The next day we set up fields of fire for our Company mortars and by nightfall figured we had our position established as well as conditions and time permitted. That was Jan. 8th.

Tomorrow was a new day. . . We felt ready.

After darkness had fallen and the Platoon had settled in, S/Sgt "Ped" Pydynkowski and I "walked" our position and set the guard watches. Our Platoon Runner, "PeeWee" Dunn took a detail back to the Co. CP, but returned late being held up by enemy artillery fire. They finally arrived none the worse for wear, except for some bruises suffered from bumping into trees, or falling over the "knockdowns" from the mortar and artillery fire, but they didn't lose the boxes of rations or cases of ammo they were carrying and "PeeWee," being the good postman that he was, delivered the mail.

No one knew it then, but if you didn't read your mail that night, chances are you never did.

About 0500 hours the next morning, Jan. 09, 1945, we took heavy,

THE LEMBERG/BITCHE SECTOR

close-in, automatic fire from inside our wire. We had been penetrated by enemy troops clothed in white, camouflage snow suits with hoods and with their rifles and machine pistols painted white. In the half-light of the hour before dawn, they were, to all intent and purpose, invisible in the snow covered ground and trees aroundus. These troops were good, well trained and silent. (We later learned they were "SS," Hilter's "elite," dedicated and atrociously fanatical.)



They had to have moved very slowly and cautiously, without sound in the snow and through our wire, for our position was surrounded and we were unaware of them until their penetration was deep and one of our men, getting no answer to his challenge, opened fire.

All hell broke loose! . . .

We called for our mortar cover, which responded quickly and accurately, inflicting numerous casualties on the exposed invaders. We had sound-powered phone contact with our Co. CP and with Lt. Repke's Platoon CP when our lines went out. With communication cut, our mortars stopped firing and the Germans renewed their attack with a vengeance. Teams of two laid a cross-fire on selected foxholes with their machine pistols. A third member to each team was moving up with FLAMETHROWERS. The outcome, in my opinion, was inevitable.

I Was Given An Option to Surrender

I was given the option of surrender . . . I accepted. It was a command decision. Right or wrong, it had to be made and it was. I have lived with that decision ever since that moment that seemed to be hanging by a thread in time and believe now, as I did then, that it was the correct one.

With our decision made and the surrender announced, the firing stopped. We were quickly disarmed, herded together and taken off our hill through a draw and a small road toward the railroad tracks outside The City of Lemberg. At this point we were hit with a heavy artillery barrage; . . . OURS. The Germans took cover while we were forced to remain on the roadway along which we were being led. Both sides suffered casualties.

Fighting 36th Historical Quarterly

The following quotation is taken from, A HISTORY OF THE 36th INFANTRY DIVISION. "... Companies A and C of the 142nd Infantry... sliced off an enemy bulge and netted 50 prisoners on the morning of January 8. Next day the Germans threw a battalion against Lemberg, which after initial surprise, was driven off under heavy artillery concentrations."

You should know, you were there!

When the firing stopped, we were led further back from the battle line to what appeared to be a Company CP. I was interrogated, briefly, and requested medical attention for our wounded from the German officer in charge. My request was denied.

The "SS" Insignia Was The Most-Hated of All Nazi Troopers

For the first time I observed officers and men without their white camouflage suits. Their uniforms all bore the insignia of the two strokes of lightning assigned to the "SS." We were, again, brought together and marched, under heavy guard, to the city of Bitche where we entered a large underground fortress in the French Maginot Line. This time it appeared we were at a Regimental Headquarters. It was now late afternoon, the day had been long, we had been marched about 28 kilometers. Still stunned from our experience, we were tired, hungry and with probable good reason, scared.

We were turned over to higher authority, the guards were changed and I was quickly separated from the rest of you and taken some distance down the concrete tunnel where we were being held. Quite by design, I'm sure, I was placed in a position where I could observe, but not communicate with you. The interrogations began. After I was interrogated, a group of you would be taken, one by one, to be interrogated and then I would be returned for further interrogation. This method of questioning went on well into the night with each session becoming more threatening and harsh as time went on and interrogators changed.

Finally, sometime after 2300 hrs, I was told the interrogations were over; that we were considered as an uncooperative and hostile group. The officer interrogating me advised I would not be allowed to rejoin my men. "In the morning," he continued, "you will all be taken from here. You will be shot!"

These were the last words, in English, I heard on Jan. 09, 1945.

THE LEMBERG/BITCHE SECTOR

I am sure you recall how, on the following day, we were stripped of our outer winter clothing and taken outside where a heavily armed detail marched us to some nearby woods. There we were given entrenching tools and told to dig a trench. I can't remember how far our diggin had progressed, but I do remember a German officer, riding up in a motorcycle sidecar, who ordered the digging stopped

Thank god for the change in orders.

Still separated from the rest of the Platoon, we were formed into a marching column and, with a change of guard, our march into Germany began.

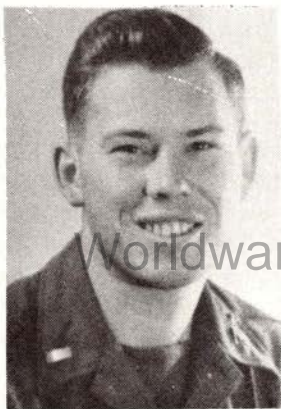
We were now, officially, American Prisoners of War. The German records listed us as "Kriegsgefangener."

What varied and singular stories each of us has to tell. How important it is that each of us hears these stories from one another.

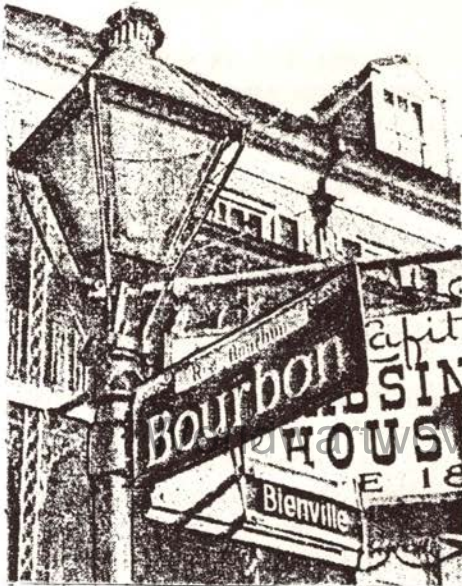
Company B, Eastern Group will be holding its' 15th Annual reunion in Lancaster, PA. August 2-4, 1985. The official notice will come later.

Will you, please, make every effort to join with me and your many friends and comrades to celebrate our 40th anniversary of the Third Platoon's ultimate victory and survival over the events we shared and which are our very own, beginning with, Tuesday, Jan 09, 1945.

Most sincerely,
Bob Martin
(3rd Platoon Leader)



THEN & NOW . . . Here's Robert J. Martin, of Co B 142nd as a young Lt. when he did R&R at the Baines Les Bains Spa in France — and NOW, Bob greets his old buddy, Harry J. Linet, of Columbus, OH at the Co B 142nd reunion last August at Detroit, Mich., the Eastern group. Martin says Harry was in his 3rd platoon that were captured Jan. 9, 1945.



famous Bourbon Street in the Vieux Carre

Training Exercise
At New Orleans

Confessions of
Conway Foster, of
Co A 111th Med. Bn.

I make it to my first every reunion last year in San Antonio and I really did enjoy it. We drove that 1,361 miles and I did find out one thing to be a fact.

When I first joined the 36th in November 1943 as a replacement, I was with the 16th EVAC Hospital at Salerno and was promoted to litter bearer with Company A, 111th Medical Battalion. These guys told me right off that the US of A was a part of Texas and, after helping drive across Texas to Dallas-Fort Worth to go down 35 to San Antonio, I had become a believer in that Texas was big.

I had never seen anything that big before or since, but I'm glad I went and I hope to be in Houston come August 29th to renew some wonderful friendships that began last year as I met a lot of T-Patchers I heretofore only read about. The biggest and most known-to-me was to be Leonard Wilkinson as I had been in touch with him through joining and bird-dogging, etc., and I had that pleasure, but found out he wasn't as big as Julian Phillips. I met Virgil White, Erwin Teggerman, Hank Gomez, E. C. Coffey, from whom I bought my T-Patcher necklace-belt buckle, etc., and so many others I am looking forward to seeing again this year.

To get back to the story I wanted to relate, I'd like to start with one from another National Guard Division, The 30th "Old Hickory" Division. I know a lot of you can associate with the Old Square Divi-

Conway Foster Discovers The French Quarter

sion, Four Infantry Regiments. Ours was composed of 117th, 118th, 120th, and 121st from Tennessee, South Carolina, North Carolina, and Georgia.

My First Promotion in the National Guard

I was born and raised in a small textile village (Cannon Mills Co.) in Concord, North Carolina. I was in my junior year of High School (10th); then we only had eleven grades. We had some Old Guardsmen around who were members of Company E, 120th Infantry, 2nd Battalion. They always went on maneuvers somewhere each summer for one or two weeks training.



CONCORD NORTH CAROLINA

Where the hell is Concord, North Carolina? (we didn't know). We found it north a few miles from Charlotte and in the area of Pinehurst, NC off Hwy US#1 where you have the World Golf Hall of Fame. But, everybody has a CANNON towel in their home, and that's the village of Concord, (home of Conway Foster) and the Cannon Mills Company.

This particular year, 1939, they were going to Hattiesburg, Mississippi for two weeks. Since I had never been out of North Carolina I was very interested in their stories. I had no way of knowing they made an effort to "get to full strength" prior to going, so one of the tactics used here was to promise you everything, and I was promised that if I would join I would get to go into New Orleans, Louisiana from Hattiesburg.

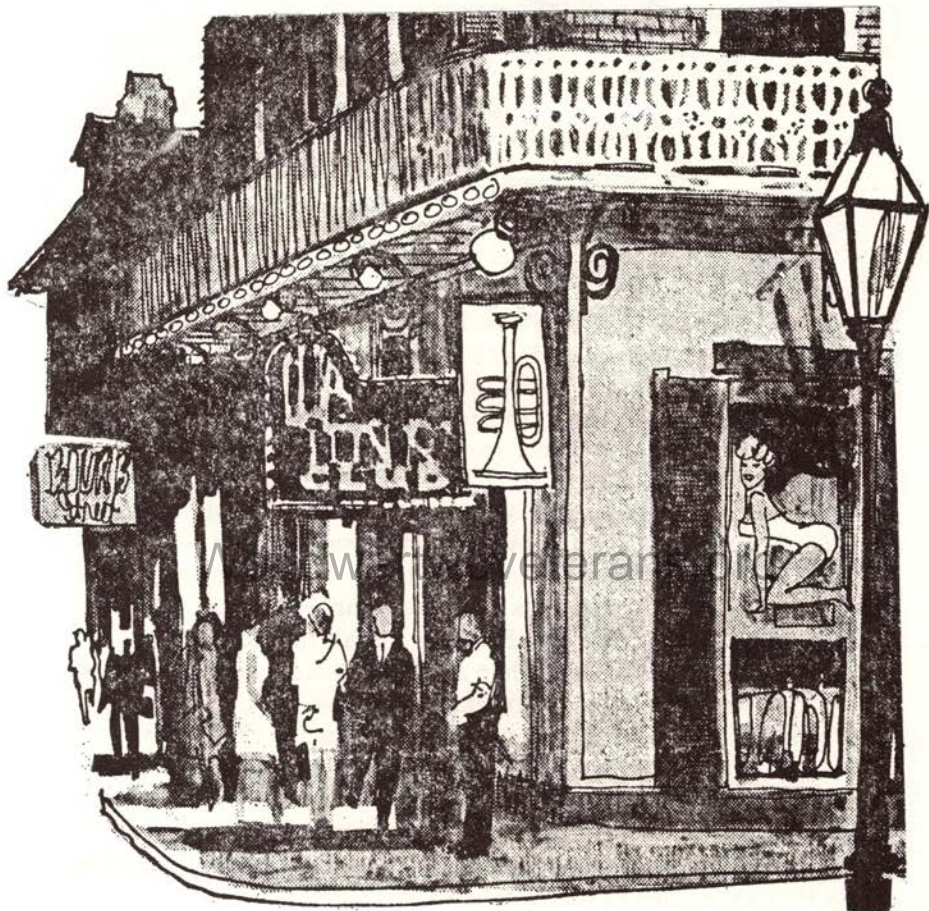
So, I joined The Guard. It was all new to me and, I'll admit, pretty exciting. We reached Hattiesburg, or they said we did — I never saw any town; all I saw was fields and trees. I was learning all the time, like setting up positions and gun emplacements, that Corporals were in charge and the Privates did all the digging.

So, after doing a lot of this, when a Sergeant came around and asked for volunteers to "drive a truck," I was the first to volunteer. They must have run out of trucks though because they gave me a shovel and showed me where the garbage pit was to be.

The first week was all work, no play. Then it was Saturday and a notice was posted on the bulletin board saying a truck would be leaving the motor pool at 5 p.m. for New Orleans. One foot note was added that only officers and non-coms were going.

I made a mad dash to the sergeants tent and reminded Sergeant Coley (Claude) of his promise, and I knew by the that Sergeants don't have to keep proomises. I asked him anyway and he siad, "Put on your khaki, a tie and cap and be at the motor pool." So I did, and I was, and I went.

As I think about it now, I can see how green I was and how much fun I was going to be to that bunch of Sergeants (old timers). Sergeant Coley (Claude), Sergeant Robinson (Humpy), and Sergeant Trull called me over to where they were sitting in the truck and informed me we would be visiting a few "cat houses." Now I knew by then what a prostitute and a whore was, but I never realized there were houses full of 'em. So I guess I started to panic and they said, "Don't worry, if one of 'em wants you to go with them, just tell her they feed you saltpeter at camp and that will do." So I calmed down and we got to New Orleans.



Conway Foster Discovers The French Quarter

You can imagine a 19-year-old from a little textile town of 2000 population right in the middle of these old heads, experienced from a lot of years in The Guard. They asked a policeman directions to one of the biggest and best places in The French Quarter, and he told them. That flabbergasted me, but I was anxious and scared too.

We came to a mansion-type house with big white columns on the front, ablaze with lights, and Sergeant Trull said, "This is it." We started u the wide white walk and were almost to the third step front when the door opened and out came Captain C. Norman Alston (our company C.O.) and another officer from F Company (Charlotte, N.C.). The sergeants all saluted and spoke and joked a bit and i tried to hide and get down into the walkway. The Captain looked right at me and said, "you better be careful Private Foster," and I didn't say a word.

We went into this big, big room where a bar took up one whole side, and there were all kinds of couches and sofas and two sets of stairs going to higher places, I guess. There were at least thirty of the most out-of-this-world femininity I have ever done looked on and they were all miling around making sure everyone was comfortable and welcome.

My throat was dry and that tie was choking me to death. One of the sergeants handed me a bottle of beer and I couldn't hardly swallow the first drink. The second went down better though and I sat down in a big chair and was really taking in all that beautiful scenery.

About that time, a redhead walked over to me and said, "Soldier, you wanna have some fun?" I looked around for my sergeants and I saw two of them headed upstairs with a blonde and a brunette. So, I looked this redhead over and man-oh-man, I ain't never seen such a figure; she must have been a distant relative of Dolly Parton.

I told her what them sergeants told me to and she said, "How much they been feeding, you," and while she was asking this question she pulled back that whatever it was and slid one arm around my neck and pulled me up against all that merchandise and then she said, "I don't believe they gave you enough saltpeter!" You know there are just some members of the body that have a will of their own, especially when you're 19 years old. Oh well, needless to say, I wound up doing like the sergeants had. I climbed them stars with the redhead. That was my first ever trip to a "House of Ill Repute." We did visit a couple of places and I won't ever forget my trip to New Orleans.

Fighting 36th Historical Quarterly

We returned to camp and everyone slept all day Sunday. No officers or non-coms were around much anyway. On Monday my platoon had been on a field exercise away from camp and, when we reached camp, Roy Hatley from another platoon came running over and said, "Con, who did you brown nose to make corporal?" I was totally in the dark myself and he said, "Its posted on the board." I had to go see for myself and on my way down there I was told to report to Captain Alston.

Then I was scared again and I didn't stop to look, but went on to the C. O.'s tent, went in and reported. The Captain had just recently married a much young-then-he was young lady and, after putting me "at ease," he said, "Foster, you know we have these training trips each year and we do a lot of necessary work and we also try to have a little fun. All of us and especially the Sergeants do not care to have what we do down here known to our families back in Concord and Kannapolis, and Sergeant Coley said you would make a good N.C.O. So I have authorized you being promoted to Corporal." So that is how I came to earn my first set of stripes.

This Colonel (Retired) C. Norman Alston lives four blocks from me and is now a widower 94 years young and has out-lived everybody in Company E, so far.

Conway S. Foster
102 Tulip Avenue S.W.
Concord, North Carolina 28025



THEN & NOW — Here's CONWAY FOSTER when he was a litter bearer for 111th Medics — and a recent foto of Conway and wife Reecie, 102 Tulip

P.S.: I have other stories I'd like to relate (at least) one being my first and last conversation with Brigadier General George S. Patton in 1942 and how a PFC (my rank in 1943) a T-Patcher became a pen pal of the head honcho of all the brass, General George Catlet Marshal, Chief of Staff.

The Saga of the One Forty Third

By William Kiessel
Co. D 143rd
(written in 1945)

They gathered us from every state but — Texas led the rest,
We have every kind of type from the worst up to the best.
So they threw us all together and told us what to do,
From digging pits to scrubbing pans and how to shine a shoe.
From Bowie on to Blanding, then maneuvers in the South Carolina,
To Edwards in the Yankee land of quiet old Falmouth.
We griped and swore as soldiers do and ever will I guess,
Complaining of our sergeants but proud never-the-less.
We slept in tents through sleet storms on wintry old Cape Cod,
Thought then the life of soldering was proving terribly hard.
Then suddenly, our time had done, we packed one lonely night,
And by the time the sun had dawned our transports were in sight.
We shouldered up our "A" Bag and so we left our home,
A-heaving G.I. beans and spam to the fishes on the foam.

In Africa one sunny day we touched once more the land;
But there were no flags a-flying nor a gaily thumping band.
"bon-bon. Chu-gum" screamed Arab kids along the dirty street,
"Ceegaret, Papa" they'd yell at every Yank they'd meet.
From G.I. trucks to cattle cars we traveled all the time,
They packed us in so tightly we lived like filthy swine.
Magenta and the other holes (we never knew the names),
Sometimes in cork-wood forests or out on sandy plains.
We learned to hunt for vermin in the lining of our shirt,
And crack them on our fingernails to hear the beggar's squirt.
We learned to sleep with perfect ease upon a muddy floor,
And envy cows and donkeys who had beds of beaten straw.
We learned to wash from helmets; mirror balanced on our knees,
Our bayonets were bread knives or prongs for tasting cheese.
We learned to cheat the natives from Oran to fair Rabat,
For in our time of training we roamed around a lot.
Then they picked us for the nasty job of pasting in the face,
The once proud troops that Hilter called the vaunted master race.

The sun was just a-settin' when we from the harbor sailed,
Men were shooting craps on deck while o'er head barage balloons
trailed.

Fighting 36th Historical Quarterly

We smashed them at Salerno beach in the heart of Italy,
It was pretty rough at first for our assaulting infantry.
Altivilla and at Sele we learned the art of dodging lead,
And keep a foot of good old earth twixt snipers and our head.
When Jerry started strafing and the planes filled us with fear,
We learned anew to pray and that God is every near.
Yes, we learned to live and lump it in this shattered land of war,
When all the face of Nature seemed a monstrous septic sore.
Where the bowels of earth hung open like the guts of something
slain,
Where the wreck and ruin of everything is bombed and bombed
again.

From Naples to Cassino we fought on "Highway Eighty-eight."
And though killing and a-slaying we tried hard not to hate.
For Jerry has his mother and his wife or sweetheart too,
He's fighting for what he thinks is right just like me and you.
We killed in solid darkness and the nights turned into day,
And living men were buried and the dead unburied lay.
For a soldier's life is hardship and he only gets his rest,
When he's stinking in a gully with some shrapnel through his
chest.

Though our hearts are heavy laden since we left peaceful Arzew,
We have learned to write home happy-like not letting on we're
blue.

Our road is long and rocky but it leads on up through Rome,
And every step on the Appian Way is coming closer home.
But at every river crossing and at towns like Venafro,
There's an added line of corpses standing row on row.
Then we read the home town papers where the "warriors" of the
pen,
Write of Christmas in the foxholes; the high morale of men.
May the horrors and the anguish and the things they never tell,
May the lies that they have written haunt them straight to hell.
Before another holocaust should ever more befall,

May God in common pity destroy us one and all.
Oh, could we learn our lesson we must not hate but love,
And follow out the precepts of God who rules above.

Be friendly with our neighbor and share with him our stores,
Eliminate the selfishness and greed that breeds our wars.
For shame if as in ages past this sacrifice of youth,
We still ignore the Judgment Day of Righteousness and Truth.

The SAGA of the ONE FORTY THIRD



Msgr. Bernard Roemer.
36th Chaplain,

This is a rare photo of Chaplain Roemer, circa 1944, sent in by William Kiessel, who sent these two photos to Capt. Roy D. Goad, CO of Co D 143rd (Capt. Boyd, below) and has this to say "Father Roemer was absolutely, unquestionably the finest men who ever walked on the face of the earth. He was terrific".

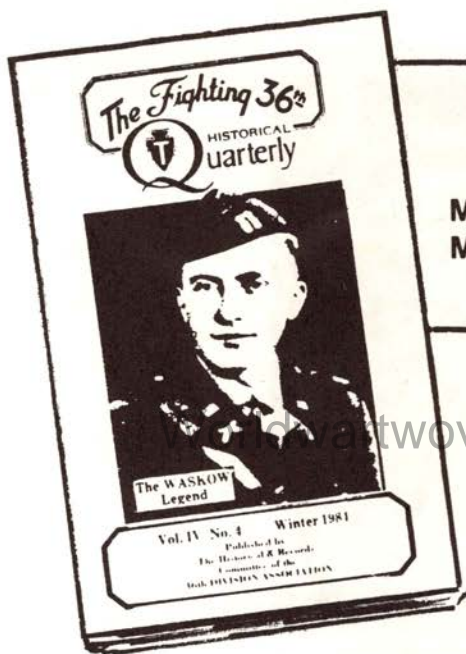
William Kiessel, Box 97, Bearsville NY 12409.

DOUGLAS BOYD (shown below) was always trying to get me to go to OCS and be a 90 day wonder because I had two years of college. We got along great and I treasured my memories of him.

Capt. D. N. Boyd of Waco was Regimental Adjutant at time this foto was made... the man in back of the trailer was later killed. Boyd was 36th Association president in 1959, reunion was held of course in Waco.



Douglas N. Boyd'



The WASKOW Legend

Mud,
Mountains and Mules . . .
and Death

PART II

The troops write when they like something, and the Waskow Cover Story brought in an array of good comments. And rightfully so. The WASKOW Legend created by Ernie Pyle will be used for the next fifty years.

An Aside to the Day THEY BROUGHT CAPT. WASKOW down from the mountain

By Alfred G. De Clute
Btry B, 133rd FA

Cpl. C. N. "Coop" Cooper and I were assigned to dig-in a 50 ca. machine gun on the side of a hill just 25 to 30 yards from the base of the trail where they brought down Capt. Waskow's body. As I recall, elements of the 10th Mountain Div. and 3rd. Rangers were on that hill also.

While "Coop" and I and others I presume (now I can't remember who) were told to dig in the machine gun so that we could get a full sweep of the valley that German aircraft were using as an entrance-exit for their bombing-strafting runs on our frontlines. Til this day, I can't understand why, we, as an F. O. party of B Btry., 133 F. A., who would normally support EASY, FOX and GEORGE Company's of the 143rd. would be there. It was a moment of history.

THE WASKOW LEGEND — Part II

As dusk approached, mules and men were bringing bodies down the trail. I did not know Capt. Waskow. Nor the others that lay on the grounds beside the road. In the failing daylight, one smaller man in G. I. garb and manor was asking questions about the dead. Nor I nor too many of the others gathered there could answer. He took no notes at the time that we stood there. He as dis we all sensed, here was a special someone, honored and respected. A leader of men.

For just a moment we must have all looked at those bodies and said to ourselves "There but for the grace of God." Could we have filled his shoes? I doubt it, but we could have been just as dead.

Death ws no stranger to the men of a line Company, but death with dignity and love was an earned tribute to Capt. Waskow on that nite as Ernie Pyle wrote "Of Mules and Men". Only after the story came out in Stars and Strips, did I learn that the man asking the questions, was Ernie Pyle.

A. G. "Al" De Clute

Another damnyankee from Coldwater, Mich. Took Field Artillery training in Fort Bragg, N.C. Joined B Btry., 133rd F. A. in Camp Edwards, Mass. approx. three weeks prior to t he 36th. Div. going overseas. As a gun crewman under Sgt. Bill Thompson from Kerens, Tx. until some time before the San Pietro offensive. Then to become part of an F. O. party for the duration.

Returned to the States with the 63rd. Div. at Newport News, then to Camp Sheridan for discharge as Cpl.

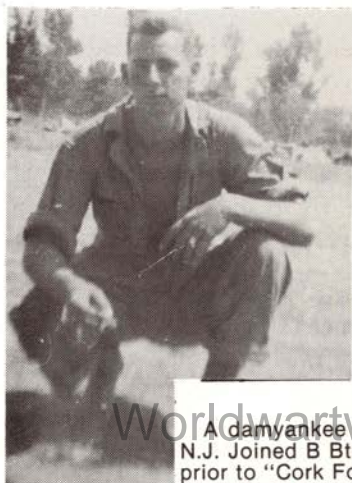
Along with the invasion Arrowheads, Campaign Stars and Ribbons also awarded the Bonze Star and Purple Heart.

Married in 1947. On step sone, one dauther, three grandsons and even a couple of greatgrandsons.

Retired from Business in 1982. Wife Joan, died in Jan. 1985.



Fighting 36th Historical Quarterly



Here's "Coop" Cooper, Italy 1944 just before we went to Southern France. "Found it in my old scrapbook", says Al De Clute. "The one of me on page 71 was made Sept. 15 1944 in France. Old Coop and I were destined to become great friends after the war."

C. N. "Coop" Cooper

A dandy Yankee who entered the Service from Long Branch, N.J. Joined B Btry., 133 F. A. of the 36th. Division some time prior to "Cork Forest" as a Cpl. He trained in the States as a 90mm Ack Ack gun crewman.

Became part of an F. O. party in B Btry. shortly after the invasion of Italy and stayed on in that capacity until the end of the war.

Returned to the States with the 36th. Division as a Sgt. with all the Ribbons, Arrowheads, Stars and Honors accorded the 36th.

Married in 1948, has one Son and one Daughter and I think he is a granddad now. He is retired from U. S. Govt. Service. An avid baseball fan.



OLD BUDDIES of Btry B 133rd F.A. Bn., enjoying America's Favorite sport -Hot Dogs, Apple Pie and oldtime Fellowship - ballgame at Fort Lauderdale Feb. 1985. Photo from De Clute, 105 Royal Park Drive, Fort Lauderdale FL 33309 - and Cooper, resides at: 592 Irving Place, Long Branch NJ 07740.

ED note: Our thanks to De Clute for this very fine item, which proves that "fellowship" of T-Patcher is alive and well".

THE WASKOW LEGEND — Part II

Dear Editor:

Ernie Pyle's story, CAPTAIN WASKOW'S MEN SAY GOODBYE, is a masterpiece. It is poignant, a deeply human interest story that graphically portrays what death is like in war. It is probably the most widely read story of World War II.

However, the reader is told only that Waskow's men liked him, he got killed, and Ernie Pyle was there. If Pyle hadn't been there, Waskow would have been just another casualty.

I knew Henry. He came on active duty on M-Day with Company I, 143rd Infantry, the Belton company, and was a protegee of Lt Col Henry H. Carden, originally commander of Co. I, and later regimental adjutant, and still late the Regimental exec. Waskow was a nice young fellow who had few negative personality traits, kept his nose clean, and didn't make waves.

However, he has become a legend, and that is good. Thanks Ernie. We needed that.

I've got three pieces in mind for future quarterlies. Will try to get one of them in ASAP.

Fraternally yours,

C. A. Williamson

12653 King Oaks San Antonio, Tex. 78233

Capt. Henry T. Waskow of Belton, TX (143rd) has become a Texas folklore hero of WWII for all us Lone Stars. Here's a quote from Col. Oran Stovall:

Dear Editor: **Your Waskow story was excellent, and a long time in coming. I knew Henry very well and all things said about him were deserved. Along with Bowden, Andrews, Yates, Minor of a dozen officers I**

could name — were all the cream of young Texas men. We were all better because we knew them. The commander is 'everything' to the men of his company... Waskow as an inspiration to his soldiers."

Del Dendall, Muskegon, Mich. (A/143rd) has been the most prolific contributor to the Quarterly, sayd: "**Your latest issue was super from start to finish, the Waskow story was the BEST ever. Keep up the good work."**



Dear Editor:

Enjoyed reading about ERNIE PYLE in the last issue of the Quarterly, and I remember making a snapshot of his grave marker, Punch Bowl Cemetery, outside Honolulu, when we visited there a few years ago. Also recall reading about Ernie's remarks about Waskow in American Heritage Pictorial History of WWII, (page 387 & 386) by C.L. Sulzberger.

E. Pat Stapleton
2133 Holmes Avenue
Springfield IL 62704

Ernie Pyle



Dine to Jary: Dear Editor -

I write a column for the weekly Martha's Vineyard Times. "On/Off Island", the latest is my tribute to Ernie Pyle. Please send me six copies of the Vol. IV No. 4 1984 issue (your story about Waskow) - for friends of Ernie who are still active in the news media.

Thanks for the generous handing of my, "Sir, You're Nuts" piece in same issue. Received a very flattering note from Col. Oran Stovall.

Signed Joe, 6/24/84

THE MARTHA'S VINEYARD TIMES

Thursday, June 13, 1985

On/Off Island

By Joe Dine

Ernie Pyle was the GI's war reporter

Rome fell on June 5, 1944 — a day of triumph for Allied forces in the Italian campaign, one for which they had fought and died since September 9, 1943, when the 36th (Texas) Infantry Division invaded Salerno in Southern Italy in the first successful attack on the European mainland.

Allied soldiers, so weary after the bloody battles of Italy after Salerno — which included the Rapido River, Monte Cassino, Anzio — were uplifted by cheers of the hysterical Romans as they moved through the city.

But the next day was June 6, 1944, and the awed attention of the world turned from the capture of Rome, the

first European capital to fall to the Allies, to the Normandy invasion, that magnificent action which all hoped would soon bring the war to an end.

The gigantic new invasion, of course, brought about a major shift in all aspects of the war. One that was little-known was that some of the media stars among the war correspondents were quietly transferred from Italy to England, to be on hand for the invasion because public attention to their efforts was important to all commands. Press camps in each theater did their best to attract and keep war correspondents to ensure coverage of

that particular battle and its commanders.

One of the top war correspondents who left Italy for the larger story was the legendary Ernie Pyle, who worked for the Scripps-Howard newspapers, and who had become famous as the GI's reporter because he spent so much time with the lowly infantry soldiers.

Pyle was loved by the front line troops because he wrote about them as people, not as part of sweeping strategic moves. Instead of simply accepting an Army bulletin that might report, "It was quiet, with occasional probing patrols," Pyle would find the soldiers of one of those patrols and write a human interest column of what they did and what it cost in casualties — not in numbers, but in human terms.

One of his unforgettable columns was about Capt. Henry Waskow, commanding Company I, 143rd Infantry Division, 36th Infantry Division, in which I served. Waskow was killed on December 14, 1943, in Italy. The current issue of the highly respected Historical Quarterly of the 36th Division reprints the column, a tribute to Capt. Waskow by his men.

Pyle's words brought tears to fighting men and their families:

"I was at the foot of the mule train the night they brought Capt. Waskow down.

The men in the road seemed reluctant to leave. They stood around, and gradually I could sense them moving, one by one, close to Capt. Waskow's body.

"One soldier came and looked down, and he said out loud, 'God damn it.'

"That's all he said and he walked away.

"Another man came. I think he was an officer. It was hard to tell officers from men in the dim light, for everybody was bearded and grimy. The man looked down into the dead captain's face and then spoke directly to him, as though he were alive, 'I'm sorry, old man.'

"Then a soldier came and stood beside the officer and bent over, and he, too, spoke to his dead captain, not in a whisper, but awfully tenderly and he said, 'I sure am sorry, sir.'

Then the first man squatted down, and he reached down and took the dead hand, and he sat there for five full minutes, holding the dead hand in his own, and looking intently into the dead face, and he never uttered a sound all the time he sat there.

"And then, finally, he put the hand down, and then reached up and gently straightened the points of the captain's shirt collar, and then he sort of rearranged the tattered edge of his uniform around the wound. And then he got up and walked away down the road in the moonlight, all alone. . . ."



Our thanks to Joe Dine, who has contributed several great stories he had written for military publications, and graciously offered them to us for re-print.

Nazi Propaganda For The Homefront

Lustige Blätter

Berlin, den 18. Juni 1943

Nr. 26 / 56. Jahrgang

£

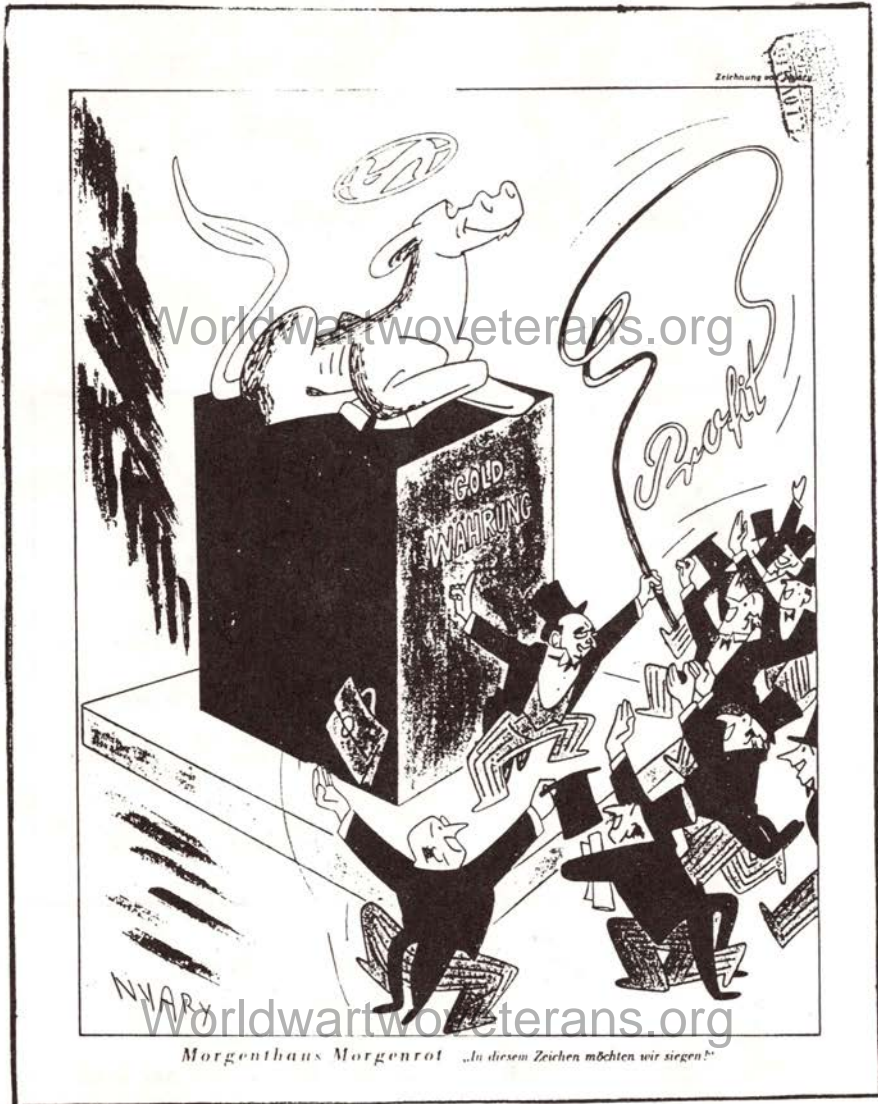


Zeichnung von Balne

Eine fleischfressende Pflanze

TRANSLATED: - Lustige means "merry", Blatter means "paper" so we can call this a FUNNY PAPER, comic style. The Nazis loved to characterize the JEWS as "blooming idiots" (a plant) growing out of a flower pot, backed by American and British interests. EINE FLEISCHFRESSENDE PFLANZE means "One flesh-Eating Plant" (please note the bones). This issue is dated June 18, 1943, Berlin. Printed in full color, 9" X 12" was loaded with anti-Jewish cartoons and anti-British/American put-downs. Most of the German populations - believed this as the TRUTH.

Wall Street Worship the Golden Calf



WORSHIP OF THE GOLDEN CALF (Gold Currency) shows all the Wall Streets Money-merchants, with the leader with a whip, labeled "profit". This of course, is a no-no in a dictatorship. MORGENTHAUS MORGANROT (corrupt House of Morgan) IN DIESEN ZEICHEN MOCHTEN WIR SIEGEN - means - within this dilemma we conquer! The propaganda experts of the Nazis had a field day in running-amuck, stooping to new lows - in their effort to create "HATRED" for the Jews and all the Allies. (Our thanks to Erwin Teggeman for his assistance in this one.


The Fighting 36th



HISTORICAL QUARTERLY



The QUARTERLY is a vehicle designed to seek, record and print stories (all kinds) about the encounters of the valient men who took our adversaries To Task while proudly wearing the old T-PATCH.



Run Up the Ol' Lone Star!

THERE'S 8 MILLION STORIES IN THE 36th! You know that. But, we need to get while we have the time to tell it . . . that's what the QUARTERLY is all about.

Bear in mind . . . NOBODY else has offered such a privilege to their membership . . . I kid thee not!

"Remember the Alamo"

REMEMBER THE ALAMO! Remember Salerno, St. Pietro, Rapido River and Cassino, Anzio and a couple dozen othrs. We broke more records than ELVIS . . . and the blood-stained history of the 36th has been hailed as, next to other battles of America's history . . . so you outta — write it now . . . later, may be too late!



A Damn Good Investment!

TAKE STOCK in the 36th . . . it'll pay great dividends — cause it's your responsibility to LEAVE something of the history of the FIGHTIN' 36th for your grandkids,, and their kids . . .

WE ONLY PRINT so many, and some are out of print — . . . so fill out and send this order blank to LENWLK, and he'll take care of it . . . but don't wait . . . TIME'S RUNNIN' OUT!

Thanks, Ole Timer



Help!

We got a flock of left-over issues of Vol. IV 1984 (shown below) and we need to put 'em in the hands of the troops. ORDER a set (4) for grandkids, friends etc. NOW!



order NOW, make your check out –
 “Fighting 36th Historical Quarterly” and mail to:

LEONARD WILKERSON, P. O. Box 2049,
 MALAKOFF, TEXAS 75148

Here's my check for \$_____ for the following:

- Set of Vol. III 1983 issues
 (4) @ \$12.00
- Set of Vol. IV 1984 issues
 (4) @ \$15.00
- Set of Vol. V, 1985 issues
 (4) @ \$15.00

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Unit Served _____

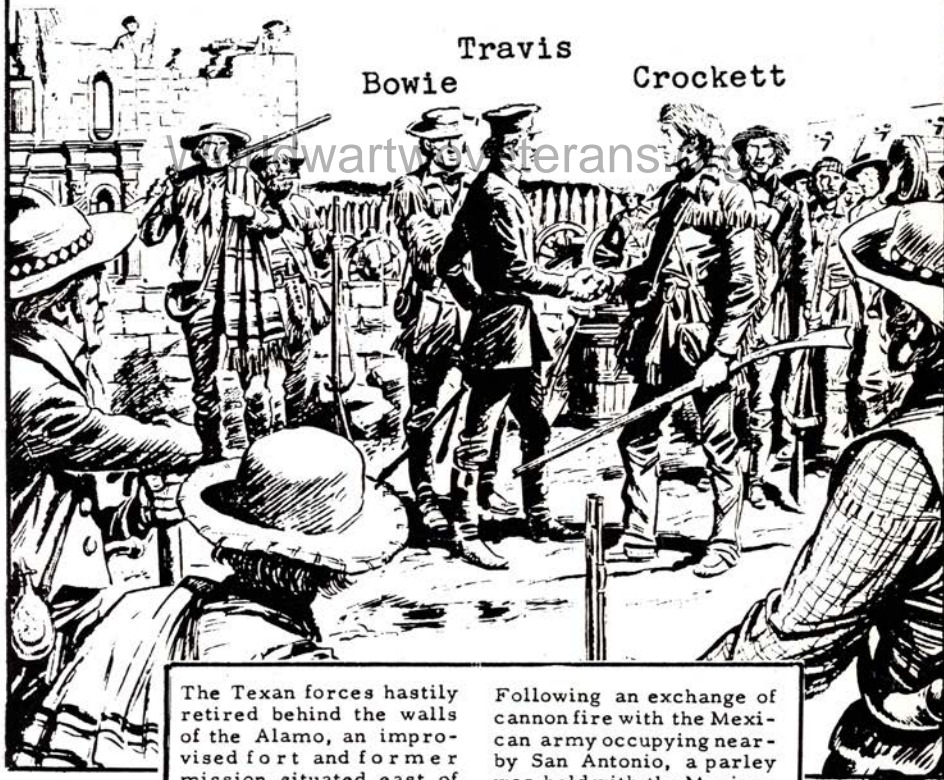


9-85

Worldwartwoveterans.org

Worldwartwoveterans.org

1836-1986
WAR
SESQUI-CENTENNIAL



Travis
Bowie Crockett

The Texan forces hastily retired behind the walls of the Alamo, an improvised fort and former mission situated east of the town. They numbered over 150 men, among them the celebrated Davy Crockett, frontiersman, bear hunter, and ex-U.S. congressman from Tennessee. Earthworks and gun platforms had been thrown up inside the walls of the old mission grounds, and two couriers (Dr. Sutherland and John W. Smith) were dispatched to Gonzales for help.

Following an exchange of cannon fire with the Mexican army occupying nearby San Antonio, a parley was held with the Mexican officer in charge. His demand for unconditional surrender of the Alamo garrison was answered by a cannon shot and the siege was on! Santa Anna himself soon arrived in San Antonio and from the tower of San Fernando Cathedral hoisted the blood-red banner of NO QUARTER!