

The Fighting 36th
HISTORICAL
Quarterly



Unveiled NOW — For First Time —
SECRET MISSION TO NORTH AFRICA

Vol. VI, No. 2 — Summer 1986

Published by
36th DIVISION ASSOCIATION

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The Fighting 36th



HISTORICAL

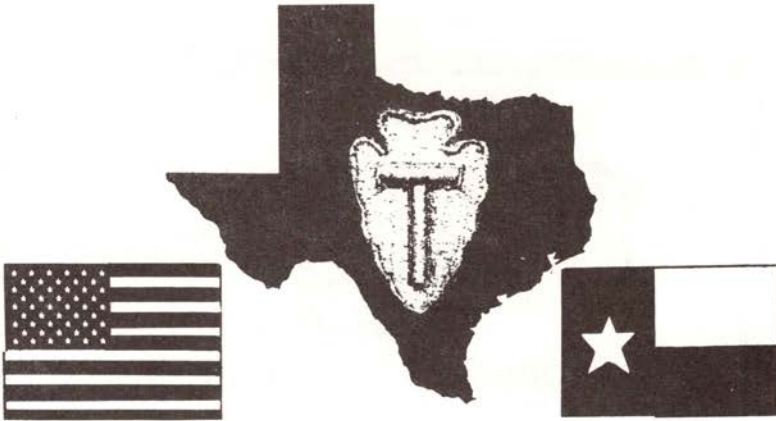
QUARTERLY

THIRTY SIXTH
TEXAS
DIVISION ASSOCIATION



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36th DIVISION ASSOCIATION



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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.

Vol. VI, No. 2

– Summer 1986



WorldWarTwoVeterans.org
**36th INFANTRY DIVISION
ASSOCIATION**

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



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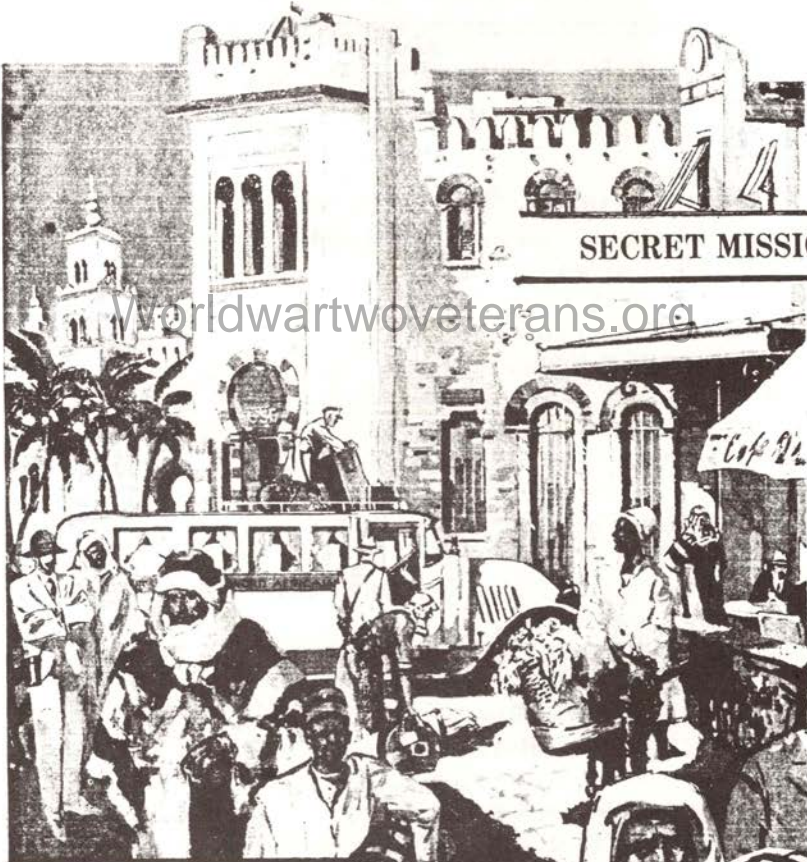
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Cover Story



SECRET MISSION

CAUTION:

This is not a cloak and Dagger Top Secret Mission — just has never been told before! The hundred T. Patchers involved found a strange land, and some most unusual native Arabs.

Casablanca



BRIGADIER GENERAL OTTO F. LANGE

General Lange joined the 36th as Assistant Division Commander at Camp Blanding, Fla., in the spring of '42. He served in that capacity during the final training days on the East Coast and in North Africa.

**Brigadier General OTTO LANGE,
Assistant Division Commander
Commands ADVANCED DETACHMENT to
North Africa — March 1943**

**by JOHN W. MOORE
736 Ordnance**

In the early part of March 1943, while the 36th Division was at Camp Edwards and getting ready to be shipped over seas, General Walker formed an Advanced Detachment, with General Lange in command, to go to North Africa ahead of the main portion of the Division. This was a very secretive and confidential mission and was given very little publicity, therefore there has likewise been very little written or published about it.

For several years, Bill Jary and I have discussed this and we both agreed that it would be good to write an article about this group for the Quarterly and I am just now finding time to set down and write about some of the things that I remember about that trip. Not only has it been over forty three years ago, but my memory was not too good even at that time. (I use to always carry a rock in my right hand when I was on the drill field). With the able assistance of my good friend, and fellow member of the Detachment, Col. Oran

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Stovall, we have come up with what we think is an accurate and complete list of the names of the officers assigned to this Detachment.

There was at least one officer and one enlisted man from each Divisional Headquarters, each Infantry Regimental unit, each Artillery Battalion unit, each Special Troops unit, and the attached 636th T. D. Bn.

LIST OF OFFICERS IN THE ADVANCED DETACHMENT

Brigadier General Otto F. Lange	Hq. 36th Inf. Div.
Colonel Thomas J. Shryock	Hq. 36th Div. Arty.
Lt. Col. Andrew F. Price	141st Inf. Reg.
Lt. Col. Samuel S. Graham	142nd Inf. Reg.
Major Willis T. Ellis	133rd FA Bn.
Major Frank E. Fulgham	131st FA Bn.
Major Frank J. Hobbs	Hq. 36th Div. Arty.
Major James W. Nichols	Hq. 36th Inf. Div.
Major Clifford M. Snow	132nd FA Bn.
Major Oran C. Stovall	111th Eng. Bn.
Major James (NMI) Taylor	155th FA Bn.
Major Fred L. Walker, Jr.	143rd Inf. Reg.
Capt. William B. Mobley	142nd Inf. Reg.
Capt. Aubrey P. Nathan	141st Inf. Reg.
Capt. Joe P. Parish	143rd Inf. Reg.
Capt. Ralph (NMI) Phelan	111th Med. Bn.
Capt. Bernis W. Sadler	111th Eng. Bn.
Capt. Robert H. Travis	Hq. 36th Inf. Div.
Capt. Joel W. Westbrook	143rd Inf. Reg.
Capt. George C. Fugate	142nd Inf. Reg.
1st Lt. Joseph D. Alston, Jr.	36th Sig. Co.
1st Lt. Joseph (NMI) Burk	141st Inf. Reg.
1st Lt. Richard M. Burrage	143rd Inf. Reg.
1st Lt. Henry T. Conlin	636th TD Bn.
1st Lt. Frank M. Hamby	142nd Inf. Reg.
1st Lt. Parkhurst C. Hough	141st Inf. Reg.
1st Lt. Jess W. Jones	Hq. 36th Inf. Div.
1st Lt. William P. Jones	36th Qm. Co.
1st Lt. James L. Minor	142nd Inf. Reg.
1st Lt. Claude D. Roscoe	141st Inf. Reg.
1st Lt. Robert E. Sadler	141st Inf. Reg.
1st Lt. Robert H. Skiles	143rd Inf. Reg.
1st Lt. Charles W. Walker	Hq. 36th Inf. Div.
1st Lt. Martin W. Williamson	Hq. 36th Div. Arty.
2nd Lt. James E. Chatley	111th Med. Bn.
2nd Lt. Edward W. Green	Hq. 36th Inf. Div.
2nd Lt. Robert L. Gutterman	36th Recon. Tr.
2nd Lt. John W. Moore	736 Ord. (LM) Co.
2nd Lt. Reynolds D. Rodgers	636th TD Bn.

There was no way we could come up with a list of the names of the enlisted men that were in this group, but if any of you readers out there was a member, or know of a member please drop me a line and we will publish an updated membership list in the next Quarterly.

SECRET MISSION — Advanced Detachment to North Africa — 1943

“We Board H.M.S. ANDES, a British Luxury Ship, Converted for Troops — and Travel NOT IN A CONVOY. . .Crossed the Atlantic in Only Eight Days.”

The weather was fair to excellent all during the entire trip with only a couple bad days and the sea was never very rough. I did not get sea-sick at any time, but there were some that were not quite as lucky. Lt. Penn Jones got sick the minute he boarded the ship and stayed sick the entire trip. There was also a group of the colored soldiers from the Quartermaster Laundry Unit that were sick most of the time. Those poor guys would just lay around on the deck, afraid they were going to die and wishing to hell they could. They turned from black to a ghostly yellowish purplish green, and I am sure they felt as bad as they looked.

Each morning we would have life boat drill, followed by some exercises which consist of a brisk walk around the decks. Some days we would have meetings for lectures or instructions, but most of the time we were free to do as we liked. You could sit on the upper deck and watch the passing ships, read a book in the lounge (the mess hall was used as a lounge between meals) or participate in some of the games like volley ball, shuffle deck and boxing, or you could always find a penny-ante poker game.

Occasionally the band would play and you would hear some of the old favorite songs like “Deep in the Heart of Texas,” “Drinking Rum and Cocacola,” “Chattanooga Chu Chu,” “Beer Barrel Polka,” “Don’t Fence Me In,” “As Time Goes By,” and many others, which would bring back memories of a happier time back home. There was also a bar in the Officers lounge which was opened in the evenings where we could get a glass of wine or a good mixed drink which would help pass the time away.

CASABLANCA...What a City — We Arrived on March 28th...First Stop — “Rick’s Bar...”

On the eighth day at sea we finally sailed into the harbor of Casablanca on March 28th. We were not allowed on deck as we approached the harbor, but from the port-hole we could see that several of the dock buildings had been damaged by bombs and there were many wrecked or scuttled ships laying in the harbor, including the famous French Battle Ship “JEAN BART” that was scuttled by the French Navy November 8, 1942 rather than surrendering to the Germans. After reaching the docks we quietly and quickly disembarked in a very orderly manner under the instructions bellowed to us over the loud speakers from the ships Captain.

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MAGENTA, ALGERIA is our Destination, A Three Day Overland Trip Via Truck

After leaving the ship we were met by a member of the Port Officials that directed us to a group of waiting trucks that carried us to a camp area East of the City where we were to bivouac for the next several days while we were making the necessary preparations for a three day trip to Magenta. After we landed Lt. Penn Jones felt much better and regained his natural color. While the top echelons were busy making the usual preparations, we in the lower echelon were given some free time to visit the City and see some of the sights.



Members of Detachment
having C Ration dinner
on beach at Casablanca

Lt. Gutterman and I hired a French guide with a horse and buggy to tour the area and it was well worth the two hundred Francs (about fifty cents). We asked the driver to take us to "Ricks Bar," made famous from the picture show Casablanca, and sure enough he took us to one, but it did not look like the one in the mvie and there was no piano player named Sam.

Sightseeing tour of
Casablanca, Lt. Roger
Gutterman and Lt. John
Moore hire a dirver and
look for Rick's American
Bar



SECRET MISSION — Advanced Detachment to North Africa — 1943

To our surprise there was a large sign with a T-Patch and saying "Welcome 36th Div." We had removed our T-Patches from our uniforms when we left Camp Edwards but some how the French and Arab natives knew all about our division. The little kids on the street would greet you with "Hey Joe, You from Texas?" and then sing a few verses of "Deep in the Heart of Texas." They could all speak two or three languages; French, English and possibly Arabic and Spanish, and they were always trying to bum a cigarette, chocolate or chewing gum.



PURPOSE OF OUR MISSION . . .

The purpose or duty of the Advanced Detachment was to go to Africa ahead of the Division and get things lined up ahead of time and to have the bivouac area ready when General Walker and the rest of the Division arrived.

When I first received my orders assigning me to this Detachment I was kinda skeptical about it because every thing was Top Secret and we knew nothing for sure just what it was. In my Company, being the lowest ranking officer, I was use to getting off-beat assignments like V.D. Officer, Chemical Warfare Officer, etc., but it did not bother me at the time. In fact it turned out to be just the opposite, and I went to Africa on a Luxury Liner rather than a slow Troop Ship.

We left Camp Edwards March 17, 1943 via rail road from Falmouth to Fort Hamilton, New York P.O.E. We were quarantined, given typhus immunization shots, and set around the barracks reading or playing cards while we were waiting for the orders to get on board the ship. We were allowed liberty for one more final night on the town and Lt. Gutterman and I took full advantage of it and arrived back at Fort Hamilton just in time to get our bags and get ready to depart.

It was March 21st when we marched single file with all of our baggage up the gang-plank of the H.M.S. ANDES, a British Luxury Ship converted to a troop transport ship. That night, under cover of darkness we sailed out of the harbor, past the statue of liberty, out

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into the open sea headed for an unknown destination. It was not until the fourth day out that we were told that Casablanca, Africa was our destination. The ANDES was fast enough that we did not have to go in a convoy like the slower ships did, but she did go in a zig-zag course to prevent from becoming a target for the German submarines.

We were assigned to state rooms, not real large, but ample, with four bunk beds to accommodate four persons. I consider this rather luxurious compared with the usual crowded quarters of the smaller Troop Ships. The enlisted men of our detachment were not quite as lucky as the officers, but they were still a lot better off than the troops on the smaller ships. We were served two meals a day; a big breakfast and an early dinner. The British cooks were very good and the food was always appetizing and well prepared. My only complaint was that we had to wear our number one uniform (blouse) for all meal formations.

There were several other units aboard the H.M.S. ANDES with us; a Tank Division, a Field Hospital Unit, a colored Quartermaster Laundry Unit, and a band. This all helped make the trip more enjoyable, as the band would play and we would dance with the nurses. (The head nurse was strict as hell and really kept a tight rein on her nurses.)

I do not remember the name of the Captain of our ship, but he ran a tight ship and a clean ship. He was always in command. He would come on the air over the loud speaker numerous times each day with weather reports, war news, or any other pertinent information. He was very strict about sanitation, cleaning up our quarters, and complying with black-out regulations.

Here's Lt. Gutterman and others of the Detachment at a French Garrison



The French guide also drove us out to the ANFA Hotel where F. D. R. and Churchill had just a few months earlier had their famous meeting. When we returned to our camp that afternoon we found that we had been the victim of some Arab burglars that had sneaked up in the underbrush on the back side of the camp and had burglarized several of the furthest tents. They had not only taken some of the blankets and bags of clothing, but also some of the rope and canvas of the tents.

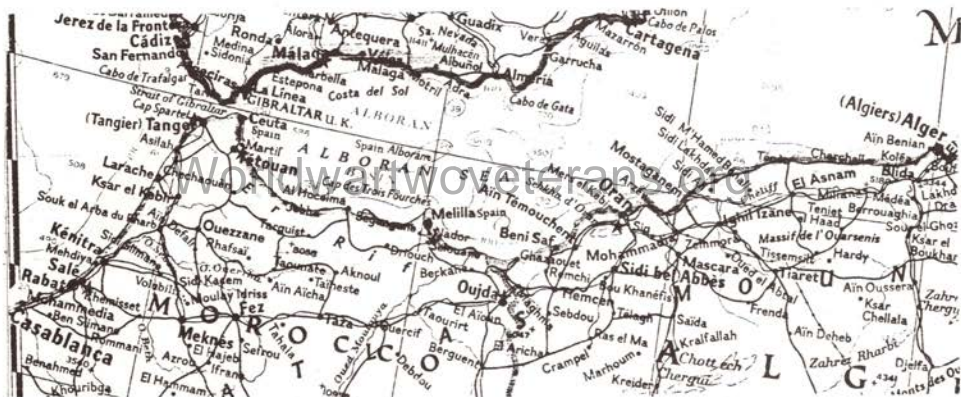
SECRET MISSION — Advanced Detachment to North Africa — 1943



Above left foto: Lt. John (Dub) Moore, who didn't Walk a Mile for a Camel, they were all over the place and he gets a close look at an amazing creature. Right top — Here's Col. Andy Price, Col. Samuel Graham and Col. Aubrey Nathan in the area between Casablanca and Rabat.

We See a Strange and Ancient Land of Mystery and Intrigue...

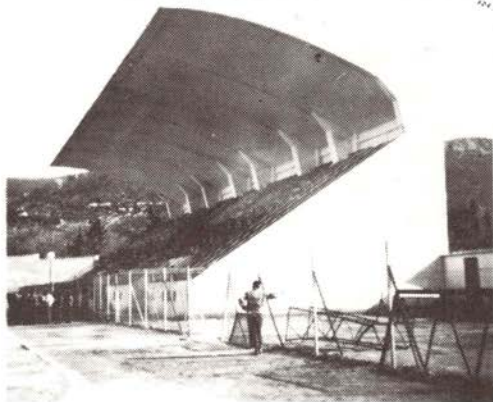
On March 29th we loaded into the back of Army Trucks, formed a convoy of about eight vehicles and headed Eastward to our final destination. The first large town that we came to was Rabat, the capital City of Morocco, which looked pretty from a distance, but when we got there it was dirty and filthy, much like the border town in Mexico. We did pass a lot of beautiful fruit orchards, vineyards and gardens. The country side was much like that of California and Arizona. We also saw many stork nests built on the chimneys of the farm houses. The natives considered it a good omen to have a stork build a nest on their chimney.



Look close, you will see — Casablanca — then Rabat, Meknez and on to Fez, then Taza, Guercif, Oujda, Tlemcen, Sidi Bel Abbes — and Oran and the Magenta area — where the 36th will first be billeted on arrival — April 13th 1943.

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After a brief relief stop in Rabat we drove on to Meknes, past the Cork Forest and on to Fes where we spent the night. The next day we drove to Taza and on to Guercif where we stopped at an Army Gasoline dump and refilled all of the vehicles and our gasoline cans and then proceeded on to Oujda where we spent the second night. The area we passed through today was more arid and dusty with more brushland suitable only for goats rather than orchards and gardens. The weather was good, mild and sunny during the day but rather cool during the night.



Top left: Maj. James Taylor near Guercif, on convoy between Fez and Oujda.

Above: Here's Lt. Penn Jones taking a good look at an Arab kid near Taza on convoy.

Left: Soccer field stadium at Tlemcen where we spent the night enroute to Magenta, Algeria.

The next day we drove on to Tlemcen and camped in a Sports Arena with a small but very modern stadium, primitive but welcome bathroom facilities, and a good fenced area for the motor pool and sleeping area. We arrived fairly early in the afternoon and after we settled down, got our bed rolls lined up, finished our c-rations, it was still too early to hit the sack so most of us freshend up a little by taking a French bath, and then we proceeded to walk back to the town to see the sights. It was the regular French village with lots of old buildings, numerous shops for tourists, several sidewalk cafes where you could buy a glass of wine, and the usual crowd of kids following you around trying to bum cigarettes and chewing gum.

SECRET MISSION — Advanced Detachment to North Africa — 1943

It did not take long for me to see all I wanted to see so I walked back to our camp, but evidently some of the others must have found something to entertain them for they stayed pretty late. Most of us had already gone to bed, anyway I was already asleep when I was suddenly awakened by a confusion of noise, rifle shots, and guard commands to HALT. We got up and went down to the guard post and found it was only Major Walker coming back to camp. I don't think he had too much wine, so he must have forgotten the pass word or lost his crickett. Any way he wouldn't talk about it so we all went back to sleep.

We left Tlemcen early the next morning and drove to Sidi Bel Abbes where we stopped for a rest and ate our C rations, then proceeded on to our final destination of Magenta. Here we set up camp and remained for the next several days with the task of getting the area ready for the Division before they arrive. Each unit was assigned a certain area and it was the duty of the advanced officer to make their areas and put up directional signs so the new arriving troops could find their respective sights. The 111th Engineers were also building shower units in the area so the troops could have a shower after their tired and dusty trip from the Port of Oran to the bivouac area.

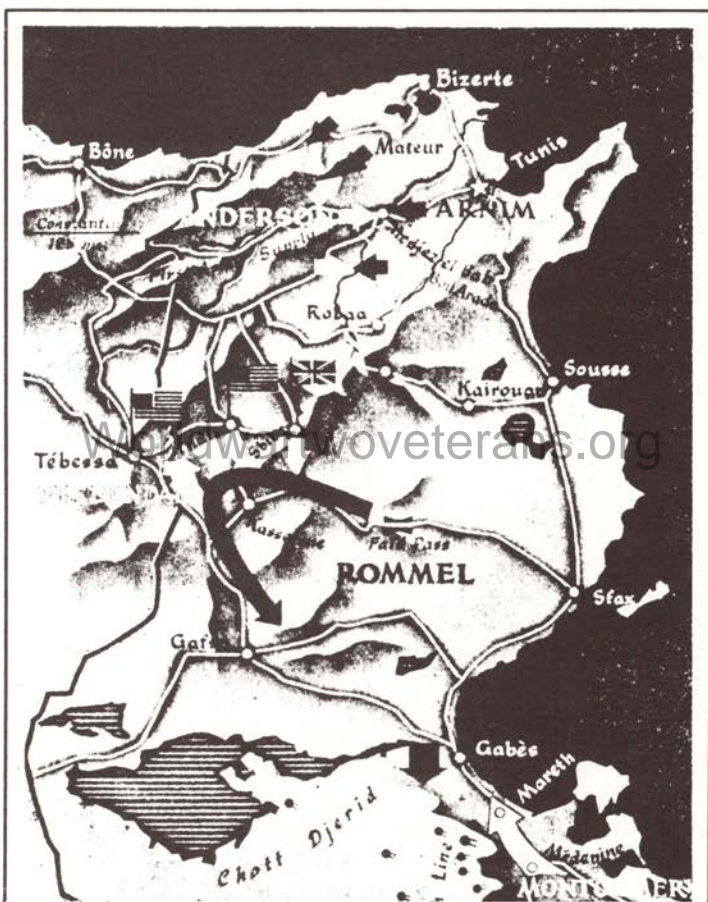
MEANWHILE — BACK AT CAMP EDWARDS . . .

Meanwhile back at Camp Edwards, General Walker and the remainder of the Division were loading up on ships in the New York harbor. It took five ships to hold the entire Division and their equipment. Those five ships were the BRAZIL, the ARGENTINA, the GIBBONS, the BARRY, and the HAWAIIAN SHIPPER. On April 1, 1943 they sailed out of New York harbor and thirteen days later they landed in Oran, Algeria, about one hundred miles from the bivouac area at Magenta. When they landed in Oran it was a long slow process getting the men off, then getting the equipment off, and then getting the right equipment to the right men.

In the meantime the men were stationed or camped on Goat Hill, just a few miles South East of the City of Oran, while they waited for their equipment to be unloaded. After they received their equipment they were allowed to move on toward the Magenta Bivouac area, some by trucks and some by French trains.

In the processing procedure at the Port of Oran, the services of the Quartermaster and Ordnance personnel were required longer than the other units, therefore the 736th Ord. LM Co. was among the last units to leave and it was not until April 25th that Captian Ben Swank and the rest of the 736 Ord. Company joined me at the bivouac area near Magenta, thus ending my advanced Detachment service.

LOOK-BACK at the DESERT WAR IN TUNISIA



This map from the March 8 issue of TIME shows the area of Africa, some 230 miles wide and 350 miles long, in which U.S. and British forces eventually trapped the Afrika Korps. Less than five months after breaking out at El Alamein (off the map) some 1,500 miles away, General Bernard Law Montgomery is about to crash through the Mareth Line with his British 8th Army. Meanwhile, other Allied units have begun consolidating their positions in French North Africa and Tunisia. U.S. troops under General Lloyd Fredendall have suffered a serious defeat at the Kasserine Pass, but they will soon rally under the command of General George S. Patton. The Tunisian port city of Bizerte will fall to the Allies in May, and the last elements of the Axis forces in Africa will be wiped out.

The map above and story that follows was taken from one of our favorite sources of 'time and places' — "TIME CAPSULE". **History of The War Years, 1939-1945**, taken from pages of TIME Magazine. Having an argument about events of WWII? The answers are IN this book.

In March 1943, we read the papers, but some of it may be hazy after 40 plus years, so this DESERT WAR, when Erwin Rommel was a headline maker, would so fold mid-May. Could be that the Nazis called it quits when they found out that the Fighting 36th was ON THE WAY. So read on —

SECRET MISSION — Advanced Detachment to North Africa — 1943

WORLD BATTLEFRONTS

Battle of Africa

It was in North Africa that American soldiers engaged in their first World War II combat against German troops. After landing in Morocco and Algeria late in 1942, the Americans moved on into Tunisia to join with General Bernard Montgomery's British forces in an all-out effort to crush German Field Marshal Erwin Rommel's Afrika Korps.

FEB. 1 1943 **THE LONG ROAD:** The Road is a ribbon along the fair, azure sea. It wanders past graves inscribed "This is hallowed ground. They died in the service of their country." It streaks, hot and straight, for miles across the desert sands. At the Road's end last week stood a wiry man with pale, piercing eyes, hawk's nose and cadaverous cheeks. General Sir Bernard Law Montgomery had traversed half the continent of Africa, leading a victorious army on the heels of a beaten one. To his troops he had proclaimed: "Nothing has stopped us. Nothing will." This week he was in Tripoli and driving on.

The long trek had started at El Alamein. Now, after eight days of fierce fighting against rear-guard troops left behind by Nazi Field Marshal Erwin Rommel, the British had persevered and Tripoli fell in flames and smoke. Montgomery had shattered the last vestige of Italy's African Empire. He had opened up a new base for Allied ground and air forces from which the Axis' slipping grip on North Africa could be pounded and attacked. He had ended the longest chase in military history—1,300 miles in 13 weeks.

It was on a sweltering summer's day, some five months ago, that Bernard Law Montgomery had walked into Cairo's crowded Shepherd's Hotel. Few people noticed the man who had come from England to boss the demoralized Eighth Army. Outside military circles, the scrawny, gimlet-eyed little man was unknown. Montgomery did not stay long at Shepherd's. At 5 o'clock in the morning the day after his arrival, he rode into the desert with a young cavalry aide. Weeks went by while he mercilessly pounded his army into shape. Supplies poured in to the Eighth. Montgomery attacked.

Montgomery made sure that every man down to the last blue-eyed boy private understood his intentions. In his Or-

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der of the Day he declared: "When I assumed command of the Eighth Army I said that the mandate was to destroy Rommel and his army, and that it would be done as soon as we were ready. We are ready now. The battle which is now about to begin will be one of the decisive battles of history. It will be the turning point of the war."

An hour before the Eighth let loose its first shattering artillery barrage, the General went to bed. He read his Bible, as was his custom, and slept. At 1:30 a.m. an aide awoke him to make a report. Montgomery listened, issued some orders and went back to sleep. He rose at his customary hour of 6, while the British barrage was splitting open the sky.

Twelve days later newsmen met Montgomery in his desert headquarters. He sat through the interview with a fly whisk balanced steadily on one finger. "I have defeated the enemy. I am now about to smash him," he asserted flatly, relaxed and asked: "How do you like my hat?" Then, wearing a tank corps beret which he had picked up, he climbed into a tank and rumbled off after his troops like a skinny avenging angel.

WORST DEFEAT: U.S. soldiers clung like goats to the rocky Tunisian hillside, dug into shallow holes, anxiously watched the German positions on the opposite ridge. From the German rear, 88-mm. guns coughed. A lieutenant on the rocky ridge pulled a U.S. infantryman down, saying curtly: "A man lying down looks like a rock. A man standing up looks like a man."

Early Sunday morning, hours before daybreak, General Dwight Eisenhower rode up in a Jeep to inspect the Allied positions. The whole situation was precarious. Eisenhower had been maintaining this mountainous front largely by bluff. Even now the fresh, inexperienced U.S. troops under General Lloyd Fredendall were inadequate for any real defense. Fredendall knew that he was holding the bag. Eisenhower rode off to inspect the next point in the U.S. positions.

Three and a half hours later the Germans called his bluff. A canopy of screeching *Stukas* shook U.S. soldiers, experiencing dive-bombing for the first time. Thirty German tanks poured out of Faïd Pass, overran the positions of green U.S. artillerymen, who sometimes scarcely had time to fire one round.

In the end U.S. forces had to abandon Gafsa, swinging their whole line north and westward to escape annihilation.

SECRET MISSION — Advanced Detachment to North Africa — 1943

Great columns of smoke rose over abandoned and burning munition dumps. In the valleys of olive groves lay more than 100 wrecked U.S. tanks, numbers of Jeeps, motor transports, huge quantities of ammunition. Valiant Allied air support kept the retreat from turning into a rout. But when weary U.S. troops tried to hold Kasserine Pass, the cocky Germans kept jabbing at them.

Despite a storm of U.S. artillery fire, the Germans seized the pass, swept on through. For the first time in this war, on a battlefield of their own choosing, U.S. troops had been thoroughly defeated.

MARCH 8 TURNABOUT: From Kasserine Pass, Major General Lloyd Fredendall's weary young U.S. infantrymen, artillerymen and tankmen had fled across the valley. They abandoned their dead and their equipment along the muddy, bloody roads. They were handicapped by a lack of motor vehicles. Some of them fought blindly in small isolated groups. But there appeared to be no stopping the Germans.

A great opportunist, like all good soldiers, Rommel was ready to exploit any gain. And he was a gambler. If he were lucky and could crack the Allied line, he could pour troops onto the flatland and drive against the flank of the British First Army which sprawled across the top of Tunisia. Then the whole Allied strategy in North Africa would have to be recast. This was the crisis when the weary young men braced themselves and Allied reinforcements rushed up to give them aid.



"Dub" Moore has contributed to this publication before. See Vol. III, No. 3 Fall 1983 — cover story: **736th Ordnance does an AUTOPSY on captured German 88**, fresh from the front lines of Tunisia.

Moore files a Chronology of Events of the 736th Ordnance (LM) Company, from North Africa to June 14, 1945 that will add much to your study of the 36th Division in WWII. Our sincere thanks for Moore for this SECRET MISSION story. (Ed).



1st Lt. John W. Moore,
515 S. Gordon St.,
Alvin, TX 77511.

“A BITCH OF A BATTLE AT BITSCHOFEN”



by

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

Some days you just naturally remember. Just about all of us recall where we were on December 7, 1941...or November 22, 1961...or what day and month Christmas falls on.

We also remember days in our life where major things were achieved or when a tragic event occurred.

A day that I shall always remember is March 15, 1944. That's more than forty years ago now, but that day is firmly etched in my memory. Some of the scenes of that day are so clear in my mind it is as if there had been a VCR attached to my brain.

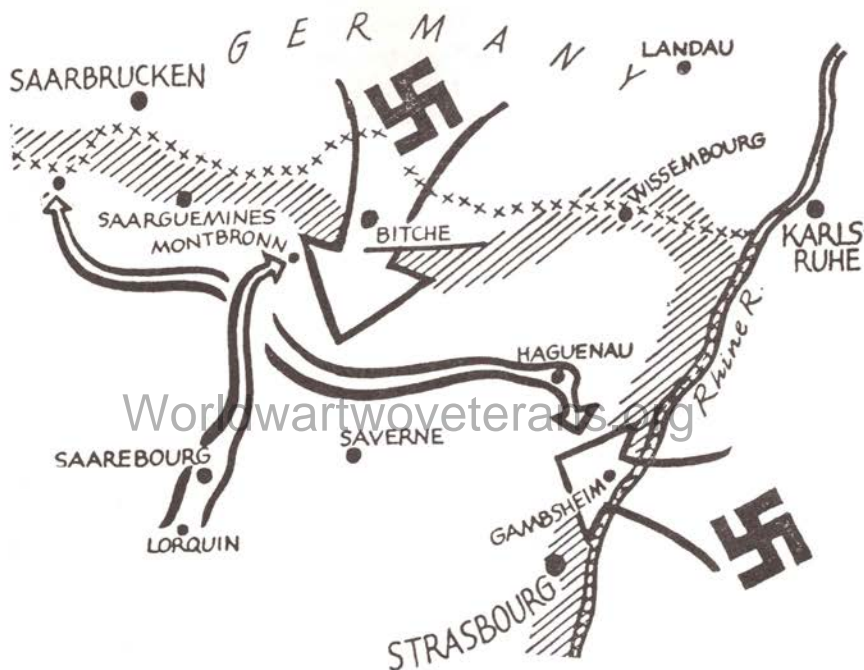
I was nineteen then. (Is it possible I was ever nineteen?) I was a part and parcel of the 4th Platoon, Company K, 143rd Infantry, 36th Division ("Are you from Waco?").

The 36th division was in the Bitche area. The Germans had their backs to the wall. Across the Rhine lay their beloved homeland. Germany was not ready to surrender. They still dreamed of other Bastognes with better endings.

The 143rd Regiment News Sheet was entitled "The Big Picture." We dogfaces scarcely knew THE BIG PICTURE. Our whole world was our Company and our Platoon. Survival was the name of the game for us. That and a longing for Rest Camp or a million dollar wound.

In point of fact the Big Picture in the ETO on March 15, 1944 was that the shadow of defeat was engulfing Hitler. Hitler responded by ordering the murder of all the Jews in concentration camps. He did not want the Jews liberated. In March 1944, Der Fuhrer instructed his Field Generals in Western Europe to prevent the crossing of the

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Rhine. To the North, Generalfeldmarschall Walther Model had seen his Army Group B smashed. To the South, the Jerries were being encircled by Patton's Third Army from the North and Patch's Seventh Army from the South.

When Patton requested to attack across the northern section of the Seventh Army Zone, General Patch promptly agreed, "We are all in the same Army," Patch said.

Indeed we were. Jack L. Scott, when President of the 36th Division Association in 1980, wrote to a dissident group, "We all ducked the same shrapnel." Well said, Jack.

To make the drive to the Rhine the German-held town of Bitschofen had to be taken. Company K of the 143rd Infantry was chosen to make the initial assault.

Dawn broke lethargically on that March 15th. As I recall, the artillery support was practically nil. I recall that 'surprise' was the keynote of the attack.

The heat of violence permeated the air that crisp, foreboding day. W. H. Auden captured the aura of the ravages of war in Europe when he wrote:

"In the nightmare of the dark
All the dogs of Europe bark
And the living nations wait,
Each dequistered in its hate."

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We did not have 60mm mortars set up. Ahead, the furious battle raged. We of the "rear echelon" mortar section heard it and cringed. This was no dry run. It was a furious fight.

We heard the stacatto bursts from machine guns; the BARS sung bass, while the rifles yapped off-key. For at least two hours there was a constant engagement. It was as if the fury of Hell had been unleashed. These are the times in combat when long forgotten or deep rooted prayers are said.

"Kibbey," it must have been Sgt. Charleston who said it, "Get your men, you and Rice, and help the Medics bring the wounded back."

Bob Rice hailed from Moberly, Missouri. Ever since the War, I've tried to contact him. No dice. He was a quiet young man, perhaps a year older than I. He was the other squad leader.

The going had to be rough if the Medics needed help with the casualties. As a mortarman, I had gone on patrols when an M. P. Captain took command of the Company. The Captain was somewhat innovative. A mortarman on patrol? Unheard of until the good Captain arrived espousing new rules. I believe the Captain was captured at Drussenheim. As I recall today, he had more courage than sense, which is not necessarily a minus for Infantry Company Commanders.

Back to Bitschofen! We prodded to and fro with the Medics. The word had been sent back: "Look out for schu mines." Those and "bouncing Betties."

The wounded we carried back all had a foot or part of a leg torn off by a schu mine. The severed foot or part of a leg looked like a kitchen match that had been snapped in two near the bottom. There were slivers of flesh hanging down as if the flesh were tattered clothes. Reflecting on it now, I do not recall seeing much blood. It may well be that the medics had already applied a tourniquet. My memory pictures only a torso from which had been torn one of its extremities. Some of the torsos found voice. One said, "Well, I got the million dollar wound but I won't be doing much dancing."

In getting to the wounded, we tried, whenever possible, to follow in the tracks of tanks that had preceded us. Our theory was that if the weight of the tank did not set off the schu mine, that the weight of our bodies would not.

Perhaps time has served to exaggerate the facts. Depending again on my memory, I believe there were about thirty men in the 3rd Battalion, 143rd Infantry, who lost feet or part of a leg to a schu mine at Bitschofen.

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One I recall with great vividity. I believe his name was Kenneth Coleman from Knoxville, Tennessee. As I recall he had lost part of his leg to a damnable schu mine and the other leg was broken. We were carrying him back when a barrage or Jerry Mortars came in, whispering sudden death.

Before the attack, we had been instructed to get out of any area zeroed in. About the second round that came in knocked the stretcher out of our hands. We sprinted out of the area. The barrage continued fiercely. Rice and I both suffered small wounds. No big deal, but five points and a trip to the aid station away from the storm of shells (incoming mail.)

Coleman was brought in by either the medics or some of Sgt. Frank Hazzard's riflemen. My men and I were all shook up. It was the closest brush I had had with death in combat. Any closer and I would have been a goner.

The worst shock was yet to come. Two members of our Mortar Section had not made it out of the Zeroed-in area. They were dead. I passed where they lay. I could not have been over fifteen feet away from them when the barrage came in. The howl of the shells roared in my ear. I do not mention their names here, but their names ring in my memory.

"Even though I walk through the
valley of the shadow of death
I fear no evil."

To shut out the pain, I closed my eyes as I walked by where they reposed in death. Hurt was in my heart.

It is over forty years as I write this recollection of the Bitch of a Battle at Bitschofen. I believe Company K, 143rd Infantry, received a Presidential Citation for its accomplishments there. I know the 3rd Battalion, 143rd Infantry, received a Presidential Citation for its valor at Montelimar. So two Presidential Citations shows the kind of unit I was proud to serve in, then and now.

For years after I came home from World War II, I could not cross an open field without thinking of a schu mine.

Today is a beautiful August day in 1986. here, in my native Kentucky, I inhale the warm Summer air.

The "Bitch of a Battle at Bitschofen" was a major event in the closing days of World War II in Western Europe. Its memory stirs a sense of pride and humility in me.

That, and a deep realization that on March 15, 1944, God chose to let me live.

Blessed be the name of the Lord!



Part II

"KRIEGIE"

Prisoner Of War In Germany

OFLAG 64

By Alan "Chum" Williamson

Our contingent of captives arrived at Oflag 64 in early November 1943. The camp for American Ground Force officers was situated at Altburgund, the German name for the old Polish town of Schubin, in the Polish Corridor, at 53 degrees north latitude. However, the winter climate was moderated by the warm current of the North Atlantic Drift.

Some 240 officers captured earlier, including T-Patchers Roger Cannon and Joe K. Emerson taken on D-Day on the Salerno beachhead, were housed in a large, three-story stone building which was also the administration building. Most were taken in North Africa during the battle for Kasserine Pass. A former Polish college, the Germans contemptuously called the building "the White House." For want of a better name, so did the Americans.

In-processing included a strip search. A mug shot was taken and we were given POW ID cards with 4-digit numbers. The German officer in charge of the detail said, "I think you will find we are not the beasts you have been led to believe."

Our contingent, along with others who had arrived a few days earlier, was assigned to one of six brick and stone barracks, the first to be occupied. Each barracks was designed to house 80 prisoners, 40 in each half. The two halves were separated by a cold-water washroom. We were billeted in the half of Barracks 2 designated as 2-B.

The bunks were double-deck, the mattresses filled with wood shavings and supported by wooden slats. We were each issued a wood shavings pillow, pillow case, sheet, and two thin blankets. We were also each issued a Red Cross parcel.

The barracks was divided into cubicles for eight men each. Each cubicle contained a table and four crude wooden stools. The billet also had two tile stoves, only one of which we used. The fuel ration for 2-B was only six coke briquettes per day. During the winter months, men huddled around the stove for warmth and heated scraps of food. When a bit of food fell on the floor, we had a standing joke: It fell on a piece of paper.

“KRIEGIE” — Part II, Oflag 64



The camp area, 200 X 300 yards (a little over 12 acres), was enclosed by two barbed wire fences 12 feet high, with concertina between. Guard towers equipped with machine guns and searchlights were located at strategic points. In addition to the White House and six barracks, the camp contained a 30-bed infirmary, chapel, theater, canteen, huts for classes, greenhouse, and a sports field.

Our toilet was an outdoor Chic Sale. Since there was a 9:00 P.M. curfew, at which time all PWs were required to be indoors, we also had an indoor Chic Sale. Its use was discouraged because of the smell.

The camp commandant was Oberst (Colonel) Friz Schneider, a veteran of some 40 years of service in the Wehrmacht, the German Regular Army. He took pains to let it be known he was not a Nazi.

The camp security officer was Hauptmann G. Zimmerman. A member of the Nazi Party in good standing, he was sometimes able to overrule decisions made by Schneider. A nitpicker extraordinary, he was despised by the Americans.

The guard force consisted of about 100 men from the 813th Grenadier Regiment. Most if not all were veterans of the Eastern front. In addition to the camp staff, there were several officers who for the most part performed the morning and afternoon head counts at formations called "appells."

Under the terms of the Geneva Convention, we were required to salute all German officers of equal or higher rank. They were supposed to salute PW officers who outranked them, although few did. Being only a 1st lieutenant, I simply saluted every German in uniform, including enlisted men.

Colonel Thomas D. Drake was the Senior American Officer, responsible for the administration of U.S. personnel. Although not a West Pointer, Drake was an officer of the Regular Army. He was com-

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mander of the 168th Infantry, Iowa National Guard, when captured during the "Valentine's Day Massacre" at Kasserine Pass.

With the exception of one battalion not engaged, Drake's regiment ceased to exist as a unit. General Eisenhower had visited the front and pinned a Silver Star on Drake the day before he was captured.

The executive officer was Lieut. Col. John Knight Waters. One of West Point's finest, Waters later attained four star rank not because, but in spite of the fact that he was General Patton's son-in-law. He was commanding the 1st Battalion, Combat Command A, 1st Armored Division, at Djebel Lessouda, when the Afrika Korps blitzed at Kasserine.

Lieut. Col. James D. Alger was chief of our Security Committee. Also a graduate of the U.S. Military Academy, "Gentleman Jim" would later attain the rank of lieutenant general. He was commander of the 2nd Battalion, CCA, 1st Armored Division, at Sbeitla, during the Kasserine Pass debacle.

Alger's committee reviewed and approved or disapproved all proposed escape plans. He also debriefed all new arrivals for fresh news from the front and also to assure they were really American PWs.

During the Battle of the Bulge, a prisoner arrived wearing the uniform and insignia of a U.S. Army lieutenant. Col. Alger immediately spotted him as an imposter. Under questioning, he claimed to be a Belgian freedom fighter who, when capture became imminent, put on the American uniform to avoid execution.

Alger didn't clear the fellow. We gave him no information about sensitive projects, such as daily newscasts picked up by "the bird." After regaling us several days with stories of the exploits of Belgian freedom fighters, he disappeared.

Each billet had a field grade officer as barracks commander. We were further organized into mess groups of eight men each, with the senior officer acting as mess president.

Our first commander of Barracks 2-B was Lieut. Col. Gaines J. ("Jesus") Barron, of Waco, Texas. Barron acquired the nickname "Jesus" because his middle initial was "J" and he tended to be overly officious. A T-Patcher in the 143rd Infantry for many years, he attained the grade of captain at age 24. He was CO of the 1st Battalion, 142nd Infantry, when captured at Altavilla.

Barron was soon replaced by Lieut. Col. John H. Van Vliet Jr., a graduate of the U.S. Military Academy, as was his father, Colonel John H. Van Vliet Sr. Van Vliet was commander of the 3rd Battalion, 168th Infantry, when the Germans blitzed at Kasserine. Of 40 officers in the battalion, all but one were killed or captured.

“KRIEGIE” — Part II, Oflag 64

Shortly after he was captured, the Germans took Van Vliet to the Katyn Forest, west of Smolensk, where they had discovered the remains of 14,500 Polish prisoners of war. They had been killed by the Russians and buried in mass graves.

The Germans were anxious to be able to prove after the war that it was the Russians, not they, who had committed the atrocity. Col. Van Vliet was convinced that this was indeed the case.

Van Vliet was replaced by Lieut. Col. Max Gooler, who remained our barracks CO until the Oflag was evacuated in January 1945. Col. Gooler was one of the first Americans captured by the Germans during World War II. An officer of the Regular Army, he was assigned as a military attache' with the British Army at Tobruk. When Tobruk fell shortly after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor brought the U.S. into the war, Gooler was taken prisoner along with the British garrison.

Larry Allen, an Associated Press correspondent, was also captured early during the war. Larry won a Pulitzer Prize for his 1937-38 reporting of the German invasion of Czechoslovakia and the Balkans. The only American newsman permitted to ride British warships, Larry was aboard a vessel that was torpedoed in the Mediterranean Sea. He was picked up by an Italian ship and turned over to the Germans. Larry was repatriated during the summer of 1944.

Not all the Kriegies at Oflag 64 were line officers, of the combat arms. T-Patcher Lieut. Gray was an Ordnance Corps Officer. Operating a tank retriever on the Salerno beachhead, Gray towed a disabled tank to the rear for repair. When he returned to the same area next day, to retrieve a second tank, the terrain had changed hands.

Treatment of prisoners at Oflag 64 was better than at other camps for Ground Force personnel. There was no brainwashing. Jewish-Americans were treated like everyone else. No PW was bothered by the Germans unless he violated camp rules or tried to escape. And in every case where a "Kriegie" managed to get outside the wire at Oflag 64, he was recaptured alive. The standard punishment for escapees was three weeks in solitary confinement on bread and water.

No finer group of men was ever assembled than the Americans interned at Oflag 64. They came from all walks of life. Their numbers included doctors, lawyers, college professors, clergymen, and as of July 1944, four All-American class football players, two professional baseball players, two Golden Gloves champions and an All-American lacrosse player.

However, even the best of men can get on each other's nerves under the conditions that exist in confinement. A lieutenant of the 45th Division assigned to Barracks 2-B seemed to be constantly go-

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ing in and out, and never closed the door. When he exited, shouts of "Close the Goddamn door!" went unheeded, as the frigid north wind whistled through the unheated barracks. Someone had to close it after him.

On the other hand, there were men who brightened the place by their presence. One of these was Captain Clarence M. Ferguson of Groesbeck, Texas, now a retired district judge. "Fergie" was a gentleman not just by Act of Congress. But in a courtroom, he was formidable.

Another who made Barracks 2-B more pleasant was Lieut. William R. Swanson of Balboa, California, and a platoon leader of Co. F, 143rd Infantry, when captured. Like fully half the officers in 2-B, "Swanee" was captured on "Black Monday," 13 September 1943. He composed a song which became an immediate hit with his fellow Kriegies. Sung to a simple blues melody, it was titled "The PW Blues;"

"We sailed across the ocean, to land in Italy.
When we got there someone said,
'Pour vous la guerre finis.'
I've got those PW Blues.
Those PW Blues!
I'm gonna feel this way
Until my friends they come some day!"

POWs of the Germans had their own jargon, most if not all of which was handed down by the British, some of whom had been "in the bag" since Dunkirk, and before. For example: Kriegie - Prisoner of war. From the German Kriegsgefangener. In the bag - In captivity.

Goon - German guard. Anything furnished by the Germans was given the prefix "goon."

Bash - Food saved for a special occasion, which invariably occurred when there was enough for a meal.

Ferret - German security officer.

Weasel - Security NCO.

Smoky Joe - A smokeless heater, fashioned with the oleomargarine and the powdered milk cans from an American Red Cross parcel. They burned bits of wood and pieces of paper. Properly constructed, they were very efficient.

We received news from several sources. We got three German daily newspapers which we used for toilet paper and fuel for smokeless heaters (also called "heatless smokers"). German-speaking Kriegies translated the news from the Volkischer Beobachter, with an American slant, then typed and posted it on the bulletin board.

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A German public address system piped news and music into each barracks, normally from 8:00 A.M. to 11:00 P.M. Quite a bit of the music was grand opera which Kriegie opera lovers were not allowed to enjoy. Others tried to drown out the singers.

Newscasters included Axis Sally and William Joyce. The latter, facetiously called “Lord Haw Haw,” was our favorite. A British citizen who claimed he had become a naturalized German citizen, Joyce was hanged for treason after the war.

A group of enterprising Kriegies began publishing a camp newspaper, the Oflag Item, in November 1943. Captain George Juskalian was editor. Of course Larry Allen was a member of the staff until his repatriation. The last issue was published in January 1945, just before the Oflag was evacuated. Copies are still available through the post-war association of former Oflag 64 Kriegies.

Our main source of news was a short wave radio called “the bird.” It had been smuggled into the camp and was operated clandestinely in the Oflag library, on the third floor of the administration building (“the White House”). Representatives from each barracks assembled daily for a news briefing by the radio operator.

Lieut. Floyd L. (Leonard) Vaden, of E/143, was the Dan Rather for 2-B. Len had an excellent speaking voice. He was also one of the actors and a singer of popular songs in Our Little Theater.

Of course care had to be taken that the goons didn't discover the bird, or surprise one of our newscasters during a newsbreak. Lookouts, called “stooges,” were posted during such operations.

Incoming POWs gave us information regarding casualties in our former units. However, they were not a reliable source for “the big picture.” Also, newcomers related endlessly how they were captured, and the circumstances became bloodier with each retelling.

Our fellow Kriegie who would become perhaps best known after the war was Lieut. Amon G. Carter Jr., son and heir of Amon G. Carter Sr., publisher of the Fort Worth Star Telegram. An officer of the 1st Armored Division, Carter was wearing an Arab costume when captured during the Kasserine Pass debacle. He was hiding some classified equipment in a cave when a marauding band of Arabs spotted him. They took everything. One decided he liked Carter's uniform better than his own clothing, so he forced an exchange.

A Kriegie was allowed any amount of incoming mail, a food parcel every two months, cigarette parcels and book parcels. Incoming mail was censored by eight Germans, all but one of whom learned English in the United States.

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A Kriegie of German ancestry received a letter from his mother written in German. The censor had stamped GEPRUFT all over it.

Each Kriegie was given three letter forms and four postcards per month to write home. After the war, a friend said she heard that a couple received a letter from their son, a PW in Germany. He said he was being treated well. But they looked under the stamp and he had written there that they cut out his tongue. A good yarn, but PWs in Germany didn't use stamps. We wrote in the upper left hand corner, "Mitt Luftposte Nach Nord Amerika."

On December 15, 1943 we were issued U.S. Army enlisted uniforms, including much needed overcoats. The Germans brought in a photographer, who took pictures of any group of as many as four PWs. They then offered to let us mail pictures home.

However, Lieut. Col. John K. Waters, the Oflag executive officer, announced at a formation, "These pictures make it appear that you are well fed. You know that is not so. They make it appear that you are well clothed. You know that is not so. The Germans want you to mail them home for propaganda purposes. This is not an order. But I urge you not to send the pictures home."

Most of us heeded the request. However, Lieut. Amon G. Carter Jr. sent prints of all Texas Kriegies to his father, who in turn had copies made and sent them to the next of kin.

When Captain Richard H. Torrence of Waco died less than a month later, the same camera crew took pictures of his funeral and gave them to the pallbearers and others who attended.

Colonel Drake stressed the importance of keeping physically fit. Every Kriegie was required to have his own physical fitness program. Baseball, softball, touch football and soccer leagues were formed, using equipment furnished by the YMCA. Less physical sports included pitching horseshoes and walking.

A duplicate bridge league met twice a week. The usual winners were T-Patcher Stanley M. O'Brien and Vincent A. Grimes. They were as good as professionals. There were chess matches and tournaments, cribbage tournaments, even a domino tournament. The latter was won by T-Patcher Leonard Spence, of Mesquite, Texas.

Sid Thal organized "fun nights," with a variety of entertainment. A roulette wheel made by Lou Otterbein of Bloomfield, New Jersey, was a popular feature. We gambled with camp marks, a paper money used to pay PWs, as required by the Geneva Convention. The funny money was good only at the Oflag canteen, which stocked almost nothing except used razor blades and a near beer, similar to that sold in the U.S. during Prohibition.

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I whiled away many pleasant hours playing chess with Captains Clarence M. Ferguson and Phillip “Pop” Foster, both strong players, and woodpushers from the White House and other barracks.

In civilian life, Foster was a professor at Penn State University with a Ph.D. degree. He was an artillery forward observer with the 45th Division when captured in Sicily. An attack scheduled for early one morning was called off, but the commander forgot to notify Foster.

Proceeding to the initial point in the pre-dawn hours, Foster and his NCO assistant were unaware that there were no friendly troops in front of them, until a German sentry said, “Vas iss los?” Foster was wounded and both were captured.

Other recreational facilities included the highly popular “Little Theatre of Schubin College,” which produced a total of eight three-act plays, all former Broadway hits, seven one-act plays, eight musical revues, and one original three-act play. T-Patcher John J. Hannan, an actor, was a star thespian.

A library in the administration building contained 1,600 books furnished by the YMCA. Kriegies who were former teachers conducted classes in any subject in which there was enough interest. Capt. Ferguson, an attorney from Groesbeck, Texas, organized a law school that was very popular. He was assisted by other Kriegie lawyers. A number of us received the equivalent of a year of law school, thanks to their efforts.

The Germans offered periodic parole walks. Those participating signed a parole promising not to escape. They were led on a 2-hour walk through the surrounding countryside by a few guards armed only with pistols.

On an occasional Sunday morning we were permitted to attend a motion picture theatre in Schubin (Alzburgund). Of course the dialogue was in German. Newsreels showed action on the eastern front, with the Germans always winning. Large numbers of Soviet soldiers would be shown walking through the smoke of battle toward the German lines with their hands up. In aerial dogfights, the German always won.

During most of 1943, Father Stanley Brach of San Antonio was our only chaplain. He conducted worship services for both Catholics and Protestants until Lient. Paul Carnes, an Infantry officer whose father was a minister, took over the Protestants services. Later, we had a joke about the Germans obligingly capturing several Protestant chaplains for us.

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My bridge partner (a good one who deserved better!) was Capt. Harold D. Craft, of Basking Ridge, New Jersey. Hal was CO of Company K, 143rd Infantry, when captured at Altavilla. He was there when "Commando" Kelly's heroic actions won the Medal of Honor.

Instructors at the Infantry School, Fort Benning, scoffed at the claim Kelly used mortar shells as hand grenades, activating the fuses by striking them against the concrete steps of the building where he held off an enemy attack. Using rounds from the same lot, they were unable to activate the fuses even with a hammer. When Kelly later came through Fort Benning, he was asked to duplicate the feat, but declined.

Craft said, "I was there, I saw him do it. There was so much firing going on around the building that nobody could tell if the shells exploded or not."

According to psychiatrists, all normal persons have mood swings, with the highs and lows coming about 45 days apart. In the case of PWs, the swings were more pronounced. At the high point, the elated Kriegie would count his blessings. His pay was accumulating, he had escaped certain death, wasn't being shot at, and had time to plan his post-war life. He would sign up for all the courses available, to prepare himself for liberation.

At the bottom of the swing, he was morose, dejected. He wasn't being promoted — would remain in grade for the duration. His wife might be unfaithful. He might not live to be liberated.

The Kriegies had a name for this condition: "Kriegieitis."

Captain Richard H. Torrence was the nephew of Colonel William C. Torrence, long time city manager of Waco, Texas and Commander of the 143rd Infantry until his resignation because of ill health in 1941. But Dick earned his commission on his own merits. When he assumed command of Co. H, 143rd Infantry, it was a problem unit. Its rate of courts-martial was the highest in the regiment. In a very short time, Dick turned it around.

The Germans required two head counts, "appells," daily. Dick was a bit late for the morning appell on 10 January 1944. But he did arrive, and took his usual place beside his close friend, Captain Ferguson.

As a German officer began the head count, Dick slumped to the ground. Ferguson and another officer lifted him to his feet.

He said, "I sure do feel funny." Those were his last words. A moment later, he collapsed and died.

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The Germans immediately took Dick's body away for an autopsy, to make sure there had been no foul play. The cause of death was a congenital defect. A valve in his throat closed, causing his jugular vein to collapse.

Dick was buried in a Polish cemetery near the Oflag. Officers of the 2nd Battalion, 143rd Infantry, acted as pallbearers and as the honor guard while his body lay in the chapel awaiting burial.

The Germans furnished a large wreath, adorned with a swastika, for Dick's casket. The casket itself was expensive, ornate, made of a very fine, carved wood.

To our surprise, a German honor guard presented arms as the funeral procession exited the Oflag. At graveside, they fired a three-volley salute and a German bugler played Taps.

Captain James B. Bond, of Waco, acted as Dick's pallbearer twice. First when he was buried at Schubin, and again when his remains were returned to Waco for burial after the war.

NOTE. This is Part II of a series.

KRIEGIE

Food for survival has for centuries been a big item, that sometimes takes-down an Army, the Nazis kept the good stuff for their own bellies.

Memorandum: Rations

1. Many officers have requested clarification on certain points which I shall try to give, impatiently, so all may have a clear understanding.

2. The German ration furnished prisoners-of-war is fixed in kind and quantity by the German High Command. It is definitely inferior to that given their third class, or non-fighting troops.

3. Fresh cabbage and other fresh or green vegetables are prescribed in the German ration but in lieu thereof, The High Command prescribes turnips, which are called "cow turnips" in America, for prisoners-of-war.

4. P. O. W's are allowed 1/6 to 1/7 loaf of bread per day while the German soldiers at this Oflag receive 1/3 loaf daily.

5. The amount of meat prescribed for P. O. W's amounts to slightly over 8 ounces per week, at least one-fourth of the weight must be bone. As a matter of fact it principally consists of the more undesirable parts of the hog carcass, never omitting those choice morsels of eyeballs and ears.

6. The dried vegetables furnished on the ration alternate with dried cabbage, peas, noodles and barley. The noodles are never enough in quantity except to flavor the soup, they can't be saved as nothing is issued in lieu thereof for that day's soup.

7. The Kommandant of this Oflag, in carrying out that part of the International Agreement which prescribes officers may buy food stuffs in the market for their mess, have made it possible to buy fresh cabbage, carrots and beets from time to time.



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8. The garden, which we started shortly after our arrival here, has been the means of greatly improving our mess and some items, such as onions, kohlrabbi and "good" turnips are still being used from our storage saved for the time of the year, as likewise the mixed vegetables and tomatoes, saved from our parcels last summer while we lived on the garden.

9. It should be known that the soup served at noon is principally made up from vegetables purchased or grown by the officers of this Oflag. In fact the dehydrated brick vegetables, mostly cabbage, have not been used for the past 1½ months.

10. The evening meal, outside of the potatoes which are intended for the noon meal, is composed of food furnished by the U. S. Department (of the Army) thru the Red Cross. The ersatz coffee and tea is not used and the noon meal of soup is the only one furnished by the German Authorities.

11. It should be further realized that no provision is made for fuel to cook the evening meal except two days each week. The fact that three meals are now served is due to the ingenuity of those persons concerned with the feeding of the Prisoners-of-war.

s/t THOMAS D. DRAKE
Colonel, U. S. Army
Camp Senior

We've had several excellent stories about life in a Nazi Prisoner of War Compound, but this is a first-time to get an actual copy of JUST how lousy the 'portions' of bread and meat, etc. really were. **Man's inhumanity to Man** — has been going on, we guess, since Time began.



Coming NEXT . . .
Vol. VI, No. 3
"KRIEGIE"
Part III
Oflag 64 After
Normandy

There are several
more Parts to this
great documentary of
"KRIEGIE"



Chum Williams has spent a few thousand hours on this story of Life in a Nazi POW Camp. His labors will not go unrewarded. We've received many of his manuscripts and it is WORTHY — of a major Movie, and Television special Documentary. So let's wait and see. Who knows what might happen when you have written a GOOD ONE. (Ed).

Beer Haul to Anzio

By Lem Vannatta
Service Company, 143rd Infantry

In the spring of 1944, we truck drivers from all over the 36th Division, were put on temporary duties hauling supplies to Anzio. It was this kind of a haul. We loaded up at Naples. Then, we loaded on Navy L S T's and went 90 miles up coast. Then, we would unload, usually under fire, from "Anzio Annie," the big railroad. We unloaded at various dumps on the small beach head.

There were British troops on the beach head and they got a weekly issue of American Beer. We, being American enlisted men, were not issued anything to drink.

Well, here's the story. I was sent to the British Dump in Naples where I picked up a load of beer and a British soldier armed guard. I was put on an American L S T. I quickly told the Navy Chief Petty Officer in charge of the tank hangar of my dangerous load. He went down and told the Limey guard that no one rode in the tank hangar on his ship. That set the stage for a great beer party.

The beer was in quart bottles, twelve to the case. As we drank a bottle, we placed the cap back on the bottle. The Navy and we soldiers on board drank and made away with half the load of beer.

When we unloaded in Anzio, there were air raids and shelling going on. The Limeys never noticed the empty cases until old Lem was on his way back to our assembly area. I never heard what happened; but I doubt if the British government every paid the lend lease debts anyhow.

I certainly hope the statute of limitations has run out on this incident since it happened forty-two years ago.

Lem J. Vannatta
Rt. 12, Box 32
Longview TX 75605



“T-PATCH LIGHTNING”

By Buster Hughs
I Company 142nd Infantry
Regiment



“The American SS”

German Civilian Baffled by Texans’ “SS” Emblem

As the need to be recorded in history exists, this is another untold story about a proud company in the Third Battalion of the 142nd Infantry Regiment commanded by Captain Alban Reed. I Company, otherwise known as the “Item Company” was an outstanding individual company in the Third Battalion commanded by Lt. Col. Seldon Simpson. At the time of mobilization, the company was assigned to the west Texas town of Stamford.

During the combat days of World War II, this particular story takes place in the Drusenheim Woods of France, on or about February 3, 1945. The company was billeted in Bischwiller for a number of days.

The Winter snows had begun to melt on the Moder River, therefore it was in flood-stage and the ice was floating in the cold water. We were told that we would cross the river as soon as the

"T-PATCH LIGHTNING," The American SS

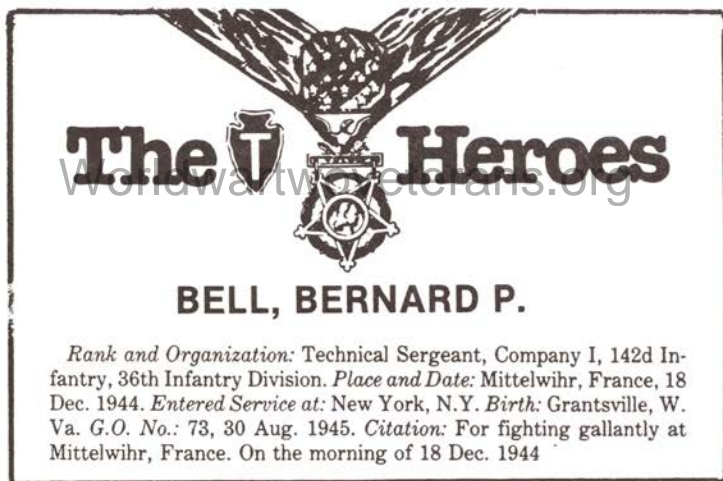
engineers could build a foot bridge. We were to cross at dusk, using the darkness for concealment, in hopes that we would reach the enemy position by surprise attack.

But as the time neared for moving out, we learned that the bridge was not ready and that we would wait until the next night. For a combat soldier, this waiting meant another day to swat out an attack; to write another letter home telling them that everything would be fine and not to worry. You vision their joy in receiving your letter, and you pray for the day that you will be united again. But for now, you sit and wait, then comes the order "load up"; it's time to move out!

We found our footing on a submerged bridge, water above our waist, and difficulty in keeping our equipment dry. As we reached the other bank, we spread out and began our advance through intermittent puddles of knee-deep water. Just as things were going as planned, and we were within 100 yards of the woods edge, the Germans opened up with heavy machine gun fire.

Those famous German flares changed darkness into daylight. The company was pinned down, out in the open field, and suffering many casualties. Captain Reed was leading the company. Lt. Robert Stenger was the third platoon leader and since the first was without a leader, he was filling that position also. For his outstanding leadership, he was later awarded a Silver Star medal.

Sgt. Bernard Bell was leader of the second platoon. (He was later to be awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for his action at Middlewihr.)



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Sgt. Bell ordered his platoon to advance with assault fire, Indian style, towards the enemy's positions. This action by the second platoon kept the enemy down, and I Company over-ran the enemy's position, forcing them to retreat. Leaving their tanks without infantry protection, the Germans were in a hopeless position.

One fellow soldier in the company, Homer Cryster, took a light 30 caliber machine gun and bluffed a German tank crew to retreat, which was later knocked out by a bazooka team.

I Company, suffering many casualties, had reached its objective, and daylight brought the opportunity to clear out the woods. We tried to dig fox holes, but the water pouring in from the river-soaked soil made them collapsable and therefore useless.

The day was spent consolidating our position, while K Company was being forced back across the Moder by tanks. L Company was also having its problems, and some of the men joined us in our positions. The men were still wet and cold from wadding the river. Captain Reed requested company relief, and we were told that we would be relieved after dark.

Dog Tired, Cold and Hungry, We Wade Through Water to Bischwiller

After enduring more than 24 hours of exposure, hunger, and hard fighting, we began our return to Bischwiller, by another route. But as we reached the muddy open field, we again came under machine gun fire from an enemy patrol. Our men, being so tired and cold, did not change their pace as they wearily found their way in the dark. Tracers could be seen as the machine gun fired into our ranks, but luckily, no one was hit.

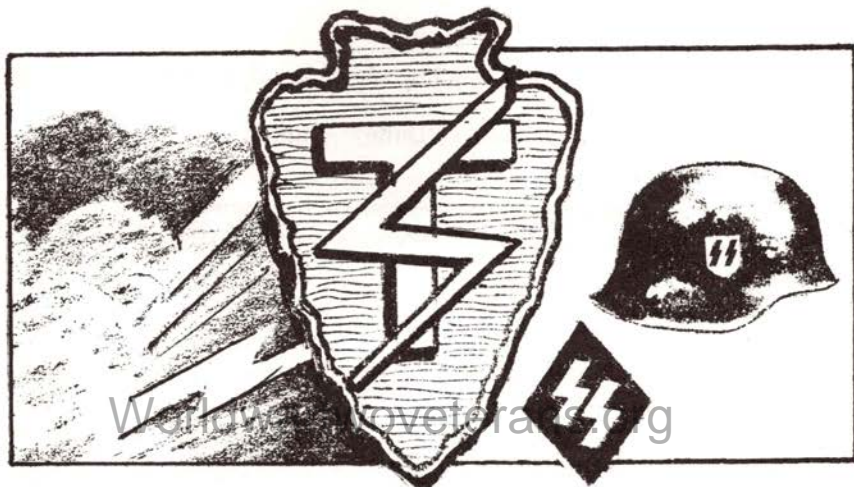
We could only think of warm food and dry socks, as we waded through the water back into Bischwiller.

An Idea Hits Us Like Lightning

The Company spent several days resting. We were treated by the medics for frostbite, which caused the inability to wear our combat boots. For relief and comfort, we had to elevate our feet before attempting to sleep. It had been a hard and difficult struggle, but I Company had done their job. During this rest period, a lightning bolt was painted across the T-Patch on our helmets.

We Were Proud of it,
we felt we deserved it!

“T-PATCH LIGHTNING,” The American SS



As we entered Germany later, the civilians called us “SS” troops because the lightning bolt on our helmets *resembled the feared “SS” ensigna*. But they soon learned, that American G.I. was that good ole boy. Still, we were proud of our lightning T-Patch, for we felt that we had earned it.

As first stated, this is just another untold story of the famous 36th Division. This one about those men led by Captain Alban Reed, as remembered by just a soldier who was there, Buster Hughs, and proud to have worn the Lightning Bolt T-Patch.

Buster Hughs — THEN & NOW . . .



THEN & NOW . . . Here's Buster Hughs, 1606 Cor-sicana St., Wellington TX 79095, served with 3rd Bn 142nd, in photo made at Nurtigen, Germany 1945, (shown at right), with a buddy named Werst. NOW — Buster at Memorial Day Service at Wellington.





“TINY FINDS A LOADER”

By: Julian “Duney” Philips



When I joined Co. G. 143rd Infantry in the Spring of 1938, I was sixteen years old. I had asked my parents to let me follow my older brother, Malcolm, who had joined Co. G. that March to go to summer camp. Camp Bullis, Texas was where the 36th Division was to hold it's Annual Summer Encampment.

I stood 6'1" and weighed about 140 pounds and because of my height I was placed in the 1st platoon where most companies put their tall men. It was commanded by 1st Lt. Andrew Y. Austin and was an exceptionally good group of men. One of the men was outstanding in many ways. Cleveland “Tiny” Thompson stood 6' and weighed at least 265 pounds. He was light on his feet — had been a good athlete from San Jacinto High School in Houston where he played football. One outstanding feature of Tiny's was his smile. One very seldom saw him when he wasn't smiling.

Soldiering was new to me but I had accepted it and was determined to do the very best I could.

We had only been at Camp Bullis two days when Sgt. Edwin Temple stopped me in the company street and said, “Private Philips the company will go on Guard Duty tomorrow and Co. F. hasn't sent over the Spurs to mount the guard. Would you run over to Co. F and get them from the supply Sgt?.” Trying to satisfy all the Sgts. plus everyone with one stripe and above, I answered “Yes Sir” and was off running on one of my first lessons as a soldier.

As I arrived at the C. P. in the Company F area, I asked to speak to the 1st Sgt. I was ushered inside and there was 1st Sgt. Jack D. Prentice, who spoke as I tried to introduce myself. “Solider, can I help you?” I answered, “Sgt. Prentice Company G is going on guard duty tomorrow and Sgt. Temple sent me over to get teh Spurs to mount

"TINY FINDS A LOADER"

the guard." Without a smile the Sgt. answered, "soldier the spurs are kept in the supply tent. Run down to our supply tent and get them from the supply Sgt. He will have you sign for them." I answered, "thank you Sir," and was off running.

As I entered the supply tent I asked to speak to the supply Sgt. A middle aged Sgt. sitting behind a field desk looked up and gruffly said, "I'm the supply Sgt., can I help you?" I answered, "Sgt., I'm from Co. G. and we go on guard duty tomorrow and Sgt. Temple sent me over to get the spurs to mount the guard." Without blinking the Sgt. said, "Damn it, I should have known someone from Co. G. would be sent over to pick them up. I've just had our artificer take them to Battalion Headquarters supply room so Co. G. would have them in time to mount the guard."

He turned and yelled the artificers name, then added, "did you take the spurs to Battalion Headquarters?" I heard the answer loud and clear, "Yes Sir Sgt." The supply Sgt. turned back to me and said, "the spurs are at Battalion Headquarters. Company supply tent. Soldier, run up there and pick them up." I answered, "thank you Sgt." and was off running.

When I got to the Battalion Headquarters supply tent I got the same answer, the spurs had been sent to the Regimental Headquarters Company supply Sgt. The Sgt. said "solider run up there and get the spurs." As I stepped outside, Tiny was just coming out of the Aid-station and when he saw me he asked what I was doing at Battalion. I answered, "Tiny, Sgt. Temple sent me over to Co. F for the spurs to mount the guard tomorrow." I told him every palce I had been and the answers I had gotten and wound up by saying I was on my way to Regimental Headquarters Co. to get the damn spurs. Tiny put his hand on my shoulder and said, "Duney hasn't Malcolm told you what to look for here at Camp? There aren't any spurs in this damn division. This is an Infantry outfit and that spur crap to mount the guard is as old as the army! They take a young soldier and send him running to get the spurs to mount the guard and every one gets a big laugh as the kid leaves. Come on back to the company with me and tell Sgt. Temple to go to Hell." As we walked back to the company area, Tiny told me he was allergic to Poison Ivy, so when he arrived in camp each year he ffund a Poison Ivy vine to infect himself with. He would then be placed on light duty, no marching and no maneuvers. He would lay up in his tent and swab the infected area with calamine lotion for the next ten to twelve days. As I recall this was also Tiny's way out of our famous twenty five mile marches.

From that day on, Tiny took it upon himself to mother me until I

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became Army wise enough to take care of myself.

After we were mustered into Federal Service on 25 November 1940, Tiny and myself were still in the same squad in first platoon and were still as close as ever. My older brother was with us but he was more interested in making the Army a part of his life. He wanted to be the best drill Sgt. in the division.

Company G., 143rd Infantry was rated as one of the best companies in the division and from time to time we would receive an officer just commissioned a 2nd Lt. or we would receive one transferred from other units.

The Army was expanding and our older officers who mobilized with us were moving into higher and better jobs.

Enter: 2nd Lt's WASKOW and WM. BUSTER

During the year 1941, Co. G. received two outstanding young officers, 2nd Lt. Henry T. Waskow and 2nd Lt. William G. Buster. Both men fit right in the company training program, getting their platoons ready to live up to the company's past record.

No one knew in the fall of 1941 what to expect from the Japanese and Germans. Then orders came from the war Department that the National Guard Divisions that were on active duty would have their enlistments extended indefinitely. Then we got word over the radio on Sunday December 7, 1941 that the Japanese had attacked Pearl Harbor — the United States was at war. (Congress declared war on both Japan and Germany.) From 8 December 1941, our training took on a different light. Roosevelt had finally gotten what he wanted: the U.S. standing with the Allies to fight the Axis Powers!

In 1942 Company G saw men and officers come and go at an unbelievable rate. The army was expanding, so the men were being pushed up the ladder of rank so the company could meet its quotas to training schools and cadres to form new divisions. Some transferred to the Army Air Corp., some went off to O.C.S. and then there were quotas sent down for officers service schools at Ft. Benning, Georgia. The division had to fill quotas for Ft. Sill, Oklahoma, others went to Fort Knox for armored school. All branches of service had their schools and were looking for young bright Sgts. to pass and move into their branch of service.

When S/Sgt. M. H. Philips was picked to go to Ft. Benning for Officers Candidate School in early summer of 1942, Capt. Milton H. Steffin, from Huntsville, Texas put me in charge of the 1st platoon. By this time we had moved from Camp Bowie, Texas to Camp Blanding, Fla. and we were all working hard to get ready for the North Carolina maneuvers.

“TINY FINDS A LOADER”

Capt. Steffin and Company G. came through with flying colors, but G Company wasn't the same. The Company had seen Lt. George La Bounty from Lampasses, Texas transfer to the Army Air Corp. along with S/Sgt. Robert E. Lee of Houston, Texas and Sgt. Ezra Patton of Addicks, Texas. Cadres to form new divisions had seen Corp. Harrold Hooper of Houston leave with many others who had come in as recruits in 1941. Lt. Waskow and Lt. Buster had received promotions and had moved to other companies in the Regiment.

I Left Co. G for O.C.S. With Tears

When the North Carolina maneuvers ended in 1942 I was told to get ready for the train going south to Ft. Benning of O.C.S., “the school of the 90 day wonders.”

When I said my good-byes I was surprised to hear that many of the men wanted to leave too. I had recommended that Sgt. Mitchell Woods of Houston, Texas take the 1st Platoon and Capt. Steffin went along with my recommendation. Sgt. Donald Appfill, from Houston, Texas moved in as platoon guide. The day I left Company G for O.C.S. I left with tears in my eyes. This had become my home and I loved it.

TINY and Phil Strom Transfer to Can/Co

I was into my second week of O.C.S. when I received a letter from Tiny telling me he and Phil Strom had transferred to Cannon Company. Will DuRant of Houston, Texas transferred to Co. F, 142nd Infantry. J. D. Vickers had put in his papers for the Paratroopers while John Lewis was leaving for the 1st Ranger Battalion. My heart was heavy because Capt. Steffin had asked me to try and get back to the division after receiving my commission and I knew with all these men gone Co. G. would never be the same.

The division moved to Camp Edwards, Massachusetts, where they continued to train, Capt. Steffin tested his company against Co. F. commanded by Capt. Carl R. Bayne of Yoakum, Texas. Then it was off to Africa where the training intensified. The men could smell combat and were eager to be tested. Capt. Wiley Stem from Waco, Texas had worked his company night and day going through every phase of training, always trying to get his men sicked up for combat.

The 36th Division wasn't used in the fighting of Sicily, so they kept training, knowing full well it wouldn't be long before they would be tested. That time soon came when the division was loaded on ships for the Invasion of Salerno at Paestum, Italy. When the loud speakers on the Navy ships sounded, “Now hear this — now hear this — prepare to debark,” Tiny's heart skipped a beat. He had trained six years with the 36th Division for this moment and it suddenly hit him.

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Here it was 9 September 1943 and before the sun went down that day he might have to kill or be killed. He always boasted that this would give him no problem but it was a problem that every soldier on the line had to face at one time or another.

It's D-Day at SALERNO BEACHHEAD,
this would be a TEST of Training

Tiny's mind was a million miles away as he felt the Navy craft come to a stop on the soft sands in the Bay of Salerno. He soon came back to reality as he heard, "Now hear this — now hear this — start your engines and prepare to debark." Tiny and his crew had been hearing artillery fire for quite some time — long before the craft touched the sands but now he could smell death. It was burned sulphur from shells that had exploded on the beach.

As Tiny maneuvered his vehicle down the ramp he saw the body of an American laying on the sand. It was Lt. Anthony Haulk from F Company, 143rd, who had been killed as he stepped on the sandy Italian beach earlier that morning. Tiny realized this was the final test for the division after years of training. He also knew Cannon Company was ready.

As Capt. Wiley Stems platoons rolled ashore there were plenty of missions for them to fire. Regimental Headquarters of 143rd Infantry had all types of targets for Cannon Company to fire on, machine gun nests, tanks of the 16th Panzer Division and just plain defensive fire.

Capt. Stem had to be proud of his officers and men. In just six days he had seen elements of the 16th and 26th Panzer, along with the 29th Panzer Grenadier Divisions attack again and again. Each time they had been on target but Cannon Company was able to turn the Germans back.

D-DAY plus 5 Would be a Big One for TINY

By the 14th of September 1943, Tiny and the Cannon Co. could be called combat veterans, but their job was a long way from being over. German tanks were still in the area and Cannon Co. platoons were scattered. They were trying to cover the area and give support to the troops that were trying to hold the front.

Tiny and his crew were on their way to the Calore River area when they topped the crest of an Italian hill and saw a German Mark IV tank down in the valley below. The tank was hunting targets but had it gun pointed away from them. After a quick discussion the decision was made to knock out the Germans. They knew they must hit the tank before the Germans could turn the turret 180 degrees

“TINY FINDS A LOADER”

and get off a round. Tiny's crew fired and he couldn't believe it. He saw the Projectile slam into the Italian soil on the other side of the tank he knew they had fired long. His eyes had never left the German tank. He saw the long gun swing around the 180 degrees and come to a stop pointing right at him. Then he saw a puff of smoke leave the barrel. At the end of the barrel there was a dot of fire about the size of a pin head. The ball of fire grew to the size of a marble as it came toward the Self Propell. Then it was the size of a golf ball, then a baseball still on target, coming straight toward him.

Tiny couldn't move — he stared at the Projectile and by now it was the size of a basketball. The fire ball was still on course heading straight toward him. Tiny said he pushed back in the seat to let the ball of fire in the window. He froze as the projectile exploded above and to his right. He felt his life slipping away for he knew the shrapnel would be tearing through his body any second. As the shrapnel whizzed over his head he realized he hadn't been hit.

His ears were ringing but he knew he had been lucky this time. He pulled himself out of the driver's seat and stared at the spot where the 50 caliber machine gun had been. When the Projectile exploded it knocked the machine gun off as smooth as a cutting torch.

As Tiny stood up he could see the turrel on the German tank turning as they looked for other targets, thinking they had knocked the American Self Propell out. Then Tiny thought about his crew. There were no injured or wounded in the body of the Self Propell, so he eased over the rear end expecting to see a dead or wounded member of his gun crew laying on the ground.

But still he couldn't find a single member of his crew, then it dawned on him that he was alone. There wasn't an American in the area, so he ducked down and crawled back over the crest of the hill out of sight of the German tank. He took out on foot heading back to the company area to report what had happened to his M-7 and see if he could find any of his crew.

Lt. William G. Buster Comes to Rescue

He had covered about seven hundred yards when he came upon 1st Lt. Wm. G. Buster of Dallas, Texas of Co. F and Tiny had known him when he was in G Co. back in 1941. He asked Tiny what had happened up there on the hill. Tiny went over every detail and as he finished his story he asked Lt. Buster if he had seen his gun crew. Buster told him he hadn't seen them and asked Tiny to show him the German tank. Tiny said, “You are nuts, that German doesn't miss and I realize now just how lucky I am. I want no more of that tank.”

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Lt. Buster came right back with, "Tiny come on back up the hill with me and show me the German's position. You said there was only one German tank, come on and show me." Tiny answered, "hell no, I don't want no more of those Germans and neither do you. He is one hell of a shot." Lt. Buster took Tiny by the shoulders and with his voice nearly pleading he said, "Tiny I want to go up the hill and see the tank and I want you to go with me." Tiny say, "Lt. Buster, you are crazy as hell and I know I am, but lets go."

As they topped the crest, Tiny pointed to the tank in the valley below and said, "There's the bastard; now are you satisfied?" The tanks turret was turning in a 360 degree circle hunting a target. The German commander was still sitting half out of the turret looking through his field glasses for anything that he could fire on.

As Tiny and Lt. Buster lay on the ground watching the tank turret turning round and round, Tiny spoke, "the bastard is still hunting meat, lets get the hell out of here." Lt. Buster didn't move, just lowered his voice as he said, "Tiny let's knock out that German tank."

Tiny couldn't believe what he was hearing and answered, "Are you crazy? I'm not sure that our gun will still fire and if it does we need time to get two rounds off before it could turn to fire on us. It's fast plus he's good." Then Tiny asked, "Lt. Buster, have you ever fired one of these guns?" The Lt. just moved to the rear of the Cannon Company vehicle and as he started to pull himself up he said, "Tiny let's see if the gun will fire."

As Tiny pulled himself up on the back of his M-7 he asked again, "Lt. Buster have you ever fired or loaded one of these?" Lt. Buster answered, "Tiny I have never fired or loaded one of these, but I know you can knock out that German tank and I will load for you." Tiny came right back with, "Lt. Buster, have you ever loaded one of these before?" Buster said, "No Tiny, I have never fired or loaded one of these but I have faith in you. I know you can knock out that tank so lets' get started."

Tiny was already checking the piece. He opened the breech, then slammed it shut, told Lt. Buster to stay low and out of sight because if the German sees you he just might do a better job than he did last time. He cranked the muzzel down, then back up, then from side to side until he was sure the gun was operational.

He turned to Lt. Buster and said, "I believe it will fire but I will need at least two rounds and the second one has to be fast. Let me show you what we need to do." Tiny picked up an empty shell case and pushed it into the breech. He picked up another and handed it to Lt.

“TINY FINDS A LOADER”

Buster and said, “We will start here.” It wasn’t easy trying to show a man the mechanics of inserting one shell then throwing it out to get ready for a second round, knowing a mistake could cost them their lives. Tiny went through the dry run routine time and time again, until he was sure Lt. Buster was ready.

He turned to the Lt. and said, “You know you are crazy and I’m crazier than you for even trying this. You are as ready as you will ever be so let’s get the show on the road.” Lt. Buster put his hand on Tiny’s shoulder and said, “Tiny I know you will knock him out — just have faith.” Tiny said, “keep low and if I miss the first round, get the second round ready fast. Let’s get on with this show.”

Tiny adjusted the piece until the cross hairs were centered on the German tank and he was satisfied that he was right. He didn’t fire until he went over his movements, centering those cross hairs time and time again. Tiny came to himself as he heard Lt. Buster say, “Tiny I’m ready.” Tiny looked at the German tank through the sights. The tank commander was still sitting half out of the turret with his back to them. He was looking away from Tiny’s Self Propell in the direction his gun was facing.

Tiny checked his sights once again and then when he was sure he was on target he fired. His eyes never left the Projectile as it headed toward the German tank. Lt. Buster was already ejecting the spent round and was inserting a good round into the breech, as he heard Tiny yell, “I his him, we have knocked him out.” Lt. Buster stood up in the bed of the Self Propell and turned toward the valley as the German tank burst into flames.

By now Tiny and Lt. Buster were jumping for joy with Buster saying, “Tiny I knew you could do it.” Tiny came right back with, “I couldn’t have done it without a “loader” who had faith in me.”

As Tiny and Lt. Buster calmed down, Tiny moved to the drivers seat and said, “Well loader, lets see if this damn thing will start so we can get it back to the rear and have a new 50 caliber machine gun put in place.” As Tiny turned the switch the engine started and he backed it over the crest of the hill. They had traveled about four hundred yards when Lt. Buster said, “Tiny drop me off here. Company F is just down the draw and to the right.”

Tiny came to a stop and climbed out of the drivers seat. As he stood in the bed of the M-7 he faced Lt. Buster. The Lt. spoke first and said, “Tiny you are one hell of a soldier and today your courage proved it.” Tiny came right back with, “I couldn’t have done it without your faith in me.” They shook hands and as they looked into each others eyes they had nothing but admiration for one another.

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Lt. Buster eased out the rear of the vehicle and said, "Tiny take care of yourself." By this time Tiny was back in the drivers seat, had put the M-7 in gear and was off to the company. As Tiny pulled into the Cannon Company area men came from all directions saying, "Tiny you are supposed to be dead and this tank destroyed." As he climbed out of the vehicle he said, "Yeah, I know, but that damn gun crew didn't even wait to check my pulse to see if I was dead. I didn't even get a scratch. We just need a new machine gun and this M-7 will be as good as new."

From that day until the day he was killed, Lt. Buster was given the nick-name "LOADER". He accepted the title as it was given with pride and satisfaction that he and Tiny Thompson had done a job they had trained for.

Lt. William G. Buster was killed on 16 November 1943 on the forward slopes of Mount Rotondo as the Commanding Officer of Co. F. 143rd infantry.

Each time we go back to Italy we always make a special effort to show our love and respect for our friends who paid the supreme sacrifice by giving their lives so Americans could remain free.

Capt. William G. Buster lies in Section C — Row 13 — Grave #20 in the American Cemetery at Nettuno, Italy just a short piece from Anzio. Each time we visit the cemetery we place a red carnation on his grave and I find myself saying, "Thanks, "LOADER" for a job well done!"

All the men listed below and mentioned in this article gave the supreme sacrifice during WWII, except one. C. L. "TINY" THOMPSON died of cancer of the spine in 1963.

C. L. "Tiny" Thompson, Houston, Texas Died of Cancer — 1963
1st Lt. William G. Buster, Dallas, Texas KIA 16 Novmeber 1943 — Italy
Capt. Henry T. Waskow, Belton, Texas KIA 13 December 1943 — Italy
Capt. Milton Steffin, Huntsville, Texas KIA 21 January 1944 — Italy
Capt. Carl R. Bayne, Yoakum, Texas KIA 20 January 1944 — Italy
2nd Lt. Ezra Patton, Addicks, Texas Died in his fighter plane 1943
Sgt. Harold Hooper,
Houston, Texas KIA 7 March 1945 — Remagen Bridge — Italy
S/Sgt. Robert E. Lee,
Houston, Texas : KIA 1943 — Waist Gunner on the Ploesti Raid
T-Sgt. Mitchell Woods, Houston, Texas KIA May 1944 — Italy
S/Sgt. Donald Appel, Houston, Texas KIA 27 August 1944 — France
Corp. William DuRant, Houston, Texas KIA November 1943 — Italy
2nd Lt. Anthony Hauck,
Brooklyn, New York KIA 9 September 1943 — Italy



A RARE CARTOON by WILLARD MULLIN ...



TWELVE DAYS AFTER PEARL HARBOR ...

This cartoon was discovered by accident in your editor's array of WAR clips, and then suddenly noticed the name — WILLARD MULLIN, of New York World-Telegram (now defunct) who was acclaimed to be "Sports Cartoonist of the Century." Our files show many of his past efforts, like his famous caricature of an un-shaven hobo, led to the Brooklyn Dodgers being nicknamed "da bums". He died in 1978 at age 76. HIS rendering of the Jap with a Swastika pretty wells, sports style — verifies the "SNEAK PLAY" on Dec. 7th 1941. THIS is a classic, not only for sports fans — but all America!

THE WILD GEESE

The Irish Soldier in Exile
MAURICE N. HENNESSY





Irish Recruits Fought 200 Years Ago

at . . .

VELLETRI

George Kerrigan, the
Perennial Irishman, is
Official Historian
for ALL Irishmen — since
Days When St. Patrick
Ran the Snakes out of
Ireland.



Dear Editor:

I have just finished reading the book — “Wild Geese,” The Irish Soldier in Exile, by Maurice N. Hennessy, and am passing on to you — an item that “a-m-a-z-e-d” me no end. Here we find out that a battle was fought at VELLETRI two hundred years ago — (the same spot where we had a good show) in May 1944 — for the breakthrough to Rome.

Seems that the “profession soldier” was a common occupation in the old days, and the great IRISH, being ‘fighters’ deluxe joined the Royal Spanish Army in a conflict with Charles, King of Naples, and their mission was the capture of the King Charles himself.

Hey, this is the SAME TERRITORY that we performed our famous ROAD BLOCK, us troopers of Company A, 142nd Infantry. (Wish I had known of this skirmish at that time). So, it's a small world when it comes to WARS.

A Letter to General George Lynch

I figured I should pass along this item to our 142nd Commander, General Lynch of Columbus, Georgia.

The General was kind enough to reply to this, with these immortal words: “THANK GOD, the Irish at OUR own road block were all on the SAME SIDE” . . .

Regards, ‘Wrong Way Kerrigan.’

1744

TWO HUNDRED YEARS BEFORE the 36th
THE WILD GEESE

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The Wild Geese

La Columna Hibernia originated in 1709 as part of the Royal Spanish Army; it was formed in Aragon by a Don Reynaldo MacDonald who was specially commissioned by the Spanish King to recruit Irish and other foreign nationals for the regiment. The Royal decree specified clearly that all officers in the regiment were to be Irish or of Irish origin, 'to give the young men of the Irish nobility the opportunity of following the honourable career of arms.'

Initially, this regiment consisted of two battalions of thirteen companies; in 1792 this was altered to three battalions, the first two of which consisted of four fusilier companies and a grenadier company, the third being restricted to four fusilier companies.

The first battles of record in which the Irish regiment took part were those of Zaragoza in 1710 and Brihuega and Villaviciosa; it also fought at the siege of Barcelona in 1714.

To their satisfaction the three Spanish Irish regiments faced the British again at the siege of Gibraltar but, unhappily for them, all their efforts were abortive; The Rock remained the unassailable stronghold it still is at the entrance to the Mediterranean. From Gibraltar the three regiments campaigned in Italy against the Austrians between 1742 and 1748 where their enemies were commanded by some of the most distinguished Irish generals in the history of the Austrian Army. It was Marshal Maximilian von Browne who inflicted on the Spanish Irish Brigade its most severe mauling. In August 1744 Browne, with a special force of 6,000 men including many Irish, led a night attack against the Spanish who were fighting with Charles, King of Naples. Charles had set up his headquarters at Velletri, situated about twenty-five miles southwest of Rome. Browne's main objective was the capture of King Charles himself.

The Irish on the Austrian side must have known that they were opposed by the three Irish regiments of Spain for an Irish grenadier from Browne's forces deserted and hastened to warn the Velletri garrison. Browne became aware of this treachery but was still determined to press the attack.

Irish Recruits Fought at Velletri

1944

Velletri — June 1, 1944, read from the pages of General Fred L. Walker's Diary — "The Breakthrough at Velletri" — just as written and taken from his TEXAS TO ROME (1969 issue).

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Near Velletri, Italy
Thursday, June 1, 1944

A very busy and eventful day. It seems a week since this morning.

Last night all 20 of us bedded down on the ground, expecting to move forward this morning. I cautioned everyone to keep his weapon close at hand because German patrols or snipers might come into the bivouac during the night.

Before daylight we were awakened by machine gun and rifle fire which seemed to be no more than 250 yards away. However, no bullets were striking in the CP area. Since the three combat teams had already passed beyond us, I thought Germans had infiltrated between my CP and the regiment. Hal Reese and I got everyone together and quickly organized reconnaissance patrols to investigate the source and cause of the firing. It was just dawn. The firing in our immediate vicinity ceased when the patrols were starting to move out and the Germans, if there were Germans, vanished.

While I was going about helping to get everyone up and armed, I came across a man completely covered by a blanket, lying alongside the stone bridge abutment. With some impatience, I poked him with my foot and said, "Get up and get your rifle."

Slowly the face of Ken Dixon appeared. He is a news reporter who had been up most of the night with the 142nd Infantry which had gone forward. Irked and resentful, he said, "I'm a noncombatant. I don't have a rifle." He covered his head, clearly indicating that at the moment he had no interest in a news story.

After a C-ration breakfast, Hal and I walked forward over a part of Stovall's new road to a group of buildings where Harmony's

BREAKTHROUGH AT VELLETRI

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141st had its CP. It was a busy place with messengers coming and going, wounded being treated, and prisoners being interrogated. I called the Forward Echelon of my CP from there and learned that all was going well. Our troops were meeting very little resistance, except the 141st, which had the job of taking the town of Velletri.

Fighting 36th Historical Quarterly

I went forward to the CP of the 1st Battalion, not far away. It was deployed in contact with the Germans. There was small arms fire, here and there, and the battalion was preparing for an organized advance. I went to observe one of the leading companies. The company commander seemed to be taking more time than necessary to get moving, for it was important that the Germans be kept off balance and not be allowed time to regroup and reorganize. I urged him to speed things up and, on my own, undertook to help him by going over to one of his platoon commanders who was getting ready to move out, and said, "Lieutenant, get your men up and get going. Get going."

He looked askance at me and with some impatience, as if harassed, he said, emphasizing each word, "General, I'm going, but I'm not going 'til I get ready."

In other words, he was saying, attend to your business and let me attend to mine.

Was he impertinent, insubordinate, disobedient? Not at all. He has been living under battle conditions since the 26th. He has just been through a grueling fight. He was tense, but confident. He alone was responsible for the success of his men, and he did not wish to be interfered with. He was right. It is not my business to direct platoons. But occasionally I become over enthusiastic.

Several German prisoners who had been brought into the Battalion CP where Reese and I were observing, were a little slow to obey the command to assemble. Acting on a sudden impulse. I kicked one of the slow ones in the behind with the side of my foot. He was most startled and immediately jumped into place. Hal observed that it is most unbecoming of a Major General to kick a German prisoner. I agreed, of course. One of the news photographers with the Division later heard of the incident and asked me to repeat the kicking so he could get a picture of me in the act. I declined. I am not looking for that kind of publicity.

I was with the 1st Battalion, 141st Infantry, all afternoon. It

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FROM TEXAS TO ROME

was on the Division left flank, advancing on Velletri. When there was a pause in the German fire, Hal Reese and I walked along the road behind the self-propelled cannon company vehicles of the regiment while the foot troops moved ahead through the cane and vineyards on both sides. As we approached the town of Velletri, the Cannon Company vehicles stopped at a bend in the road. Hal walked out beyond the bend, in front of the leading vehicle.

Irish Recruits Fought at Velletri

Many prisoners have been taken by our Infantry today. The 12th German Paratroop Regiment, Herman Goering Division, which was in our path must have been completely destroyed. During the day I received an intercepted message which directed a German regiment to withdraw and move to the west side of a stream north of Velletri. It never arrived there. Our troops were in full possession of Velletri by midnight.

Wick Fowler has been with me all day. When it was over, he said to me, "I have been told that if I want to be safe I should stay with a general. I have had enough today. I will never again follow a general up front." He was joking.

Worldwartwoveterans.org North of Velletri
Friday, June 2, 1944

We have succeeded in a big way. The 142nd and 143rd Regiments climbed Mount Artemisio and the 142nd came in behind Velletri. This was cleverly done, mostly at night, and resulted in complete tactical surprise to the German High Command. Prisoners tell us they did not suspect that we had a whole division

BREAKTHROUGH AT VELLETRI

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in their rear until it was too late. But, the German delaying forces in front of the 141st fought for every foot of ground. Scattered and concealed in the brush and trees, they would lie in wait for our men to walk through the brush toward them. Then they would machinegun our men, run back a 100 yards or so and wait again. But our men knew their business. They would shoot into the brush with continuous fire and then rush in. The Germans who threw up their hands were taken prisoner. Those who tried to run away were shown little mercy. It was a matter of survival.

The Division CP was moved into a damaged school north of Velletri. The Germans have removed their dead, but many dead horses and wrecked vehicles are evidence of heavy losses. Our bulldozers are busy burying the dead animals. Three stray enemy snipers were captured in the CP area this afternoon by headquarters personnel.

We are having success everywhere.
This is wonderful. I am proud of the 36th.

NOW that you've read — both the 1744 story and General Walker's report in June 1944, ye shall get a little idea of the battles fought over the centuries — all for a chance to TAKE ROME, the Eternal City, and this one is a gem.



AMBUSH
AT VELLETRI
THE LUCK OF THE IRISH



“Kerrigan Kissed
the Blarney Stone...”

In order to understand the story behind this — Read the 36th Quarterly, Vol. II, No. 3, Fall of 1983 — Kerrigan's story — “AMBUSH AT VELLETRI, it tells about his ROAD BLOCK, that activated this article.



AFTER VELLETRI...

Late June 1944, above Rome after liberation on June 4th, here's five men of Co A 142nd after taking a bath in a river in background — from left: George Kerrigan, Brooklyn, Vincent Felderhoff of Muenster TX; “Skipper” Brandt of Dubuque Iowa; George Richards, a Pro fighter from Andover Mass., and kneeling — Joe Werzbicke of Johnstown PA., foto from “Wrong Way Kerrigan,”

BOOKS, New Ones You Gotta Read . . .

“Shattering the German Night” —
Reveals Nazi’s Used the 19th Century
French Guillotine on their Dissents

Of dissent within Nazi Germany, and the White Rose

Worldwartwoveterans.org

Many books tell us of the French Resistance, the Danish Resistance, and other valiant movements by citizens of nations conquered by Nazi Germany in World War II. Few books have focused on wartime resistance to the Hitler regime within Germany itself, but a new work relates one of the most poignant tales of active resistance to the Third Reich.

While stationed militarily in Germany some years after World War II, I became friends with a Heidelberg professor who was restored to academic dignity after having been imprisoned during the war for speaking out against the Nazi terror. He believed that of all the cases of internal dissent, the “White Rose” was the most tragic of all. He gave me the name and address of a family in Munich who could tell me about the misadventure involving some medical students, but I never got to Munich; and during the passing years I found only few and unsatisfactory references to the White Rose case in WWII literature.

Shattering the German Night (Little, Brown (\$17.95)) is devoted entirely to the movement that flourished briefly in 1943. It is the work of two scholars of modern Germany, Annette Dumbach and Jud Newborn. They tell of a brother and sister, Hans and Sophie Scholl, arriving independently at the same conviction of the Hitler regime’s infamy; of their founding with their friend Christoph Probst of a protest group called the White Rose; of their brief but rousing career as pamphleteers; and inevitably, of the Nazis’ exercise of “justice.” Apprehended for their subversive activity, they were quickly tried, convicted and executed. Indeed, they were beheaded, for the Nazis had revived the infamous guillotine for cases of treason. Other White Rose confederates were executed and some were imprisoned. The Nazis were unable to suppress the story, and the valor of the doomed protesters was celebrated editorially in the Allied press. Yet as years and decades passed, the White Rose story sank into obscurity.

Shattering the German Night is an important journalistic work that deserves to be widely read. I believe that, even today, the brief and long-ago White Rose movement is an intellectual influence on the West German nation and its citizenry. I, for one, am grateful to Dumbach and Newborn for producing this book about some impassioned young martyrs, lest they be forgotten.



Larry

SWINDELL

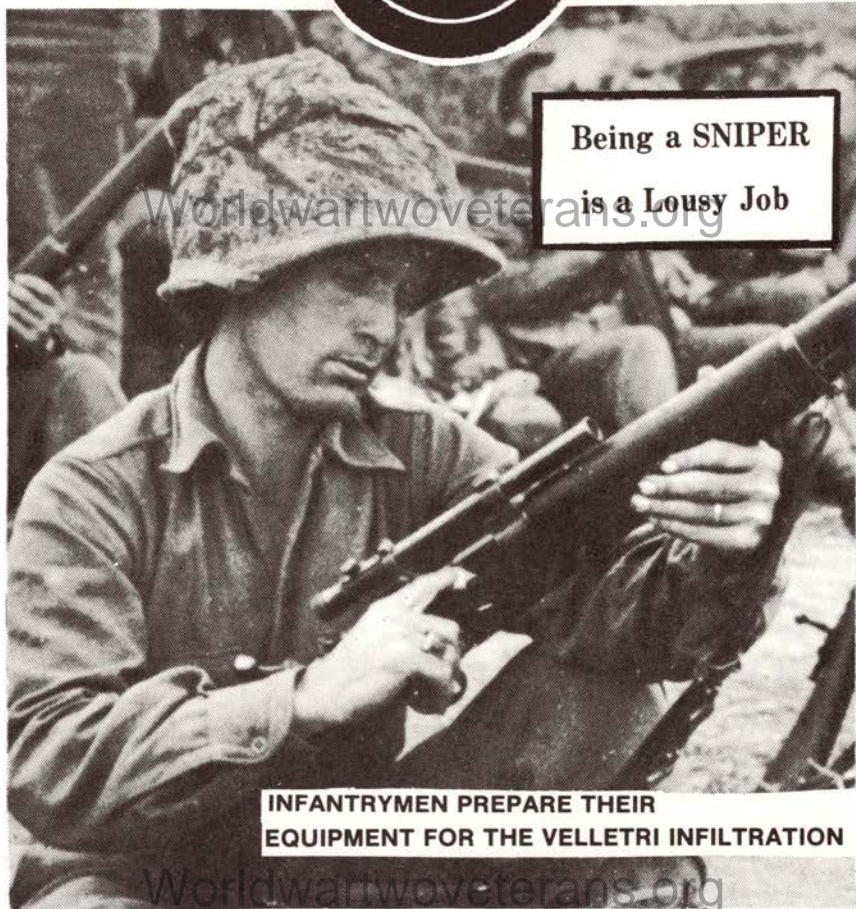
Star-Telegram

Sunday, September 28, 1986



AMAZING, but true, the Nazis used every trick in the book, including the GUILLOTINE to behead their own people, whom were intelligent enough to know Hitler’s plan was wrong.

Bull's-eye Bullets



Being a SNIPER
is a Lousy Job

INFANTRYMEN PREPARE THEIR
EQUIPMENT FOR THE VELLETRI INFILTRATION

This photo, above, was published in our 1946 Pictorial History, and again 36th 1984 Calendar along with February, and the legend says, Infantrymen prepare their equipment for Velletri infiltration. **NO mention of the fact that this MAN IS A SNIPER.**

By accident, years later we found this same foto with **proper identification** in an issue of GUNS & AMMO Magazine, vintage 1955.

Our interest was aroused by this, and hence — we now want to hear from our WWII Snipers!

Being a SNIPER is a Lousy Job



Pfc. Edward Foley, sniper with the 36th Division, checks his rifle before moving up to front in Italy. U. S. Army made much use of snipers in its campaigns.

Page 10 — T-PATCHER, August 1986

Dear Editor:

The "Bull's Eye Bingo" story in Aug. 1986 Newsletter caught my eye, and while I'm not an expert on 'Snipers,' I sure know ED FOLEY (the un-named trooper in the many times his picture was published).

Yes, I met him on May 8, 1944 just before the 36th went to Anzio for the Rome Breakout at Velletri (where his foto was taken by Signal Corps).

We were both in 1st squad, 1st platoon of G Company 143rd. I was a rifleman, and Ed Foley had just returned from 5th Army SNIPER SCHOOL at Caserta.

During the ROME Drive, he discovered that "being a sniper was NOT a good career." (He probably felt it was a bit hazardous to his longevity).

Our squad leader was using him as a rifleman, not a point man but within the squad. The "O3" — a five-shot bolt-action piece with a Four-Power Scope, and no front sight was a waste. He soon removed the cover from his helmet and picked up an M-1. (This was done at Velletri) — where after firing five rounds, he had re-loaded each cartridge separately. For the balance of our time in Italy, we served together as riflemen.

After our pull-out above Rome and returned to Salerno area for training for Southern France — we hit the Riveria at St. Raphael on August 15, 1944. (That date now is a legal HOLIDAY.)

Fighting 36th Historical Quarterly

At Frejus we lost our squad leader and platoon Sgts., and I was appointed assistant squad leader, and Ed Foley a rifleman. In September, we lost another squad leader — and Foley made Buck Sgt. when I became Staff.

On October 20th, G Company lost both the 1st and 2nd platoons at BRUYERES, all K.I.A., wounded or POWs. (This is area of the LOST BATTALION.) Ed Foley was hit early in action — and was evacuated and never returned to our company G 143rd Infantry.

It seemed to be a big hit, and I'm sure he survived. I lost four men, three K.I.A. and Foley gone — joined another squad — until I was hit in the right knee, captured — and as the captors obtained a radio from an H Company officer, they arranged a TRUCE, so our medics could remove our wounded and they could escape with the prisoners.

My 'hit' wasn't too bad, so "G" sent me to Brumath to train two new platoons from the replacement depot. They sent up two platoons from a T/Sgt to privates. Same deal was from C Company and L Company — all trained together.

Back in the line, I appointed myself "GUIDE SGT." until the new T/Sgt. was K.I.A. I took his place for the balance of the war.



William Gorman
Company G 143rd Infantry
19 Evergreen Road
Stratford, N.J. 08084

ED Note: The story you just read, sent in by William Gorman is our first to shed some light on the activities of the SNIPERS of the 36th. How many, and who were they is still to be discovered.

Gorman also included his experiences on a visit to the old battlegrounds — with the group of T-Patchers who made a 40th Anniversary visit to France in 1984...read on.

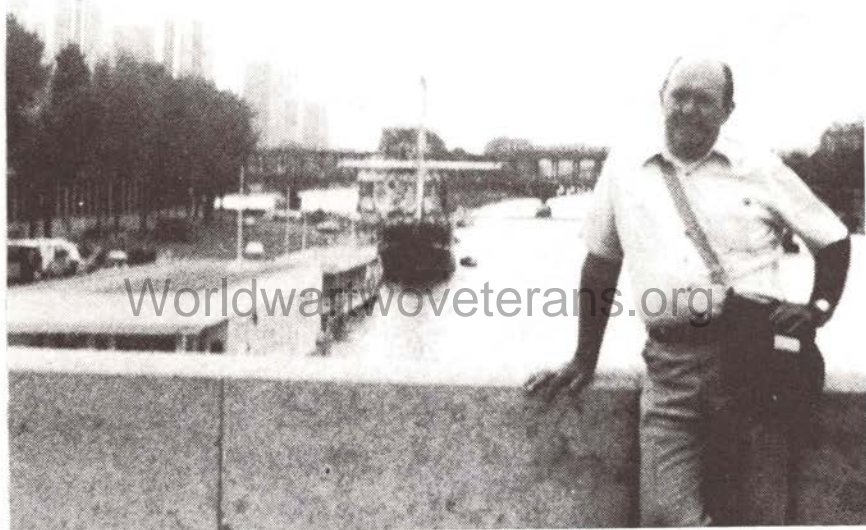
Bill Gorman Visits Graves of Buddies



MONTILAMAR France — from north (Grenoble) where I pick up a small hit.

It was my pleasure to have joined the group of 36thers — and their wives, friends and guests to the France-Germany part of our action in the wind up of this terrible — tragedy called World War II.

We visited the Invasion area — Southern France, Aug. 15th, 1944 and cemeteries where we found many of our fallen comrades. We found the resting place of two platoon Sgts. and one platoon Sgt. K.I.A. at Fregus, in the Military Cemetery at Draguinan.



LYONS, a beautiful city — I'm standing on the bridge we crossed at night — to discover, to our pleasure, that the town had been liberated (probably by the FFI) — and we joined in the celebration.

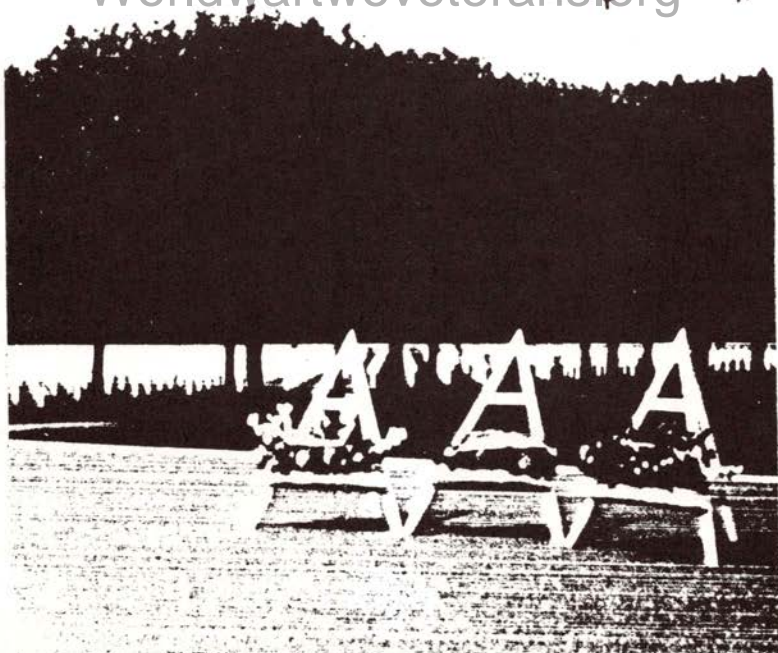
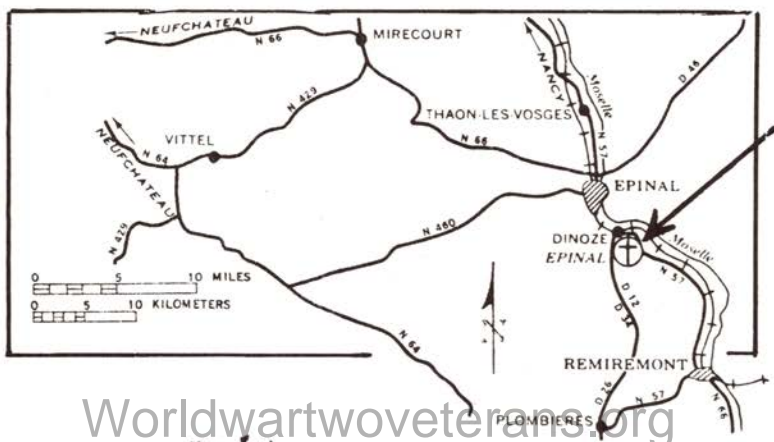
Fighting 36th Historical Quarterly

We journeyed north to the ALSACE area where other fierce battles were fought, and visited the resting places of the squad leader that I replaced, and three K.I.A.'s of Oct. 10, 1944, and another friend and buddy I lost in November. A sobering trip. These men really paid a price!



RHONE CEMETARY — here we found 3 men of Company G 143rd laid to rest.

Bill Gorman Visits Graves of Buddies



EPINAL CEMETARY — the resting place for six men who lie in honored glory.

Other men of Company G 143rd we located, included — Don Aphel of Houston, and former Texas National Guard.

Stanley (Whitey) Dudenski of Connecticut and Charles Skipper, a Georgia boy.

A Rare Collection . . .

THE WILBUR PAPERS

Discovered and sent in by
Colonel Oran Stovall

Only Three Men Left



Worldwarveterans.org

Early in February the 36th Division was pulled out of line and moved a short distance to the north to take over another combat sector. When the division left the Casino area, many of the Rifle Company of the 141st Infantry had been reduced to 20-25 men.

Their Spirit Was Magnificent

Here, the spirit of the infantry soldiers was simply magnificent. They realized that they would not be put back in line unless the situation was very serious, and most of the companies adopted a code which is almost impossible to conceive from armchair viewpoint.

Going into the line with a very limited number of men, with those present extremely fatigued carrying on a psychological load of the memory of the terrific struggle they had been through, they nevertheless carried on to do more than their share.

In many of the companies a criterion was adopted such that no man was evacuated to the rear unless he had a bleeding wound. Minor shell fragment fractures that could be bandaged were not considered as valid reasons for evacuation. Serious dysentery or a high fever were likewise not accepted as tickets to the rear.

The men accepted the fact that the job had to be done and with magnificent loyalty stayed on the job day after day when many of them should have been sent to the rear. This was not only an order

General William H. Wilbur left for the ages, probably the finest collection of his long career in the Military, and much of it has been awarded in custody to the 36th Association. Col. Stovall had a large file of letters and memos from the General, and passed along these observations.

THE WILBUR PAPERS

issued by the leader, it was a policy that was given whole hearted acceptance by the men themselves.

The losses in the 141st Infantry were not limited to the front line rifle units. On February 18th 1944, Colonel Wyatt was killed and Colonel Price was seriously wounded. By some circumstances of fate, Colonel Price was evacuated back to the same hospital where I was and he was brought in early in the afternoon of the day that I was evacuated to the States. I had collected my belongings together and was just on the point of leaving the room where six of us had our bunks, when an orderly brought in a musset bag and a steel helmet. The steel helmet had a Lieutenant Colonel insignia on it and below it the rectangle of bright paint which all of the officers of the 36th Division wore.

Of course, I instantly realized that it was a 36th Division officer and was very much moved when they brought in my friend, Colonel Andy Price, the Executive Officer of the 141st Infantry.

Andy Price Tells of Death of Col. Wyatt

We had been together at Salerno when he was assigned as Executive Officer of the force which I commanded. We had spend many heavy hours together during the battle of Rapido River. About a month before the Rapido operation, the doctors had found that Colonel Price's heart was going to pieces and that it was not impossible that he might die suddenly if subjected to some severe strain. He stalwartedly refused to be evacuated and continued to give regimental headquarters the benefit of his stability and calm.

The orderly brought in the stretcher and Colonel Price was transferred to a bed. I went over to speak to him. He said, "My, General, I'm glad to see you. In the ambulance on the way in I was hoping that I could tell you about Colonel Wyatt, but I thought that you had already gone back to the States." I told him that I was leaving within a matter of an hour or two but that was unimportant, and I asked him where he was wounded. He said, "I don't think anything is very bad but I did get five pieces of shrapnel in my legs." At that point a nurse took the blanket off of Colonel Price to look at the dressing. Four or five wounds appeared to have clotted but blood was oozing through and around the bandage of the wound in the calf of his leg.

Colonel Price said, "I'm all right but I do want to tell you about Colonel Wyatt. You remember when we moved our regimental command post, we established ourselves in an Italian house, as always Colonel Wyatt took the upper floor for his own headquarters and took the

Fighting 36th Historical Quarterly

room most exposed to enemy fire. Our headquarters was shelled off and on pretty much continuously, but they didn't actually hit the building and we were beginning to feel almost safe. Early this morning a shell hit the wall, penetrated, came through our room and exploded somewhere between Colonel Wyatt and myself. When I got a hold of myself, I found that I was blind, it was temporary, and I could hear Colonel Wyatt moaning. I had felt myself and realized, although I was bleeding in several places in my legs that I was generally all right. I crawled over to Colonel Wyatt and asked him how he was.

He said, 'I have been hit in the abdomen and my intestines are protruding.' I couldn't see but I put my hand on his leg and felt upward toward his stomach. Later I found what had happened, that the shot had hit him in the chest. He died before I regained the use of my eyes and before we could get any medical attention to him. Although he was very seriously wounded, he did not lose control of himself in the slightest as you can realize from the words which he used."

"You remember that he always used highly correct language and his use of the word 'protruding' merely indicated that his mind was functioning in its normal calm way." He said, "I know, General, that you realize how great was Colonel Wyatt's integrity, how remarkable his concept of duty, for you saw him in the supreme test at the Rapido River. Now that he is gone, I think perhaps that I can take a rest."

Through all this moving story, Colonel Price had not whimpered in the slightest, although he might well have done so after having spent hours in traveling in an ambulance with painful wounds, one of which probably bleeding all the way. The loss of blood alone might well have so sapped his strength as to undermine his control, but it did not.

Then I asked him about the regiment. He told me a bit about the situation, how serious it was, of the losses that the Rifle Company was suffering, and finished off with the statement, "B Company has been battered and hammered and, General, just before I left, I got a report that there were only three men left in it." Then and then only did a tear start coursing down Colonel Price's cheek.

For the next several issues of the Quarterly, we will publish additional items such as this, plus highlights of his many accomplishments. Jim Stokes of N. Fort Myers FL was instrumental in securing a lot of the mother lode that is now in our hands. Jim has our thanks. He's the 'active' one of Co. H 142nd.

THE WILBUR PAPERS

THE WOUNDED

I have visited a good many men in hospitals in the combat zone. The wounded men were truly magnificent. One would ask, "Did we capture Mt. Maggiori, General?" "I was wounded half way up. Did we make it?" Another wanted to know, "Did that German counter-attack get stopped all right?"

And many would say, "Save a place for me, General. I'll be back soon."

A German officer, a first lieutenant of the 305th German Infantry Division who had been wounded and then taken to an American hospital where he lay in a ward surrounded by American soldiers, had this to say of the fine attitude of our wounded. He said, "They are interested in how things are going at the front. They want to get at the Germans again. Their attitude is perfectly remarkable." He went on to say that such an attitude was not found in German front line hospitals.

The Germans, when wounded, were sad and did not have any interest in the fighting. They were through. Our fine young men deserve better of their country than that they should be put into battle and expected to use courage in the place of training.

T-PATCHER — MARCH 1980 — Page 9



Jan. 8, 1943 — President Franklin D. Roosevelt places the Congressional Medal of Honor on Brig. Gen. William H. Wilbur for his valor in North Africa. Maj. Gen. George S. Patton assists, as General Marshall looks on. This photo, taken at FDR's villa in Casablanca, was loaned to the T-Patcher, courtesy Mrs. Laura Wilbur, widow of this famous general.



“MEMORIES”



by Robert Swadener

Men of 36th MP Platoon Were Eye-Witness to Bombing of LST 282 at Southern France

The disastrous explosion which happened on the L.S.T. with the forty-five men aboard ... this tragedy occurred on the shores of Southern France, Aug. 15, 1944. One plane came over and sent a heat sensitive bomb right down the smoke stack and everything went up!! The Navy shot at the plane until it couldn't be seen and it never did go down. Many people jumped off the ship right away but the Army Soldiers stayed on.

The ship drifted right under our C.P. that was located on top of a cliff overlooking the sea. When the Army, OUR 36TH, finally started jumping off, they landed on rocks! I remember sending a lot of men down to the building after they came up the path from the rocks and beach. We were knocked down to our knees from the concussion of the exploding shells and stuff, three or four times, after each one, and our helmets would tinkle with the metal raining down.



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

ANVIL - DRAGOON

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

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

From Vol. III No. 4 Winter 1983

OTHER MEMORIES

MAJOR PUCK instructed us to go look for a new P.O.W. Enclosure. I do not remember who was in the jeep with me at the time, but we drove past the walking Infantry and past Tanks on the side of the road. Just then a burst of Machine Gun fire rattled off the trees and EVERYBODY HIT THE DECK! The Lt. landed in a "BIG PATCH OF POISON IVY." When we got to LYON, FRANCE, there was NO ONE THERE! We were in GERMAN HELD TERRITORY!! We were the FIRST IN, and the FIRST OUT! — IN A HURRY!!

Another time he sent us to find another P.O.W. Enclosure, LT. ZEIBEL, who is now on the Silver Taps List, was our head Hancho. We somehow got lost and finally the Lt. saw a Frenchman plowing in a field. The Lt. in broken French, tried to ask him where a certain town was located. The Frenchman, in PERFECT ENGLISH, said, "Well, you go down to the next road and turn right." (We all had a good laugh about this.)

Fighting 36th Historical Quarterly

I was also cooking for this outfit at this time. I had cooked a couple of Thanksgiving dinners and Christmas dinners. I was cooking at Geislingen and before that time long enough to tell PETE GULLOTA that I wanted a raise-in-Rank or to get someone else! I was training people to cook, draw rations, make menus and then when they learned everything, they would get SGT. STRIPES and I still had the P.F.C. rank. I finally got two stripes and PETE said, "Are you satisfied now?"

PETE GULLOTTA chased, and put out a fire, from a five gallon gas can that came twirling through the air after the explosions. We were awoken at 3:00 A.M. for breakfast, which we didn't get, and from then until sometime the next day we didn't sleep or eat! It was thirty-six to thirty-eight hours before we had any sleep or food. In fact, I don't ever remember eating. When we started inland we got to a Railroad Tunnel and three rounds of mortar came in just about two telephone poles distance away! I WILL NEVER FORGET OUR INTRODUCTION TO FRANCE!!

FOOTNOTE: This item appeared in the Aug. 1986 issue of the 36th MP Platoon Family Association Newsletter, edited by William O. Wade. The title, "MEMORIES" by Bob Swadener and his eye-witness to the LST tragedy caught our eye. It has been a 'mystery' for years as to the detail (some called it a FLYING BOMB of the Nazis) etc.

Since the 36th M.P. Platoon CP was 'there', it's possible that this IS the correct version. We contacted Bill Wade and asked that he contact Swadener for a THEN & NOW foto, which we received post haste.

It's this kind of exploration of ideas and stories from the troops that make the purpose of the QUARTERLY a vital source of information — to get the FACTS, all the facts, and this is only the beginning. (You too can add your 2¢ worth, anytime).



ROBERT SWADENER,
80 N 6th Avenue,
Beach Grove, IN 46107

Bigg. Born 9/5/23 at Logansport, IN, enlisted in the service 1943, trained at Camp Wheeler GA and Camp Swift TX, assigned to 36th MP Platoon in Nov. 1943. Now retired from Koenig & Bauer/Egenolf, Printing Press Manufacturer. Was one first to join the 36th MP Platoon when organized in 1983, and a faithful contributor to his unit and the 36th Division Association.



A LOOK AT WAR BOOKS

Ike's European challenge, in detail that overwhelms

Reviewed by
SPENCER TUCKER

David Eisenhower set out to write a history of his grandfather's second presidential term. In researching that era, however, he concluded that the war years were essential in shaping President Eisenhower's views. The result is the first in a projected three-volume study of Dwight D. Eisenhower as general and president.

The book is not for the faint-hearted. The text is 822 pages of fine print. The author begins with the Tehran Conference at the end of 1943, just before Gen. Eisenhower's appointment as supreme Allied commander with responsibility for the invasion of France; it closes 18 months later with the end of the World War II in Europe. There is nothing of Eisenhower's early years, and fully one-third of the text is devoted to preparations for Overlord.

Eisenhower at War is meticulously researched; David Eisenhower spent eight years working on it. The author seems determined, however, to share every detail and nuance in the decision-making process with his reader, and the result is often overwhelming. Undoubtedly this is well-intended, to show the enormity of the task facing the general. Indeed, the author concludes that previous historians may have minimized the scope of the challenge. They have also, he charges, ignored "the crucial bearing on his thinking and actions" of the eastern front.

By the time of Eisenhower's appointment, problems in British-American cooperation had grown rather than diminished. A good bit of this had to do with waning British military influence — their strength was static while that of the Americans was rapidly expanding. In addition, Eisenhower had to deal with the French, specifically Gen. Charles de Gaulle, whose support would be critical in the invasion and subsequent campaign. In this, he had to overcome the barrier raised by Roosevelt's mistaken policy of non-recognition of the Gaullist government-in-exile.

Dwight Eisenhower was undoubtedly the right man to bring off the Normandy invasion, but was he as effective subsequently? There has been controversy among historians over his decision in favor of a broad-front advance into Germany (as opposed to the narrow-front approach advocated by Gen. Montgomery). Another point, related to the first, concerns his decision to ignore

EISENHOWER AT WAR, 1943-1945

Military Biography
Author: DAVID EISENHOWER
Publisher: Random House
Price: \$29.95



the Eastern prizes of Berlin and Prague.

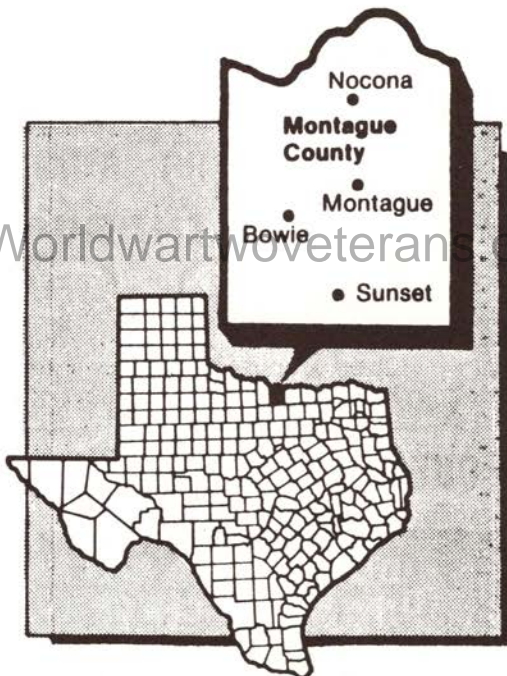
In endeavoring to explain these points, the author stresses the deliberate, methodical theme of Eisenhower's strategy and the importance of the wartime cooperation with the Soviet Union. Both the western and eastern fronts were mutually interdependent. David Eisenhower concluded that "to overlook this fact, and Eisenhower's sensitivity to it, entails the risk of misunderstanding the nature of Allied-Soviet wartime cooperation, and the evolution of the postwar settlement. The ensuing Cold War is often explained as an unforeseen tragedy attributable to Soviet deceit or Allied blunders or as a lack of foresight on the part of America's wartime leadership, but the reality is more complex."

Eisenhower at War does not answer all the questions about the soundness of the general's military strategy, but it does show how the war shaped his perceptions of the Soviet Union and the world. Clearly, during the conflict he supported the policy of cooperation with Russia — a fact that, as president, he went to some lengths to conceal.

This is a thorough study, but the biography of choice is still that of Stephen Ambrose. His first volume, covering a longer span (1890 to 1952), touches all bases, and does so in a length of only 572 pages.

(Spencer Tucker is a TCU history professor and scholar of World War II.)

A Big Fourth Of July Celebration For Citizens Of Bowie, Texas



As part of the State of Texas to get towns, and cities to participate in our 150th Sesquicentennial Celebration — to honor various groups, organizations that contributed to the history of their community during the past 15 decades of achievement, development or valor in preserving our heritage. . . here's a good one:

Many of the Texas National Guard units, where 36th Division group were organized have joined in this effort. **BOWIE TEXAS (60 miles north of Dallas/Fort Worth area) chose their favorite — Company B 111th Engineers for this effort.**

After all, when your town is named for a leading patriot of the ALAMO — Ol' Jim Bowie — a military legend — naturally would honor their own "**Fighting Men of the 36th.**"

Colonel Oran Stovall was kind enough to forward the information about this beautiful granite marker, honoring the unit that he served with, and later commanded. Read on:



**Company B
111th Engineer Battalion
Monument
At Pelham Park**

Worldwartwoveterans.org

On the eastern edge of Bowie, Texas is located Pelham Park (named for John Pelham), the boy artillery commander for General J. E. B. Stewart of the War Between The States. Near a grove of oak trees, on a grassy slope stands a monument dedicated to the men who fought for the Confederacy.

To the left is a Memorial to the 21 men of Bowie, Texas who were killed in World War II.

Now — forty years late, a beautiful 7' x 8" gray granite monument stands in memory of the 20 officers and 85 enlisted men who were inducted into the US Army as Company "B" 111th Engineer Regiment on Nov. 25, 1940.

On July 4th 1986 — Thirteen (13) of those men now, bent, gray and old stood at rigid attention and the memorial was unveiled by Jones Robinson and Virginia R. O'Neal — the son and daughter of the commander on that date.

As the band played the national anthem and a few exploits of the Company were told to the large crowd who came to pay their respects.

The obverse side of the monument shows the T-Patch to denote the 36th Infantry Division of which the Company was a part; the Engineer Castle and the Regimental Crest, with a dedicatory message.

The reverse side lists the names of each man who served with Company B 111th Engineers. ALEX A. GRIFFIN, 1st Sgt. was responsible for gathering funds given — on a volunteer basis from the families of the unit, and a few friends. Assisting Alex in the design and doing the publicity was Sandra Martin.

The National Flag and the 111th Engineers Regimental colors from World War I and World War II were taken from storage to fly proudly at the event.



COMPANY B, 111TH ENGINEERS, 36TH DIVISION

Mobilized on November 25, 1940, with 2 officers and 85 enlisted personnel from Bowie, Texas, and her surrounding communities to see duty in World War II. These men of the Texas National Guard were members of the first division to successfully assault the mainland of Europe at Salerno, Italy, on September 9, 1943.

Company B 111th Engineers Honored



These men went through 28 months of training in six different states and served approximately 28 months overseas. The overseas fighting took them through some seven different European Campaigns and some of the toughest and trying times of World War II.

For those deceased as well as those still living, the City of Bowie, Texas, salutes each of you for a job well done and commemorates your service with a Proclamation dated July 1, 1986, and a permanent marker dedicated this 4th day of July, 1986.

Fighting 36th Historical Quarterly

PROGRAM — July 4th, 1986

Master of Ceremonies Sam Poe
"History of Regimental Colors"
Group Singing of
"God Bless America" led by Robert & Jo Ann Lancaster
Remarks and Presentation of
Company B Personnel by Alex Griffin
Remarks and Presentation of
Commemorative Marker Mayor, John W. Middleton
Unveiling of Marker Virginia Robinson O'Neill
Acceptance of Memorial Oran Stovall
Group Singing of the
National Anthem led by Robert & Jo Ann Lancaster
* End of Formal Ceremonies *

Worldwvoveterans.org

ALEX L. GRIFFIN, 715 N. Jefferson, Bowie, TX 76230 was former 1st Sgt. of Co. B 111th Engineers, according to Stovall — was the handicraftman for design and erection, along with Bob Lancaster of the Lancaster-Henderson Company were the men behind the granite monument.

This is the same Company that did the T-Patch monument at Austin.



The T-Patch Monument at the Texas State Capitol in Austin is, and has been since 1959 our finest tribute to the "Fighting 36th," men of Texas and all the rest of our fifty States.

Company B 111th Engineers Honored

When You Need Something Built, Call In The Engineers, Like Stovall and Alex Griffin



Colonel Oran Stovall, the official Elder Statesman of the 36th Division Association is no stranger to markers and monuments, honoring the men of the Fighting 36th — as he was the architect and one of the ram-rods for the huge granite T-Patch Memorial located on the west side entrance of the State Capitol of Texas.

This was 1959 — 14 years after War's end, and it is today, the single Monument for World War II, along with all the others — honoring the men who fought for freedom — since the Alamo.

If you have not seen this great Memorial, please put it on your list of "things to do," see and relish what it represents.



GROUND-BREAKING on the state capitol grounds, from left is Gen. Carl Phinney, Ernest O. Thompso, William Martin and handsome young Oran Stovall. These are the men who put together the fabulous 36th Division Memorial Monument in Austin. 1959.



*“History... The eternal
landscape of the past”*

— Alfred Lord Tennyson *In Memoriam*, 1850



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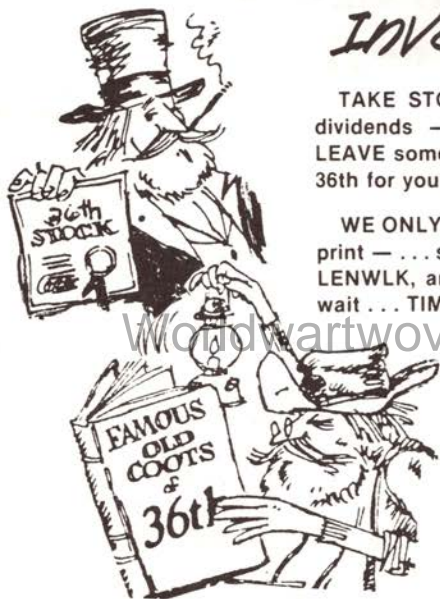
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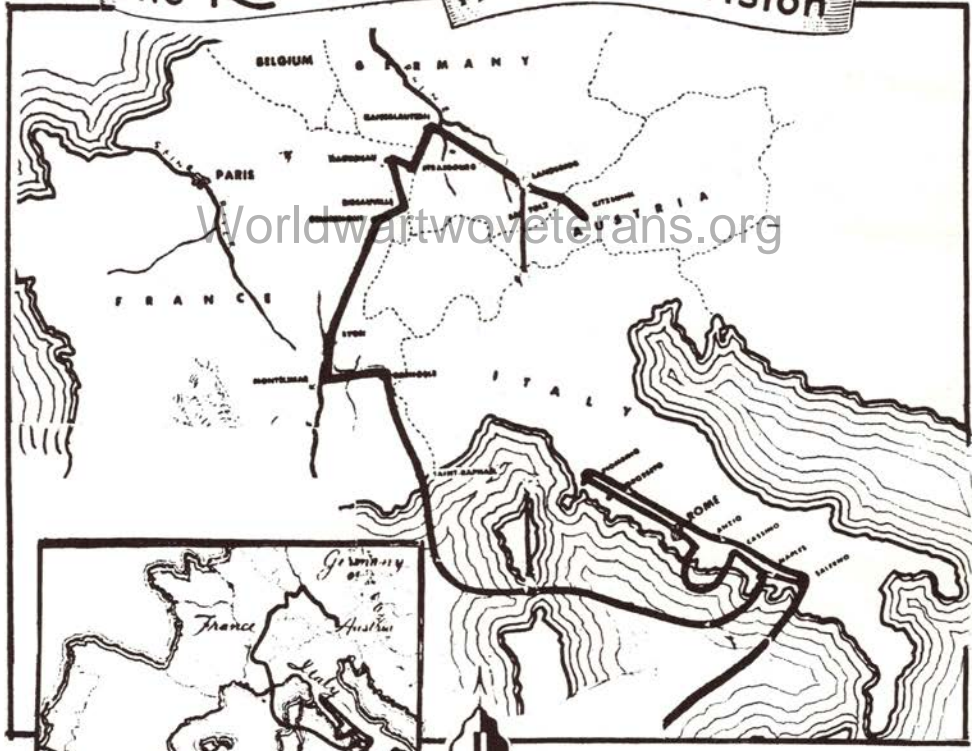
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A Long Rocky Road to Victory

the Route of the 36th Division



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Nov. 20, 1940 - May 8, 1945

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