The Fighting 36th HISTORICAL Quarterly

The Original Tar Heel Texan
Robert 'Buck' Glover
Talks About His
Buddies, Battles and Brotherhood

Vol. VII, No. 2 - Summer 1987

Published by
36th DIVISION ASSOCIATION

Worldwartwoveterans.org

The Fighting 36th

HISTORICAL QUARTERLY

THIRTY SIXTH TEXAS DIVISION ASSOCIATION

Vol. VII, No. 2 - Summer 1987

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36th DIVISION ASSOCIATION

Service Record in World War II

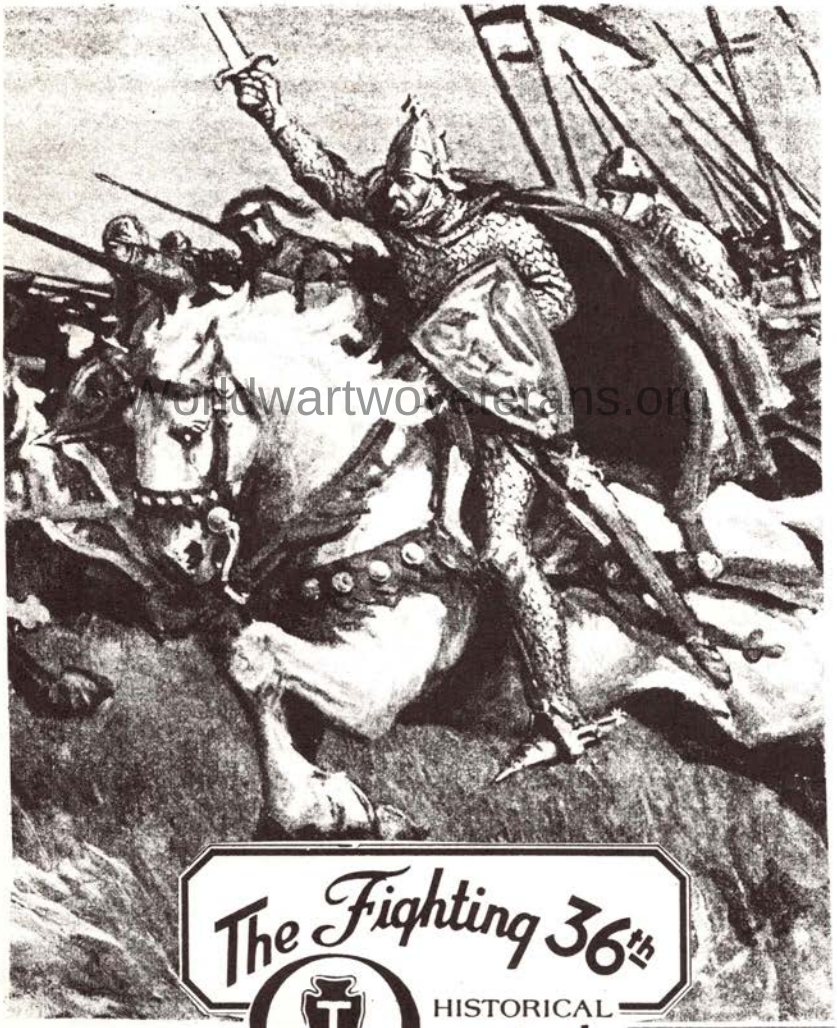
Tragedy, intrigue, heroism

The famed 36th (T-Patch) Division was mobilized into active federal service on Nov. 25, 1940. The division trained at Camp Bowie, (Brownwood) as a square division up until Pearl Harbor Day (Dec. 7, 1941.) Two units, the 144th Infantry and 2nd Battalion, 131st Field Artillery were quickly dispatched to defend the West Coast area in event of an invasion. The 2nd Battalion, 131st Field Artillery was sent on to the South Pacific and were later captured in Java. The men who survived spent over two years as POWs in Burma and Japan.

The remainder of the 36th Division departed for overseas in early 1943 landing in North Africa. The division was the first American unit to invade Hitler's European Fortress, by landing at Salerno, Italy on Sept. 9, 1943. The division later captured Rome, Italy on June 5, 1944 and made the Southern France invasion on Aug. 15, 1944, and fought through France and Germany until the war's end on May 5, 1945.

The 36th Division suffered over 27,000 casualties, the third highest of any World War II division. The men earned 15 Congressional Medal of Honor, 80 D.S.C.'s, 2,354 Silver Stars, 5,407 Bronze Star Medals for valor and 12 Presidential Unit Citations.

It is the only military unit known to have had fighting men in the Pacific and Europe at the same time during WW II, as military records were never changed to relieve the 2nd Bn, 131 F.A. from the rolls of the 36th Division.



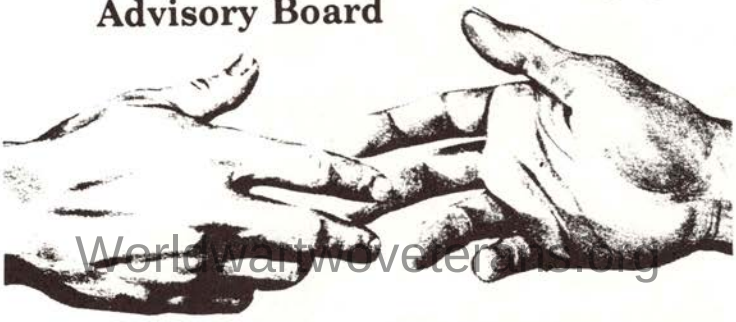
The Fighting 36th HISTORICAL Quarterly

36th Infantry Division

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.

Editorial Advisory Board

1987



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THE FIGHTING 36th HISTORICAL QUARTERLY

36th DIVISION ASSOCIATION

Vol. VII, No. 2 - Summer 1987

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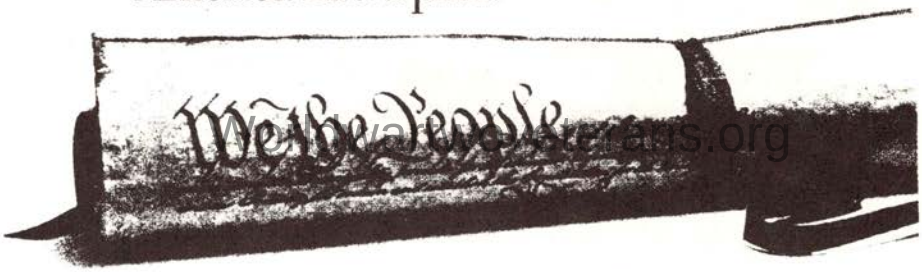
Two hundred years ago,
America had a plan.



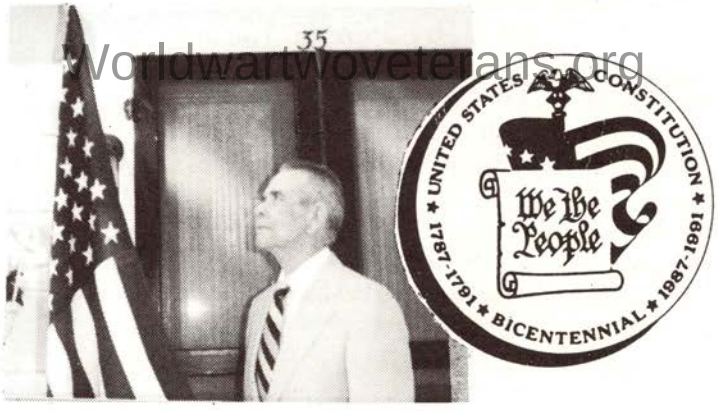
September 17, 1787
The United States Constitution

We The Troops

September 9, 1943
The 36th Division Has A Mission

☆ ☆ ☆

"Buck Glover Knows About The Blessings of Liberty"



The Original Tar Heel Texan

Robert 'Buck' Glover

Concord, North Carolina has a few words to say about the men he served with in Company C 141st

. . . since we went through so much together . . . "You guys are as much a part of my life - as eating and breathing"

QRTLY: Buck, we've been talking about this story for a year or so. You've been a dedicated contributor to our Newsletter and this publication. Since you agreed to be interviewed (our first) - let's start from year-one.

GLOVER: I was born and bred in North Carolina and am proud to be called a TAR HEEL. There's been many versions as to how we got this nick-name as the Tar Heel State. The one I like best is the one after a particularly bloody battle during the War Between The States.

General Robert E. Lee asked Gen. Jackson how things were going. He replied, the North Carolina boys are doing pretty good. Gen. Lee then said, "**Yea, the North Carolina boys are HOLDING THEIR GROUND LIKE THEY HAD TAR-ON-THEIR-HEELS.**"

I was born in a small town of GASTONIA, N.C. My father died when I was very young and was placed in an orphanage, where I remained until I finished high school.

I always loved baseball and signed up with the St. Louis Cardinals farm team. I felt I had a future in this sport, but WWII was heating up and it was just a matter of time until we would be involved.

After 3 years in baseball I was drafted in 1942 and found myself at Camp Wheeler, GA for basic training. Early in 1943, 52 of us were shipped to Camp Edwards on Cape Cod, and I was assigned to Co. C 141st Infantry Regiment. A colonel met us and proudly said, "**Welcome to the best outfit in the U.S. Army.**"

That sounded real good to me, but the first message was, **ALL FURLOUGHS ARE CANCELLED**. Here I was, been in the service for only 3 months and never had even a 3-Day Pass. Rumors had it that we would go bye-bye on a troop ship. Let me go back a while at this point.

QRTLY: Yes Buck, we heard about your girl, so tell it like it was.

GLOVER: While playing ball in Concord N.C. in 1942, I met THE girl who was to become my wife. We planned to get married on my FIRST furlough. . . but now that would have to wait.

Nancy Archibald (her family were old settlers of Concord) did wait for me — and we were married in May 1945, and for that devotion I shall always be grateful.

On April 13, 1943 we arrived at Oran, Algeria. Went on to Morocco, and after Rommel's Africakorps went kaput, we moved to ARZUE for beachhead training. Here we're training for landing in pontoon rafts. Tragedy strikes the one I was on, it capsized and three men of Co C 141st were drowned. A tragic event — a preview of things to come. I'll never forget the 'silver taps' that were played at the foot of our company that night those men were drowned.

On the raft with me were two men that had a lasting influence on my life. **Sgt. Marshall Sapido**, my first squad leader. An easy-going,

handsome man who loved to play the guitar and sing. He would later die at Salerno.

Sgt. Ted Stern, our first platoon leader, went on to be 1st Sgt., lost a leg on Hill 593 . . . died a few years ago in San Antonio.

QRTLY: Buck, you had mentioned before how you felt about these buddies of Co C 141st, so give us more.

GLOVER: Our 1st **Sgt. Clyde Henley** treated us all like we were HIS BOYS. I liked that. Unfortunately, he was KIA at Valletri break-through that opened the Road to Rome. Another one — **Lt. Tom Neatherton (Long Tom)** was the 3rd platoon leader who made me his radio man. He remained in the service after the end of the war and became a Colonel. His son, Tom Jr., sings with Lawrence Welk.

Sgt. Wilbur Graham of Houston was squad leader, then a platoon leader. Get this — he would read all the news of the mail to some of the boys from Kentucky (who were illiterate). Wilbur left us during battle of Mt. Lungo.

Sgt. Harmon Davis was the 3rd platoon sgt. What a leader. I owe what little success I had with the 36th and as much to him as anyone. **He taught me all the basic things a rifleman has to know to stay alive in combat.** Was wounded and left us in Salerno. Still lives in San Antonio and I correspond with him regularly and see him every year at reunions.

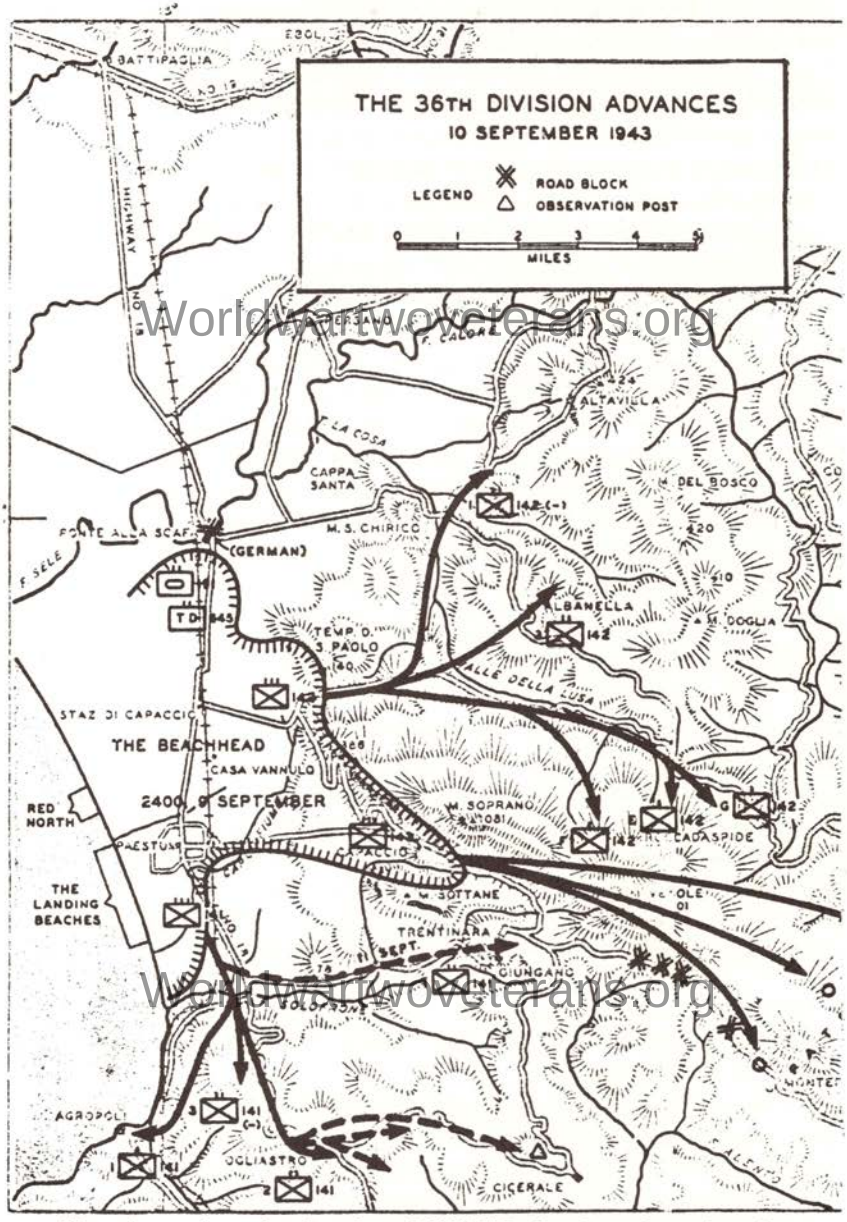
Sgt. Mac Acosta was a man like myself that saw so much action and saw so many of our buddies get blown to bits. He took over the platoon after Salerno and led it until he was hit at 593. **I know there was never a man who had a deeper feel for his country and who had the welfare of his men at heart and followed orders more than he did.** Mac still lives in San Antonio. He's real active in the 141st association and publishes the monthly paper, **The T-Bone**, which I enjoy very much. I consider him one of my best and dearest friends.

QRTLY: Buck, let's hear about SALERNO . . . that's still the big event for the Fighting 36th — the best trained, longest-trained division in the US Army.

GLOVER: D-Day, Sept. 9 1943 — H Hour 0300 and the fireworks are soon to start. We were to hit the beach with absolutely no support at all. The main thing I remember about Salerno is the total chaos. We landed. Everybody separated. They all went in different directions.

I think the most used word anywhere in the world that first day that we were there was "**Male fists**" and the countersign was "**Hearts of Vogue.**" And all over Southern Italy you could hear the

SALERNO — D-DAY Plus One



Map shown above is taken from SALERNO, American Operations from the Beaches to Volturno (9 September to October 1943) a 96 page 6 x 9" booklet published by Military Intelligence Division, War Department, Washington, D.C., for use of Military Personnel Only, with a Foreward by G. C. Marshall, Chief of Staff, 26 August 1944.

cries. "**Male fists!**" "**Hearts of Vogue!**"

I later asked a German why they didn't just run us back to the sea when they had us on the ropes there in Salerno. He said the reason for that was that "**You didn't know how to fight a war. We couldn't find enough of you at one time to chase you anywhere. We would find a little pocket here and a little pocket there and we would hear you hollering like maybe you were on a picnic or on a roundup in the hill country of North Texas.**" And so they said the reason that they couldn't run us back is because we were scattered. If you had been organized and knew what you were doing they could have chased us back to the sea.

But the main thing outside of the men we lost and all, Salerno just total chaos is what I remember most about it, but that is where **Sgt. Graham got hit**, that's where we lost several good men. **Sgt. Zapata was killed before daylight the day that we landed at Salerno. Sgt. Davis was hit right after, right after daylight. Cpl. Stottle was wounded and left us and then after a few days of complete chaos.** I can't put anything together because there just not enough of us all together at one time to really know what happened but we do know that finally we kept the Germans from pushing us back into the ocean. We finally pushed them back into Alta Villa and we retook Alta Villa.

We regrouped and reorganized after Salerno and we picked up what replacements that we had. Capt. Lehman was promoted to Major and transferred and we got a new company commander, a captain by the name of McCain.

We moved up to Mt. Lungo. I'll never forget it, moved in the middle of the night in a pouring downpour of rain. We relieved the 3rd Div. up there and they told us, "**Boys, you are in a hot spot.**" We set ground in the rain. They shelled us. We shelled them. We sent out patrols and all, this is when "**Sarg.**", **Pvt. Bat Hallinder**, the first company communication man, was trying to string a line to the 3rd platoon and was hit with a direct hit with a mortar shell. That's one of the first things I remember about Mt. Lungo.

I remember the third platoon were going out on outpost every night. Now, by the time Mac Acosta had been sent out, he was leading the 3rd platoon at the time. Sgt. Graham had taken over asplatoon guide. The 3rd platoon moved out every night to a new outpost down to the right at the foot of the hill.

The main thing that I remember about Mt. Lungo was the morning that **J. Tremble Brown**, Col. from battalion sent orders that the 3rd platoon was to go around and establish the position on top of Mt. Lungo. We knew that that was the most impossible thing anybody could ever try to do. Sgt. Graham brought rations around

and I said "**What are we supposed to do with these K rations?**" And he said, "**you can eat them when we get up there. If we ever get up there.**"

We sat and it rained. It was a drowning rainstorm. I remember when **Mac Acosta** came back from Co. Hqs. with orders that we were going to move out. There was a look on his face that I've never seen in the face of a man, but I can realize since then that it must have just been total and complete frustration, knowing that he was going to have to take what few men that we had and try to go up to that mountain.

He realized that not only himself, but every man he carried up there would probably be killed because there was absolutely no way that we could have got up there even under the cover of darkness, let alone in daylight. We talked to a German that was in that same battle and he said that they had three machine gun companies zeroed right in on the peak of that hill.

QRTLY: Let's jump to the tragic Rapido-Monte Cassino episode. Start with The Battle for Hill 593, as published in Vol. IV No. 2, 1984 Quarterly, written by your buddy, Mac Acosta.

GLOVER: Above the Abbey, Hill 593 didn't get mentioned by the news media, but those who were there, February 1943 will never forget. Like the artillery "coming-in" from the Nazis hit our company CP and destroyed it.

Three of our men were killed — Capt. McCain, Lt. Phil Horton and a young man named Hall. 1st Sgt. Stern's leg was blown off, and Henry Von Holland got it in the hip. The whole Co C was about 'gone'. That left a young Lt. named Bill Everett (replacement) as senior officer and took over what was left, and we pulled out to get ready for Anzio.

I had a bad case of 'trench-foot', swollen up so much it almost broke my shoe laces. I ended up at 17th General Hospital (Naples) for a few weeks. When I got back to Co L for the Anzio caper, there were scarcely few troops that I knew.

QRTLY: Buck, I heard you bagged a flock of Krauts at Valletri break-out, tell us about that one.

GLOVER: It's early June 1944 — we had just taken Valletri just before nightfall. During the afternoon, I accidently slid into a deep gulley — and got credit for capturing 19 Nazis. These characters were 'ready' to give up, so it wasn't a big deal. Anyhow, I got a write-up about it — "**Big Glover from North Carolina Bags 19 Germans at Valletri**" (Ha).

The Original Tar Heel Texan

June 4, 1944 — Rome fell and headlines around the world shouted about the big event in Italy. We felt that now they'd hear about our battlescars we got since Sept. 9th, and nine months of hellfire in a stalemate war on the boot. **I'll be darned, two days later on June 6th the Normandy Invasion knocked us out of the news,** (but we also felt we were getting closer to the Fatherland). A few weeks later, we'd pull back to the old Salerno area and prepare for our **SECOND INVASION.** This time — the Riviera of Southern France.

QRTLY: Buck, if you are like me, I was damn glad to leave Italy and had always wanted to see PARIS, so tell us about it.

GLOVER: Yea, a daylight landing Aug. 15, 1944 at 0800 seemed alot better than 0300 at Salerno. Off shore the Riviera beaches was a beautiful sight, but it was better when a hundred B-17s (coming outta Italy) literally leveled the beaches in front of us.

We went in, not reaching much opposition — until we got off the ship, Lt. Martin J. Tully got hit. Last I saw of him, he was hollering — "**Boys, go get 'em, they shot me right in the rear**", as he climbed back into a Higgins Assault Boat.

We lost an old timer on the first day — **Sgt. Bill Griffith**, he was shot in the head while trying to unjam a machine gun. We started moving inland.

We trapped the Germans in the Rhone Valley, and found out how a 'trapped' animal can fight. We were all around them and they were trying to break out. As we set up a roadblock, a Nazi mounted antitank gun pulled around a corner — fired at us and killed 3 and wounded 12. One shell and we lost 15 men.

I was one of the 12 — got the left calf of my leg blown up pretty bad — and was evacuated back to Italy. Ran into Tully at the hospital — have a great story about this visit, bears telling another time.

1st Battalion, 141 Rescued By 442nd Japanese American RCT After Seven Days Trapped In The Vosges

The coded message that came into regimental headquarters that night said simply: "No rations, no water, no communications with headquarters . . . four litter cases."

Not too many miles away, on the bald top of a thickly-wooded hill, a battalion of 275 soldiers was spread out in an area 300 by 350 yards, digging their foxholes deep, using knives to whittle down trees to use as cover, folding blankets around the trees, so that they wouldn't make much noise when they came down.

"We were cut off. We could stay and fight, in an almost hopeless position, or we could give up. The Germans were dug in behind us. Three of the officers who were still alive had a conference . . ."

A two-company attack hit them from the south. They beat it off. Another attack struck from the east. Germans and Americans alike dug in and artillery began to fall among the encircled Yanks. Patrol after patrol tried to get through to establish contact with the rest of he Division. Fifty-eight men went out on patrol. Only five came back.

QRTLY: "Buck, tell us about that film crew".

GLOVER: June 7, a film crew came to my home in Concord, North Carolina to tape an interview with me for a TV program on the 442 **Japanese-Americans.** The whole thing started several weeks before when I got this call from a woman named Sheila Posner. **She told me she got my name from Chris Massey.** They were doing a story on the 442 and wanted to talk to me about the Battle of the Lost Battalion.

She didn't tell me who she was, what company she represented, anything. Then she asked me if I would be willing to talk to a man named **Haig Mackey.** I said, "**Okay,**" then wrote to you to find out what was going on and to check out her story to make sure it was legitimate.

By the time Mackey called back, I had a whole list of questions. I asked him who he worked for, and he said he was with a company called **Cushner-Locke,** in Los Angeles. Then I asked why he wanted to talk to me. He told me that since **I was a member of the Lost Battalion,** I had some contact

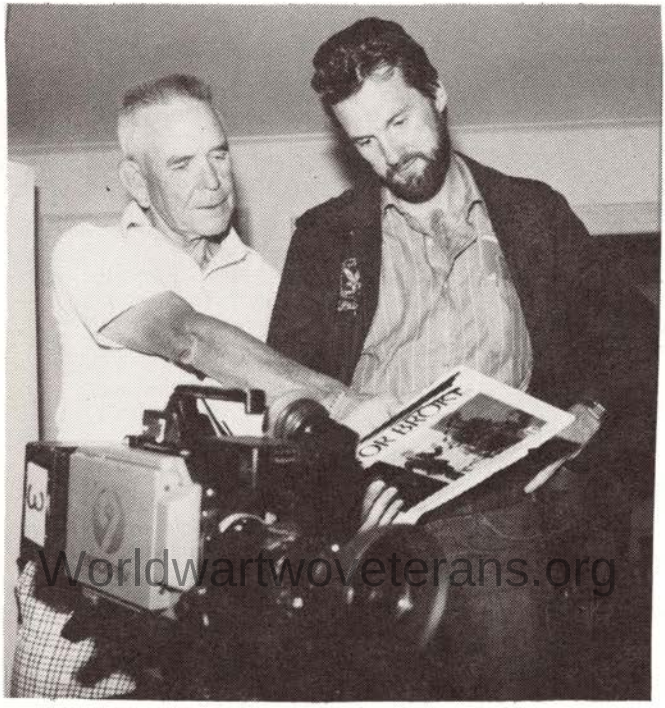
with the 442 and they wanted my views of them. Then I asked, "**Well, is this a political film for Inouye?**" I didn't want to get tangled up in any politics, national, international, or local. He assured me it definitely was not, so I told him I would help him.

Mackey started out by asking me my background: what did I do before I went into the army, things like that. **He asked if I was willing to go to Washington, D.C. to be interviewed. I told him that was out of the question.** He hesitated about committing himself to come to North Carolina to do the interview, saying he would have to clear it with his superiors first.

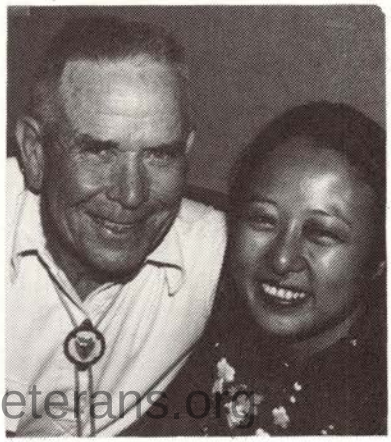
He called back a few days later to tell me that everything had been arranged. They were flying up to North Carolina and had hired a local film crew to do the taping.

I arranged to meet him at the airport and they did the interview in my home. The show, which was called "**Heroes, Made In The U.S.A.**" a syndicated series and was aired at different times throughout the country.

It showed here on July 12. My wife and I tuned in to watch it and sure enough, there I was on television. I never realized my experience with the 36th would lead me to being a celebrity . . . (Ha).

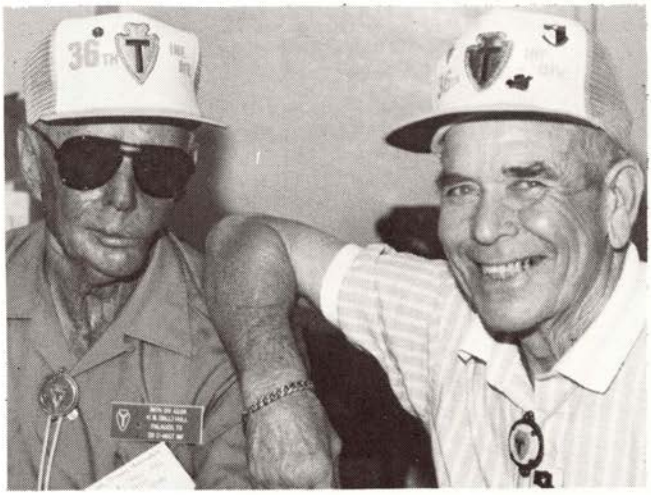


Concord, NC, in the living room of Glover's home, where **HAIG MACKEY** set up a mini-studio for the taping of an interview for a syndicated series, titled — **"Heroes, Made In The U.S.A."** Miles of wires and lights, camera crew filled up the room, of TV equipment leased from the Charolette TV Station Channel 9. **"Look out, Hollywood, here comes Buck Glover, the Original Tar Heel Texan."**



Buck Glover visits with Chris Massey at Fort Worth Reunion. She did a story for HONOLULU Magazine — "The Rescue of the Lost Battalion" for the Nov. 1985 issue, includes interviews with Bill Hull and his side-kick Buck.

Note: Copies of Chris Massey's story are available ... write to your Editor.

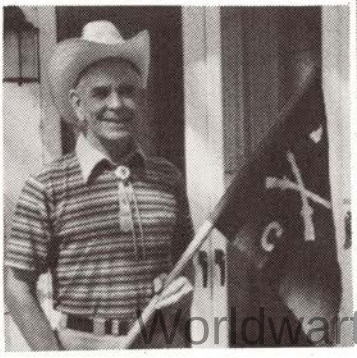


Above: **Hiler W. (Bill) HULL of Palacios TX** and Buck Glover at the 1985 Houston Reunion. Hull joined Co C 141st in Oct. 1940, served throughout the war with these men...was Division Weapons Instructor; MI Rifle at Camp Bowie as Regiment Instructor; was Division Instructor for weapons marksmanship at Camp Blanding — and was made Sgt/Major of 1st Battalion 141st at Camp Edwards. Came home with a Silver Star and Bronze Star with cluster.

Hull's version of what happened during the "Lost Battalion" is covered in detail as published in Chris Massey's story. Glover said at Fort Worth, **"I'm sorry that Hull could not be attending. Next year at San Antonio, he'll be there."**

WINTER 1943 — Camp Edwards, Mass., Buck Glover said, "Hey it really gets cold up here on Cape Cod."

Foto at right: Buck Glover at the Rest Camp at Caserta Italy, 1943 — where he turns on his charm-machine in a visit with a couple of Red Cross nurses.



ON THE COVER, this foto of Buck standing on the front porch of his home with his Guidon of Company C 141st is an annual ritual for him... **all day every September 9th** — in recognition of the Fighting 36th and their mission at **SALERNO.**

MID WEST Reunion at Cleveland OH in June 1987, Buck and his old war pal, **Martin J. Tulley** (former CO of Co C) 55 E. 144th St., Riverdale IL 60627. Now turn back and read about Tully on Page 13 — whose Purple Heart was a pain-in-the-rear.

ROBERT H. GLOVER
35 BURRAGE RD N E
CONCORD, NC 28025

St. Marie-aux-Mines

"A Town Remembered"

By Albert G. Kudzia
Co K 142nd Infantry

Just a few paragraphs are listed in the **Presidential Citation describing the actions of the 3rd Bn, 142nd Inf.** in it's breakthru of the St Marie Pass, but not listing some of the very personal details involved.

As the Company Commander of K Co at the time, one of the two companies involved in the flanking maneuver of St Marie-aux-Mines, I can recall very vividly our troops getting off the trucks and noting that the village was blanketed by fog and as we descended down the hillside and when the fog lifted and I could see into the village.

I mentioned to my radio operator that there didn't seem to be any Germans in the town. Well, one of the GIs heard only the last part of my statement, "**no Germans in town**" and then there was a foot race to see who could get into town first. However, once we arrived there, there were plenty of Germans, many on bikes making a fast exit!

Once we got into town, one of my company squads was heading up the street when we spotted a civilian car coming down and once German soldiers were spotted in the car, they opened fire on it and it came to a stop right in front of me.

I will always remember the one German soldier falling out of the car after being hit, **with the one eye almost out of it's socket.** After the city's capture, our platoons were established in defensive positions and I was looking forward to a quiet night.

One of my platoon sgts, **T/Sgt Rudolph Jaime**, returned from a rest camp and I decided to escort him to his platoon, about a block away from my CP. This was about 11PM. I knew the location of the platoon CP and as we both approached the house, we heard the pop of a hand grenade and I ducked below a fence, which had bars above a two foot foundation. Jaime took off for my company CP.

ROUTE MAP showing all areas where the 142nd Infantry did their thing during WWII, **from Salerno to Mittersil, Austria,** as depicted in the **ROTATE REVIEW** Final Edition, 16 page, 9" x 14" by Office of Information and Education, Lt. John R. Key, officer in charge — printed at KIRCHHEIN, Teck, Germany, Oct. 15, 1945.

A fragment of the grenade, pierced the sole of my show and made a slight imbrasion. After that, I got up and went back to my CP. I called the platoon leader and asked about the GI at the front door who failed to challenge us. I learned that he was a new replacement and was just scared when he heard our footsteps. Fortunately, he had a BAR in his hands and didn't use that on us!

Another sad part of this story is that the night before, another replacement joined my unit and I instructed him to be sure to keep up with his squad once we hit the town.

Unfortunately, he trailed too far behind, and when he got into the city, he turned left instead of right and we located his body in one of the doorways. I don't wish to mention his name as his parents or relatives might hear of this article and would be quite depressed over how he met his death.

THE FOLLOWING STORY about the 3rd Battalion 142nd Infantry is reproduced here, as is, published in the final edition of ROTATE REVIEW, which may add much to the story you just read by Kudzia.

The 3rd Battalion at St. Marie

When the old timers of Blue Battalion get together to fight the war all over, there are always familiar names that crop up. Oberhoffen, Selestat, the Moder and Mertzweiler and the Siegfried. The very old timers may talk about the landings down in the Rest Center country or even Salerno and the Italian Campaign. But then there are few of those men left. Other places may be remembered for the tough fighting but when they think of how they outfoxed Jerry, the name of St Marie is the one that comes to mind. Then too there's that bit of gold framed ribbon above their right pocket to remind the boys of what a slick job they did. And for anyone who asks about that ribbon there are usually some good tales.

We had been fighting through the damned Vosges — nothing but one mountain after another and always Jerry. It was good to be coming into the Rhine Valley. The fighting might be just as tough but at least we'd be out of the woods. It would be something different. We rolled up to Wisembach on trucks—but let Hillyard take it. Hillyard, by the way, was a BAR man in Love Co's 2nd Platoon.

"We came on to Wisembach on trucks. I & K Co's went on down the road to the left, still on trucks. We wound on down the road for St Marie on foot. Then as we rounded a turn there were a couple of loud cracks that made our helmets dance on our heads. Maybe it wasn't the noise that did it though. It may have been the suction from the 88's that whistled over our heads. What a bitch of a road block that was. The TD's that were with us opened up but they didn't get those 88's. They did get a shed with a couple of machine guns in it. The first and third platoons took off over the hill to get at the block. Something was wrong with the radio so we lost contact with them. We took off to the left and Christ — all the wire the Krauts had made in the last ten years was down in that valley. Sgt Washer, he was leading the platoon then, put us under cover and went on up by the road to see what was going on. We all kinda held our breath then when five Krauts came down the road, we were afraid they'd see Washer and he was afraid we'd start shooting. We didn't tho and they went on down the road. I got up closer before three more came along. They saw Washer but I got them first — got two and one gave up. He said there were only 4 or 5 men down there in a house by the road block. Christ! When we got there we chased 28 out of the cellar and four and five got out the back way. Before we could get to the house the artillery plastered the hell out of them. Then we went right in. We figured we'd have to fight on into town then but the place was already taken. We just walked in."

"Yeah, we walked in too, then all hell broke loose". This came from Sgt Bryant of K Co.

"I" & "K" Co had made a wide detour across country and came at the town from the North East. Edwards, Bryant and Goodwin were remembering K Co's part.

"Those hills were as slick as owl---as slick as glass. It was raining and we kept sliding down all the way. Tony Garzia dropped his helmet then slid halfway down the mountain after it".

"When we came out of the woods, down the bald face of that hill I said, "Hell there are no Krauts within 10 miles of here! If there were they'd be giving us plenty". But I didn't realize then that we had caught them completely by surprise. When they did find out we had flanked them, there were Jerries and horses and wagons everywhere, most of them trying to get away." Bryant went on "I stayed upon the hill with a squad around the 81's until we heard the town was clear. We just got to the first house when they cut loose so we scooted back up the hill and laid in a few, then ducked what they threw back".

Goodwin was laughing about how Sgt Mask caught one in the helmet. "One shot had just gone over our heads. Mask said, I saw him. I'll get that son of a b——'. and started loading a rifle grenade on his rifle. He was squatting on a table by a rock wall and the top of his helmet was exposed. Then ping and the helmet flopped off to the ground and Mask right after it. It just creased his head enough to make him mad. He got the Kraut, then he got scared when he rubbed his head."

That reminded Bryant of how Scymanski had walked up on a Kraut standing guard with his rifle by his side. Szymanski emptied his tommygun at him. The Kraut just stood there. He hadn't been touched. Ochoa drew a bead with his rifle and the Jerry came back to life and gave up.

"I" Company was on down from K Co. Had a pretty good scrap getting into a factory building and the railroad station. Got around 30 prisoners of the factory. Lt. Stenger told about one of his men spotting a Kraut patrol. "I've forgotten who it was but he can be on my team any day. Four Krauts came down the road by the factory. This guy sat at the window and fired four shots — got a Jerry with each shot. That's not the average of the fellow in the Hagenau forest that got two with one shot, but a thousand percent isn't bad in any man's language.

Then there was the Lt who had just joined the outfit. The first shot fired was from a burp gun. When it burped the Lt hit the dirt right in the middle of the street and emptied his carbine.

Everybody agreed that it was a real field day. There was just one thing wrong. "We didn't get to stay there long enough. There was beau-coup schnapps and cognac there. It looked like a good place to stay awhile, but here came the PBS outfits and we had to move on toward Selestat."

Yeah, St Marie is more than just a name to a lot of fellows. Most of them who remember tho are called Mister now. But whenever the Lynchmen gather whether in khaki or pin stripes you can bet the talk will drift around to St Marie.

Battle for the Vosges

After the Moselle came the Vosges Mountains, cold rainy weather and fanatical German resistance. Here, after forty days of advance the drive was stopped near Tendon.

During October the rigors of battle and climate had telling effect on the Regiment. The enemy was strongly entrenched in the forests and along the ridges of the Vosges Mountains. They had good observation and the 142d received constant artillery pounding. Casualties mounted. The men were weary. Trench foot was a serious threat. The constant, cold rain seemed at times intolerable.

A broad front was thinly held through Jussarupt and Hill 827. But no relieving force was available so there was no alternative. The Regiment stayed on the line.

November brought deep snow to the mountains and a slow, bitter drive down the Les Rouges Eaux River Valley. No longer visible was the fire and dash which had characterized the actions of the 142d in the campaigns of Italy and Southern France. Now it was plain step by step slugging.

The advance was pushed doggedly ahead by men whose thoughts did not reach beyond the next objective. Grim determination prevailed and the drive gained momentum across the mountains, into Alsace and through the St. Marie Pass to St. Marie Aux Mines. Several fast marches and surprise movements caught the enemy by surprise and many were trapped. German companies and battalions surrendered after fights which were foredoomed by the smart manuevering of the 142d battalions. At the end of the month the Regiment was at massive Koenigsbourg Castle, high in the mountains overlooking the Rhine Plain.

NO STOPPING HIM

Twice Promoted on Field of Battle, Local Polish Youth Home

Al Kudzia Went into Service as a Buck Private; He's a Captain Now, and Going Back for More.

By HAROLD SHARPSTEEN

There is no stopping a thoroughbred front-runner once he gets out in front and hits his stride.

That is Al Kudzia all over.

Once Al, former Gazette newsboy, hit his stride on the battlefronts of Europe nothing could stop him, not even a German mortar shell.

Al started out in this war as a buck private rifleman. Last week he returned home from overseas on furlough a full-fledged, thrice-decorated Seventh Army infantry company commander.

Thumb-Nail Profile

That thumb-nails the 302-day, two-fronts combat record of this 150-pound, pint-sized, Kalamazoo-born Polish youth who used to sell papers at Michigan avenue and Burdick streets.

Thumb-nails it, but it does not tell the whole story of the lad who fought first in Italy and then in France and Germany, who twice won promotions on the field of battle while leading his troops against the Germans, who was twice awarded the Silver Star medal for outstanding gallantry in action.

It does not do full justice to a lad who, when wounded by mortar fire, refused to leave his men because "they had the enemy on the run."

Furthermore, in all fairness to his proud mother, Mrs. Matilda Kudzia, 915 Dwight street, who came to this country as a bride from Poland, her son, Al, hence-forth should be properly referred to as Captain, Albert G. Kudzia, 36th division's K Company commander.

At the end of his 45-day leave here, he must go back to his men at the front.

But he was Second Lt. Kudzia platoon leader, Aug. 21, 1944, in Southern France, when he won his first Silver Star medal and battle-field promotion to a first lieutenancy.

Alone to Knock Them Out

When intense fire from a German machinegun nest stopped his advance, Kudzia left his men in charge of a sergeant and went ahead alone to knock out the enemy position.

"I took a pouch that held seven grenades and started out to circle the position," said Capt. Kudzia.

When he got close enough, he stood upright, and in spite of the enemy rifle fire, he had to expose himself to let them have all seven grenades.

His single-handed attack accounted for all three of the German machine-gun crew and their two riflemen.

Behind the machine-gun emplacement, Kudzia and his men bagged 45 Nazi prisoners, including one German major.

Promoted for his valor and placed in command of a full company the day following, he remained at the head of his troops as the U. S. Seventh Army charged across France to the Vosges mountains along the German border.

Struck in the hand by fragments of an enemy mortar shell the morning of Oct. 15, near Rehaupel, France, he refused to go back farther than a field dressing station to have his wounds bandaged.

Fought with Arm in Sling

Then, for the next six days, he fought with his right arm in a sling.

Capt. Kudzia won his second Silver Star medal and battlefield promotion on Nov. 1, 1944, as the Seventh Army was entering the Vosges woods.

Above clipping from KALAMAZOO GAZETTE as appeared with foto, April 1945.

ABOVE: Albert G. Kudzia in this 1948 photo made at Fort Dix, then a Captain and served in post-war army until 1953, retired with military disability in rank of Major.

NOW — here's Al and wife Ruth, of 2255 Quail Run, Columbia SC, where he's a CLU with National Life Insurance of Vermont.

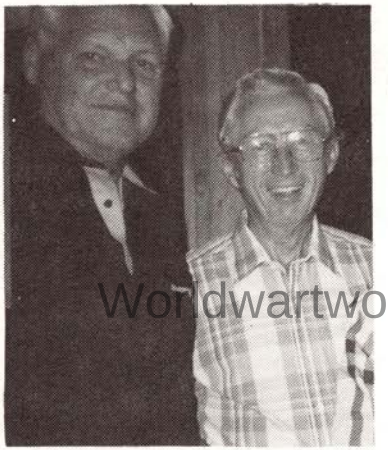


Foto made at D/FW Dallas Reunion 1986, Kudzia and **JOHN HALL of Middleton Wis.,** who was his squad leader when he had a platoon in Co K 142nd Infantry. Hall was seriously wounded in Sept. 1944 and sent home. **"I recommended him for the DSC Award which he received,"** says Kudzia.

"Lt. Philips, I'm Going to Court-Martial You for Murder

By Julian "Duney" Philips

When I joined the Texas National Guard, summer of 1938 as a private, I was placed in Co G, 143rd Infantry, where I began to observe the officers in charge of different units. The ones I came in contact with, were mostly National Guard Officers, who had been commissioned by the Adjutant General of the State of Texas. I soon found out that some of these officers, were 'political' appointees and would never measure up to the ones that mustered into Federal Service with Co. G. 143rd Infantry, on Nov. 25, 1940.

Capt. Robert M. Ives, my company commander, along with 1st Lt. Andrew Y. Austin, my platoon leader, and **2nd Lt. David M. Frazior**, were three of the most competent and dedicated officers I would be associated with for the next four years.

The 36th Division arrived at Camp Bowie, January 1941. Here, we were able to observe and evaluate hundreds of officers throughout the division. Many times we ask ourselves, whether they 'would be capable' of leading men in combat.

We had been at Camp Bowie a few months, when a group of Sgt's were commissioned Second Lieutenants. Division Headquarters had to be proud of it's selection of Sgt's that had been recommended to the Dept. of the Army of United States. Most turned out to be excellent officers.

There had to be mistakes with this system, (or should I say abuses). It happened when the division commander submitted **'the name of his nephew'** for a commission. The nephew had been drafted, (still classified a recruit) but received his commission as a 2nd Lt. in our Regiment. Four years later he was given an Infantry Company to lead into combat. He was no more prepared then, than he would have been ten years later. He was a likeable young man, and tried to get along with everyone, **but had 'no' leadership ability.**

It wasn't long before the different branches of service established

their officers candidate schools, where Sgt's were sent. After three months of rigorous training and study, they would receive a commission in their branch of service. Yes, these were to be called, "**Ninety Day Wonders.**"

The Infantry O.C.S. and Infantry Advanced Officers School were both located at Ft. Benning, Georgia. There they assembled some of the top instructors in the nation to turn out Infantry Officers.

It was rare, but from time to time, O.C.S., would let a candidate slip through and be commissioned a 2nd Lt. of Infantry, when he wasn't capable of leading men into combat. Later this would cost lives of men under their command.

In Spring of 1942, I met my first officer, who had been with the Civilian Conservation Corps. (C.C.C.). These officers had taken men from cities, towns and off the farms and placed them in units and companies during and after the Great Depression. These C.C.C. officers set up camps throughout the states to give young men a place to live, guidance and leadership. **This was good training and I never ran across a C.C.C. officer, who wasn't an excellent leader.**

We also saw our first R.O.T.C. officers arriving in the division, who had started their training in high schools and colleges. Here again, the largest percent were excellent officers. Many replaced National Guard Officers, who had been sent on cadries to form new divisions or had been assigned to one of the service schools as an instructor.

In the Fall of 1942 and early 1943, we saw the first West Point Officers being assigned to the 36th Division. **These officers had completed four years of intense military training at the U.S. Military Academy in New York State.**

We seldom saw one of the West Pointers in line companies. They had been trained for staff work and were usually assigned to our battalion or regiment staffs.

I recall the first time I met **Lt. Col. Charles J. Denholm, West Point Class of '39.** He was tall, lean and his uniform fit like a glove. He looked just like I had pictured a West Point Officer to look. He was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 143rd Infantry, after Lt. Col. Charles H. Jones was captured in the Persono area on 13 Sept 1943.

Four months later, January 1944, after the disaster of the Rapido River Crossing, Col. William H. Martin was relieved of command of the 143rd Infantry. He was replaced by **Col. Paul D. Adams of Columbus, S.C., who was also a West Point graduate.** Col. Adams fit into our National Guard Division as though it were made for him. He was fair, an excellent officer and was always one-step-ahead of the

Germans. With Col. Adams in command the 143rd Infantry Regiment wasn't losing men as it had in the first five months of combat. **We were learning to beat the Germans at their own game.**

Some of our National Guard Officers resented the West Pointers being moved into the division to replace the division's senior commanders. The same way it had been done in W.W.I, that had caused such an all-out investigation in the U.S., Fall of 1918.

The politicians and news media, back in Texas expected the 36th Division to remain a National Guard Division in spite of war casualties and transfers. It could never have survived because there were no National Guard replacements.

The 36th Division had trained hard since it had been brought off the line from the Cassino area in Feb. 1944. New replacements had been used to bring the companies up to strength and they had accepted all the hard work and training without complaining.

Wounded officers and men had been returning from hospitals in the Naples area and went right to work helping with the training of the replacements. These men had received wounds from the San Pietro and Rapido River engagements.

On 20 May, 1944, the 36th Division started moving personnel by Navy ships to the Anzio Beachhead, in preparation of a breakout. We were put ashore under cover of smoke.

The Anzio Express, (170 Cal. Railroad Gun) fired rounds into the division area, the first night we arrived. This gun was demoralizing all soldiers, and we knew it spoke death.

The 36th Division was placed in Corps reserve and was to follow the 3rd Division on the initial breakout on 25 May 1944. Cisterna De Latori was the objective of the 3rd Division. As they moved into the walled city, our orders were changed, so we could head straight for Velletri. Our orders were to move forward until we hit the Germans in force.

On 28 May 1944, the 2nd Battalion, 143rd was the lead unit attacking Velletri. There was no doubt that we had hit the main German line of defense. We were losing more than our share of men, so I phoned Bn. Hqs. explaining that we had hit the Germans in force and needed the tanks sent up. We lost too many men and needed help badly. I had been told back at Cisterna, that when we hit the Germans in force, the 1st Armored tanks were to move up with us for the breakthrough.

During that time the 2nd Bn. 143rd Battalion Commander was **Lt. Col. Goulden M. Watkins of San Francisco, a West Point Officer who had been with the division less than one month.**

Our casualties were mounting, so I called Bn. Hqs. again, asking for help. Lt. Col. Watkins sent no one from Bn. Hqs. to check our positions, much less the tanks we were told would be sent to help with the attack. Late in the afternoon of the same day, we were told by Bn. Hqs. to withdraw behind companies E & G, if we could bring out our walking wounded and casualties.

Again, the Fifth Army Commander, Lt. Gen. Mark Clark showed his intelligence by ordering the 36th to attack Velletri with a frontal assault. This is all he knew, "**frontal attack, push through, you haven't done all you can and casualties haven't been that bad.**" Not one officer from battalion, regiment or division headquarters had come forward to see or confirm what we had been through.

The plans for capturing Velletri with a frontal attack were changed on Maj. Gen. Fred Walker's orders. **He gambled his career on a tactical maneuver by moving the division to the east of Velletri, breaking the Germans line and attacking Velletri from the rear.** Gen. Walker was told by Lt. Gen. Clark, he could carry out his plans, but if it failed his neck would be on the chopping block. Gen. Clark made it clear that he would drop the ax.

General Walker's tactical maneuvering turned out to be a brilliant and successful operation. It will be remembered in history as one of the top tactical operations of WWII.

It has been published and I quote: "**If Lt. Gen. Mark Clark received the key to the city of Rome - it was Gen. Walker who turned the key and handed it to him.**"

Yes, the 36th Division had found itself. We were learning to fight a war and win.

The 36th Division moved into Rome just one day before the Allied Forces crossed the English Channel and landed on the Beachhead of Normandy.

After Rome, nothing seemed to stop the Texas Division. We had been in combat on three different occasions, Sept. 1943, in the Paestum, Salerno Area, Nov.-Dec. 1943, on Hill 1205 and the San Pietro, Lungo Areas Jan.-Feb. 1944, in the Rapido River, Cassino area. Each time the experienced German Divisions made us pay dearly for the ground we captured.

On 6 June 1944, the division left Rome and moved two hundred miles, before being pulled off the line, to train for the Invasion of Southern France.

The 36th Division loaded on Navy Ships in early August, 1944, with its new replacements. They had been trained and worked into different companies. It was my opinon that this American Division

could beat the Germans any time, any place.

After the Navy Ships raised anchor and we were underway, we opened our orders and learned we would hit the beach at San Raphael, France. **Code name - "ANVIL".**

After the Navy's bombardment, men of the Texas Division stormed the beaches and headed inland. **This would not be another Salerno; there was no Lt. Gen. Mark Clark here.**

The Seventh Army's commander was Lt. Gen. Alexander M. Patch. Maj. Gen. John E. Dahlquist was commanding the 36th Division, with other West Point graduates, commanding battalions and regiments throughout the division.

1st Battalion, 143rd still had its old standby, **Lt. Col. David M. Frazior**, National Guard officer, who had come through the enlisted ranks with the 143rd.

The division hit its objective on the beaches of Southern France. Every soldier knew we could beat the Germans, and on 19 Aug. 1944 we had driven 40 miles and taken Draguignan. From there on it was **no stopping the 36th. We took Gap, Grenoble, Roman,** then caught some of the Germans 19th Army at **Montelimar**. The division was ahead of the withdrawing Germans.

Major Sanford Webster, the S-3 of the 1st Battalion had not been with the division long. He was another West Point graduate, came to the division as a replacement. He was having trouble keeping the officers supplied with maps. We were moving so fast it was hard to keep the front line troops supplied with area maps.

To Major Webster it must have seemed that combat was much like the problems he had studied at West Point. We were not up against Field Marshall Kesselring or the good Panzer Divisions we had fought in Italy. Each time we hit road blocks or rear guard Germans, we pushed right on through. Major Webster had never seen division personnel carrying our wounded and dead off the battle fields by the hundreds as we had in Italy.

Most of the units in the division, who fought at Montelimar, experienced bitter fighting and lost many officers and men. 1st Battalion 143rd found themselves on high ground, which gave them complete advantage over the German troops moving north. Every road leading north and as far as the eye could see to the south, **were thousands and thousands of Germans moving toward us.** The vehicles were loaded with soldiers, three abreast on every road, heading toward the pass. I had seen German withdrawals on three different occasions in the Italy Campaign, **but never anything of this magnitude.**

When Lt. Col. Frazior was made aware of the advancing Germans,

he gave us 30 minutes to prepare the tanks, machine guns, mortar and riflemen to open fire on the enemy. As the flares arched into the sky, it was a signal to all companies of the 1st Battalion 143rds and attached units to begin firing. Not many American soldiers in WWII had been fortunate enough to experience a situation where we had the upper hand. **We were witnessing an unbelievable slaughter.**

The Germans were not expecting American troops that far north and as we opened fire their soldiers were killed by the hundreds.

Tanks, personnel carriers, trucks and cars of every description seemed to catch on fire as the column approached. The Germans screamed and called for aid-men to look after their wounded.

We had never had the Germans in this situation before and I'm sure it went through all of our minds, as we fired. **This is for the ones we lost at Paestum and Salerno.** Remember Hill 1205 and Lungo and don't forget San Pietro and God, don't let a one of us forget the Bloody Rapido River.

We were still on high ground, firing every weapon we had, when American P-51 fighter planes came into view. The beautiful planes came down on the German columns on the road, firing 50 caliber machine guns, leaving burned out vehicles, dead Germans and animals throughout the valley.

We had been taught about close-in-air-support, but had never seen it work so beautifully to our advantage. It was another branch of service helping Infantry in their battles.

This operation wasn't one of Major Websters typical classroom problems back at West Point. He was witnessing Americans of the 1st Battalion, 143rd Infantry killing Germans. The firing continued for 30 minutes. Lt. Col. Frazior stepped forward and yelled, "**let's clear the hill and go into the valley and finish it off.**" The whole battalion rose up off the ground and walked to the valley floor. The dead and wounded were everywhere and one could smell the burning flesh of the dead Germans that were still inside the charred tanks and vehicles.

As the Germans began to scream and call for aid-men, these men of the 36th Division showed unbelievable compassion. They knelt down beside the enemy wounded and tried to ease their pain, when just a few minutes before they were so intent on killing every German that came into their gun sights. The danger was still present from the non-wounded, who still had weapons. The German speaking soldiers of my platoon were instructed to tell the Germans to come out to the middle of the road and lay down their arms.

They were instructed to march down the road with their hands above their heads, until they reached other Americans, who would place them in a prison compound. This went on for two hours, as hundreds began to surrender. **A runner from Bn. Hqs. came forward with a message that I was to report to Col. Frazior.** When I arrived the American aid-men were using Germans to bring in the wounded, while others were setting up a make shift compound for all non-wounded prisoners. Everyone having to do a job they were not familiar with.

Col. Frazior was all smiles as I approached. He turned away from his staff and said, "**Duney, have you heard the battery of 88's firing to the West?**" I answered, "**Yes Sir, I've heard the guns, but they aren't firing on us.**" His orders were the shortest I had ever received, "**knock them out.**" This meant I had to leave the battalion, take my thirty two men across the valley to places we had not touched, where there were still hundreds of Germans, who might still want to fight.

I returned to my platoon and asked Sgt. Peterson to gather the men, who were out rounding up Germans. As my men gathered, I began to discuss our mission. I explained that we were going to leave the Battalion and walk through the Germans, to knock out a battery of 88's, that had been firing all morning. **I added that this was a crazy mission and it would be dangerous.** I expected all my men to stay close, but not to bunch up. I asked if there were any questions.

There were no questions, so I turned west and asked them to scatter out and follow me. As I got to the middle of the road, I could see a column of Germans coming toward us in company formation, about 200 yards away. I asked my men to step into the ditch and see what they intended to do. The German Capt. had his saber drawn, with all his men at right soldier arms. It made me think they were headed for a parade. When they spotted us and were a few yards from us the officer looked over his soldier and barked an order to his company.

At that time, each German went into the goose step march, while the officer raised his saber to his brow in a salute. **I returned the salute and felt honored as the column passed.** Each platoon commander saluted as he passed me and I acknowledged each salute. When the column had passed, my men moved back to the road. We heard the commander halt his company as he moved to the middle of the column and gave a left face order.

He ordered the company to open ranks and stack arms. I recognized the similarity of the formation and realized this was the end of

his command. As the arms were stacked, the men stood at attention. The commander barked, "right face." He moved to the head of the column, still in possession of his pistol, Sam Browne Belt and saber. He gave the order, "**forward march**."

When he reached the compound where the prisoners were being collected, he took his pistol and saber and presented them to one of our battalion officers. We had just witnessed an unusual surrender of a proud German unit, who knew their part of the war was over. They had witnessed the slaughter that morning and wanted to surrender with honor.

I came back to reality, knowing I still had a dangerous mission to carry out. I told my men once again to follow me and not to bunch up. I had moved the five German speaking members of my platoon, right behind me. Every 500 yards we stopped and yelled to the Germans to come forward and surrender. **This worked like a charm the first time it was tried and continued to work.** They came to the road as they were instructed and were told to drop their weapons and helmets. We assured them, no harm would come to them and to march north to the compound. This went on and on as we crossed the valley. As we moved towards the river, we realized we were in the area of the 88's.

As I passed a large wall of an enclosed villa, I turned to Sgt. Peterson and said, "**Pete, they have to be right here someplace, for I can smell them.**" He answered, "**this haze and smoke is from their firing.**" As I walked down beside the walled area, I could see only the top of the house. When I reached the southwest corner, I glanced to my right and saw a large double gate. Looking inside I saw the 88 with it's barrel depressed toward the ground, so it couldn't be seen outside the enclosure. I yelled to my men, that I had spotted one of the guns.

Then I moved forward through the gate and on my right and right front I saw two more 88's in the same position as the first one. Still we saw no Germans. The large three storied Villa was 35 yards to my front, so I started across the courtyard, thinking maybe the Germans had left this battery of 88's. I was on the fourth step, heading for the door and glanced through the window of a connecting barn. There I saw two Germans with rifles, crawling toward a nearby window.

I turned with my back against the wall and looked at my men, who by now were all in the courtyard. **I realized at that moment, what a big mistake I had made.** This platoon, that I loved so well, was in grave danger. I spoke to Sgt. Peterson, without raising my voice, and instructed him to get as many of the men out of the yard

as quickly as possible, because I had spotted Germans in the barn. I looked toward the door and yelled, "**Come on out - you are surrounded.**"

One of my German interpreters was also telling them the same thing. The door opened and a large German Sgt. stepped out on the platform. Looking down into my eyes, he said, "**Lt. I would like to surrender myself and my men to the Americans.**" By this time I had my 45 pistol drawn and motioned him to come down toward me. As he came abreast, I asked him to throw down his weapon and helmet and come into the courtyard. He yelled to his men the intructions I had given him. They came through the barn door with hands raised until I had counted fifty-eight. I asked the Sgt. if there were anymore and he answered, "**Yes Sir, there are three officers on the third floor, who do not want to surrender.**"

I instructed Sgt. Peterson to have two men, with rifle grenades, to fire into the third floor window. As soon as the grenades exploded the officers yelled they were ready to surrender and we could see a white flag appear out of the window.

By this time my men had the prisoners in formation, as the German officers stumbled out the front door with their arms raised. We searched the premises and had picked up 59 enlisted men and three officers, plus three 88's. Two of my men had moved to the closest 88, one climbed into the seat and started raising the barrel skyward, while the other one opened the breach. I yelled to the men to get off the gun.

I asked the German Sgt. if the 88's had been booby-trapped. "**No, Sir, they have not. The guns are operational.**" I asked him to come with me to check each gun. I told Sgt. Peterson to have our men destroy the guns by placing phosphorous grenades inside each barrel. This done, we marched the prisoners back to battalion. The trip back across the valley was as productive as it was coming. We used the same system of asking the Germans to come out on the road and we received the same response. When we arrived at Bn. Hqs. we had collected at least 400 German prisoners, which included, 125 German Wac's.

I reported to Col. Frazior, "**Mission completed.**" I went over in detail what had happened that morning and the Col. said, "**Duney, get your men fed, I have a job for them this afternoon and this one won't be easy.**" I asked what the job was and he informed me that Division Headquarters had ordered the 1st Battalion to move a motorized platoon across the valley to contact the 3rd Division, who had been pushing the Germans from the south. I told him I would need six jeeps. He said they'd be ready within the hour.

"I'm Going to Court Martial You"

During the operation we ran across columns of tanks, artillery and all types of German vehicles, fully loaded. **We explained to the Germans that they were to throw down their weapons, that the battle was over.** The Americans controlled the complete north end of the valley. **The Germans thought we were troops from Gen. Patton's 3rd Army.** We explained that the war was over for them, realizing we were trying to bluff our way across the valley.

We knew we could have been killed a thousand times, for we had no weapons that would have knocked out the Mark VI's we had seen. **The bluff worked**, and around 1600 hours that afternoon, we contacted units of the 30th Infantry of the 3rd Division. **They did not want to believe that six jeeps with thirty two men, plus drivers had crossed the valley from the north.** I explained to their officers that Maj. Gen. Dahlquist, had issued the order to Col. Frazior to cross the valley and contact the 3rd Division. I was asked if I had run into Germans when I crossed the valley. I told them I had seen and talked to Germans by the thousands.

I had bluffed my way across and now I had to bluff my way back. The return trip was same as the morning trip - a success. We returned to Bn. Hqs. with a thousand stories to tell - glad to be alive and glad the mission was over. Col. Frazior was happy it had been so successful.

When we had secured our positions, collected all Germans who wanted to surrender and took care of their wounded, it was time to turn north and lead our columns toward Germany.

We never went through a day without hitting the German road blocks or running into a rear guard unit whose job it was to slow the American columns so other German units could withdraw.

Lt. Col. Frazior must have had a good omen looking over his 1st battalion because nothing seemed to slow us down. We took ground so fast at times, we were told to stop driving, so other units could catch up. It was during this drive that Col. Paul Adams, C.O. 143rd Infantry, **referred to Lt. Col. Frazior as the best battalion commander he had ever seen.**

It was the early part of Sept. 1944, at 0200 hours while my Special Platoon was on an ambush outpost to pick up German prisoners for our S-2 to interrogate. **Sgt. Peterson brought in a Capt. in the Waffen S.S.** I asked him to sit down so we could talk. I asked him what his name was and what unit he was from? We needed to know who was to our front, but he would only give me his name, rank and serial number. It only took a few minutes for me to realize I wasn't going to get any information from this S.S. Capt.

Any bit of information I received might save the lives of my men. The S.S. Capt. and myself talked until 5:30 a.m. **He was Nazi through and through and he made it clear that if given a chance to escape, he would continue to fight the Americans and their allies, until his death.** He didn't want to give up his helmet because to a German that meant complete surrender. I took it from him and threw it into the corner of the cellar . . . and had him taken to Bn. Hqs. and turned over to the duty officer.

I had been up all night, checking my men on our Ambush Outpost, questioning prisoners and going over maps of the area. I was trying to find an area the Germans might set up strong points or road blocks.

As the men started breakfast, I could see it was going to be a beautiful day. **They acted like death was a million miles away.** These were some of the best men in our division and I would put them up against anyone or any unit. They had lead the 1st Battalion in its drive from the beaches of southern France. They had always been out front riding the lead tanks and had seen many of their comrads fall wounded or dead, time and time again. There were times when we hit road blocks or German defenses where we lost men before the rest of the column could catch up. We had to load up, move out and let someone else take care of the wounded and bury our dead.

I asked Sgt. Peterson to get our men ready and meet me at the lead scout car. I wanted to go over our objectives for the day and cover problems we may have on our way north. At 0800 hours, our men began loading on scout cars and tanks. **They didn't ask many questions as it was just another day to them.**

As I climbed upon the lead scout car, where three of my men were trying to secure their gear and find a comfortable place to ride, Maj. Webster approached the scout car with the S.S. Capt. with him.

He came to the front of the scout car and looked at me and said, "**Lt. Philips, I want you to take this German Captain back to Regimental Headquarters for interrogation.**" I answered, "**What did you say, Major?**" He said, "**Lt. Philips, I want you to take this German Captain back to Regimental Headquarters and turn him over to the duty officer.**" I answered, "**Major Webster, I'm leading my men into an attack in just a few minutes. I'll send him back with one of my men, but I won't take him back.**" Major Webster's face turned red, and said, "**Lt. Philips, you take this German Capt. back to Regimental Headquarters now, and turn him over to the duty officer. Do I make myself clear?**"

"I'm Going to Court Martial You"

I asked him why he couldn't get one of the company officers to take him back, that I wasn't going to send my men into an attack without me. By now the Major's voice was trembling. He raised it to a higher pitch and said, "**Lt. Philips I'm ordering you to take this German Capt. back to Regimental Headquarters, now.**"

I came right back with "**Major did you get any information out of this S.O.B. when you questioned him this morning? I questioned the bastard for two and a half hours and I got nothing. He is no damn good and he isn't going to talk when he gets to Regimental Headquarters.**" The Major calmed down a little as he said, "**Lt. Philips, watch your language. This is a German Captain, our prisoner and as I said before you will take him to headquarters.**" I said, "**OK, Major, I'll see that he gets to headquarters.**"

Major Webster was upset but knew he had won. He turned on his heels and headed toward Battalion Headquarters.

I couldn't believe this major was ordering me to send my men into battle without an officer.

I turned back to the scout car and pitched my M-1 Gerand up to Rusty and said, "**Rusty let me have your Thompson for a few minutes.**" He tossed his gun to me without saying a word.

I turned to the S.S. Capt. and said, "**let's go bastard.**" We walked back to the fifth tank and as we crossed over to the inside of the column of tanks the Capt. turned and took a step toward me. **His body slumped to the ground. He had been hit with twenty 45 Caliber slugs.** There was no need for me to check his pulse, so I headed back to my place on the scout car. I had only been gone 45 seconds and as I climbed to my position I handed Rusty his Thompson and he extended his arm to give me my M-1.

After a few seconds, I turned to Rusty and said, "**you had better reload that magazine, you might need it later today.**"

Ten minutes later, Maj. Webster came out of battalion headquarters and headed toward the lead scout car to start the column. As he passed the sixth tank he saw some men gathered around the S.S. Capt. His face turned blood red, he quickened his pace, I looked over my shoulder, (Rusty had told me he was coming) as he screamed, "**Lt. Philips, you murdered that German Captain.**" He was looking at me as he was speaking and I answered him, "**Major, the Captain tried to escape - I killed him.**"

He was still red faced and angry as he said, "**You murdered that Captain and you know it.**" I answered, "**Major, I came to Europe to kill Germans, I don't like my job, but I've learned it and I do it well.**"

That must not have been the thing to say because the Major yelled, "**Lt. Philips, get down from that scout car.**" I climbed down. I wasn't a pretty sight for my wool uniform was dirty. It hadn't been cleaned since Italy. Some of my men's blood was still on my sleeves and pants legs. It had dripped there, as I had pulled them into my arms after they had been hit. I tried to comfort and reassure them they would be alright. I came to my senses as I heard the Major yell, "**Lt. Phillips, come to attention.**"

My heels touched and my knees stiffened, as I braced my frame and stood 6 ft. 2". I said, "**Major, can I help you?**" He answered, "**Now, you listen to me, Lt. Philips, I'm going to Court-martial you for murder. Do I make myself clear?**" That ended his conversation with me. He turned to the scout car commander and said, "**get these tanks rolling.**" He turned and walked toward Battalion Headquarters.

I climbed up on the front of the scout car, knowing my men had heard the Major threaten me, but no one said a word.

The column started and my mind began to work. I was pretty sure Major Webster was talking to Lt. Col. Frazior about now and saying, "**I'm going to file charges on Lt. Philips for murder.**" I had known Col. Frazior most of my life and felt sure he would stop any charges that the Major made against me.

Col. Frazior had landed at Paestum, Italy 9 Sept. 1943 and had seen and understood combat, while Major Webster was from another school. At West Point, he had been trained by the books and it would take awhile to change his mind as **to how dirty war really was.**

From that day until we took Port-Sur-Saone on the 11 Sept. 1944, I had heard nothing from Major Webster or his charges.

We had taken Port-Sur-Saone like a 'class room' exercise. It was a beautiful operation with one small problem. **We were holding a town behind the German lines and we had captured 900 prisoners.**

Our all around defense was set up with our 57MM, anti-tank guns and our tanks were being overworked at the edge of town where they were set up on road blocks.

Every prisoner we captured would tell us we were going to be 'over-run' as soon as the Germans brought up enough tanks to take our position and retake the town.

Late afternoon, a Mercedes loaded with German soldiers got by one of the road blocks and came to a stop in front of Col. Frazior's Hqs. When they realized they had made a mistake in coming into Port-Sur-Saone, (which was being held by the Americans), they

stopped, and stepped out with their hands raised.

I was coming out of Headquarters when the Mercedes rolled to a stop about ten yards to my front. **When the Germans stepped out of the car with their hands raised, two American G.I.'s ran out from between the building.** They jerked one of the Germans around and hit him in the face with his fist. I stepped into the street as the G.I. drew back to hit the German again. As I caught the GI's arm, I jerked him back and as he turned he fell to the ground. I then grabbed the second GI and pulled him away from one of the other Germans.

When I let go of the second GI, I said, "**search them and place them in the stockade with the other prisoners.**" As I started, I looked into a second story window where I saw Major Webster just leaving. When I entered headquarters, Major Webster was coming down the stairs two steps at a time. He came to a stop about four feet from me. His voice was high pitched as he yelled. "**It's alright for you to murder prisoners, but you don't want anyone else to touch German prisoners, why?**" I answered, "**Major Webster, do you realize where we are? We are behind German lines and every prisoner I've questioned today tells me they plan to overrun our position at anytime. We have 900 prisoners in the stockade that will be able to tell the Germans they were mistreated.**"

The Major said, "**It's ok for you to kill them, is that your feeling?**" I answered, "**Major, if you want 900 prisoners dead, I'll go back and kill everyone, but I won't stand for anyone in the battalion to beat or mistreat a prisoner while we are behind enemy lines.**" Major Webster turned without another word and went back to his office.

The Germans tried to retake Port-Sur-Saone, time and again, but we turned them back each time. They soon realized they were up against seasoned troops and they couldn't retake it without a heavy loss in equipment and men.

We broke out of Port-Sur-Saone on the 13 Sept 1944, driving north to continue our push. Units of the 36th Division continued driving north, pushing the Germans closer to the Vosges Mountains and Siegfried Line, where they dug in to hold for winter.

In fall of 1944, Seventh Army Headquarters would send 100 officers and 466 enlisted men to the states for Christmas. **My name was on that list. We were supposed to go home on a thirty day leave and then return to the 36th Division.**

Christmas 1944 was the greatest Christmas of my life. Just the thought of being with my wife again after so many months to finally **see my beautiful daughter, whom I had never seen,** and by now was

13 months old, was all I could think of.

After we visited with our families, **we traveled across Texas talking to families whose sons and husbands would never return. I thought I owed each of the families that much since their loved ones had given the supreme sacrifice.**

Thirty days wasn't nearly enough time to do what I felt I had to do, but the war wasn't over and I had to get back to my job, an Infantry Officer in combat. I was very proud of that.

Our group gathered at Fort DuPont, Delaware, started the long trip back to the Division I loved. **We arrived back on my 23rd birthday, March 13, 1945. As I signed in, I was told there would be a large attack on the 15th of March with 19 divisions being used.** I was also told that as soon as the regiment lost one of it's company commanders, I would be his replacement. I was to wait in the office of the S-3 for my orders. When I arrived I found just one chair and a table, so I squatted against the wall just inside the door. I still didn't know who the S-3 was.

Minutes later, the door opened and Major Sanford Webster walked in. His uniform was still immaculate and his boots were freshly shined. This wasn't the same officer that had said, "Lt. Philips, I'm going to Court-martial you for murder." **The past six months of combat had taken its toll.** He had been through the fall and winter campaign of 1944-45 with the 143rd Regiment. He had seen war as an Infantry Staff Officer and had learned that war wasn't always fought by the books he had studied at West Point. It was hell, it was dirty and it wasn't always fought as the instructor said it would be.

As Major Webster came through the door it hit me that he had been moved up to Regimental S-3. Without thinking I said, "**Major, do you have any SS Captains you need killed this morning?**" He turned as I stood to my full height and looking up to me he yelled, "**Lt. Philips, we have been waiting for you, glad to have you back.**" **He was all smiles and grabbed me in a big bear hug.** I told him the duty officer asked me to wait for orders and I knew I wouldn't get a company until we lost one of the company commanders, after the big attack started. He said, "**Lt. Philips, I've just come from a meeting with Col. Denholm and he wants you to take Company A now, before the big attack. Welcome Home.**"

The day was 14 March 1945, My division, regiment and battalion wasn't what it was when I joined in 1938. Col. Martin had left in Italy. Lt. Col. Frazior battalion commander, and Lt. Col. Robert M. Ives, my company commander on mobilization, had returned to the states.

West Pointers commanded the division, the three Infantry

"I'm Going to Court Martial You"

Regiments and the Infantry Battalions of the 36th Division. This was the way history shows WWII ended for National Guard Divisions.

It was 1951, I was 3rd Army Sports Officer at Ft. Bragg, N.C., running a tennis tournament. **I had read about the best tennis player in the Army, a Lt. Col. named Webster from the Ft. Bennig, Ga. tennis team.** It never dawned on me that I knew this Lt. Col.

The room was full of different tennis team managers and we were about fifteen minutes into the meeting when I addressed a question to the team captain of the Ft. Benning team.

Lt. Col. Webster looked at me as I spoke and said, "**I know you, weren't you with the 36th Division during the war?**" I answered, "**Yes and I know you, but let's take it up after the meeting.**"

Lt. Col. Webster went on to win the Army Championship and to be the number one player of the Leach Cup Team.

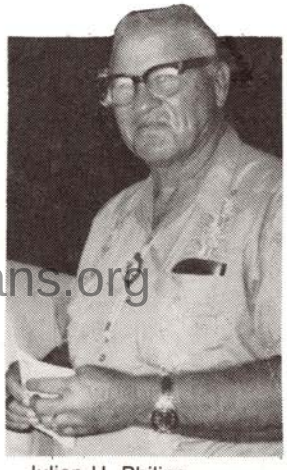
We renewed our past friendship and in all the years I knew Lt. Col. Webster, we never discussed the statement he made in France during September 1944, as a Major. "Lt. Philips, I'm going to Court-martial you for murder."

Yes Major Webster, (a West Pointer) had learned that war wasn't always fought by the books. It gets dirty, men on the line are in hell and many times, its killed or be killed. Only a few men were cut out for this part of the war, that is fought by the **Queen of Battle, THE INFANTRY.**

Footnote:

- Col. Sanford Webster - Retired - lives in Palo Alto, California.
- Brig. Gen. David Frazior - Retired - lives in Belton, Texas.
- Major Gen. Charles Denholm - Retired - lives in Alexandria, VA.
- Gen. Paul Adams - Retired - lives in Tampa, Florida.

All of these officers were excellent Infantry officers in combat and were considered by their men to be a credit to their profession.



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AN ENGINEER

COMBAT PLATOON

by Jack L. Scott

The writer was a graduate of Oklahoma A. & M. College R.O.T.C., the only R.O.T.C. unit in the USA to grade higher than Texas A. & M. in a federal inspection (1942). After graduation and ninety (90) days at O.C.S. which was easy, Scott requested to be sent to Combat Engineer Battalion or to the 82nd Airborne.

Rejected by the 82nd because of glasses (20/20 required) he was sent to Shanango, Pennsylvania, January, 1944 where **he and Lt. Robert P. Jones of "A" Co. volunteered for immediate overseas duty** and arriving at the 3rd replacement depot in Italy, where they requested to be sent to the 45th Infantry at Anzio.

Two (2) weeks later, April, 1944, they were both in a small valley south of Naples reporting to **Colonel Oran C. Stoval**, commanding officer, of the 111th Engineer Combat Battalion.)

"And where are you from Lieutenant?" "I'm from Oklahoma, Sir." "Well, we'll make a Texan out of you." Thus began my story of the first platoon of 'B' Company, the same platoon once commanded by Col. Stoval in the late 1930's. The six reporting replacement Second Lieutenants were assigned as Asst. Platoon Commanders throughout the battalion so that each platoon in the battalion had two officers, No Legal, but then when is war legal.

This is a story not so different from any other platoon in an Engineer "C" Battalion except that many odd circumstances happened that are somewhat different than any other as we all understand from our own experiences. War is always the same but always different. Who knows if it was different to die on the end of a Roman Centurion broad sword or from a big ugly piece of shrapnel from an 88.

FIRST DAY IN COMBAT

Captain Orval Chrisman, Company Commander of "B" Co. said to his assembled officers, **"We are very short of vehicles. Keep your eyes open and if you can find any German type, get word back to H. & S. Co. so we can recover it."** As a bright new replacement (I was the 4th in order platoon commander, the rest of which had been kill-

ed or wounded) this statement was taken literally. After digging in a battery of 105's for Col. Green, 132nd Field Artillery at Anzio, **Eddie Butora**, jeep driver, was requested to take this Lt. on a survey toward Velletri in search of a German vehicle.

Starting out on Rt. 6, the highway direct into Velletri, a Sherman tank was sitting in the road a ¼ mile ahead. "**Put up by that tank, Butora, and we will find out where the front line is**" was my directive. "**Hey, anyone in there?**" No answer. "**Wait while I check on them, Butora.**" At mid air sailing up the front of the Sherman, I was struck by the strange looking holes in the front, but being half way between the ground and fron slope plate it was too late to examine or turn around. One look confirmed the crew was dead. A jeep passed by going 60 mph. "**Follow that jeep, Butora.**" I said and away we went over the top of the next hill. Now we are in the outskirts of Velletri near the old castle that had served the Romans as a guard to entry.

The jeep ahead had pulled behind a house. "**Pull in, Butora.**" "**Corporal, where are we and where is the front line?**" "**Well, Sir, its back there about a half mile and we are behind German lines, he replied.**" "**What do you propose to do?**" "**Well, I'm getting the hell out of here,**". Wherewith he roared out on to the highway headed back in the direction from which we came.

Within a hundred yards, burp guns began to sound in earnest. Never having heard one before, it sounded a lot like the 4th of July fire crackers when you set off a whole package. Butora was down on the floor with his foot on the gas holding the steering wheel over his head and peeking out the side. Since I didn't know anything, I figured I better do what he was doing and also hugged the floor.

We roared through the unbelievable noise and bullets but having caught them completely by surprise and going the wrong way, we never got a scratch. On the 1984 trip to Italy I stood in reverance of that old house we hid behind which saved us a long term as prisoner or a very short life.

VELLETRI

Captain Chrisman said, "**Scott, take the company up on the road and head them toward Velletri.**" I did. I marched them straight toward Velletri and we hadn't even started the attack on Velletri yet. Suddenly I heard voices yelling. Captain Chrisman was screaming. "**Stop, Stop, Stop, I didn't mean to "march" them in Velletri.**" About that time artillery started falling and we melted back in the woods to start over.

So, for my effort to be a top notch 2nd Lt. in combat, it had been a

total catastrophe without casualties. Two nights later we attacked Velletri and **General Walker was walking right along with us with bullets whizzing all around.** But there it was. Dead center in the heart of Velletri next to the blown out bridge by the railroad tracks was a German ½track motorcycle with the back section powered by tracks and the front with a wheel and handle bars. I quickly tied on a rope and pulled it to see if it was booby trapped.
Then I sent for the motor pool to come and get it. That was my transportation from then until we passed through Rome where I had to leave it. I should have sold it.

At the end of the Rome-Arno campaign we returned for 7 days at Rome, **I was assigned as 1st Platoon Commander "B" Company.** At no time in my career was I more proud nor more humble at the thought of being the commanding officer of such a truly outstanding bunch of real combat veterans who had learned to work so well together.

I had now been in combat about 30 days, wounded once, infiltrated the Gustav Hitler line, built a road over Mt. Artimisio for the division and promoted to platoon commander and was still alive. One thought on the infiltration road over the mountain at Velletri.

John Bob Parks, the wildest man who ever pulled a lever on a dozer took me for his security and started up that hill. We made that ditch into a neat one way road. 36th Engineer Regiment people came running down the ditch yelling, "**Tank, Tank.**" I said, "**John Bob, do you think there is a tank up there?**" He said, "**If there is we'll just knock the son of a bitch over the edge and keep going.**" I had no way of knowing the difference so I said, "**Ok, let's keep going.**" That could have been the end of both of us and the road. There was no tank obviously since I'm writing this document.

Back to Salerno —
SOUTHERN FRANCE . . . Next

I am now a platoon commander. I loved my men. They were courageous, happy, wild, dedicated combat soldiers, capable of any assignment, no matter how difficult. I worked them **hard** at Salerno. Practice landings which caused a little grumbling but I knew that D-Day, H-Hour we would need every ounce of strength, courage and mental toughness we could muster. I ran them, attacked the beaches, removed underwater obstacles and blew sea walls all day till they were worn out, but we knew our job and were ready.

The beach had a six (6) foot sea wall. 1st Platoon was to land first wave and begin to blow a hole in the wall to let the infantry through. We had tetritol packs ready to throw over the wall like a saddle, pull

the pin and run back toward the water as it blew in five (5) seconds. As we neared the beach, artillery from the 88 self propelled guns became intensified. Suddenly, while in the LVCP's only 300 yards from shore we were turned east and landed behind the 141st in a cove east of Frejus.

At Montelemar we loaded on the front of tanks of the 736th Tank Battalion ready for a night counter attack. One squad each tank. **George Mac Clain, 1st squad; Henry Biggs, 2nd squad; and George Pengressi, third squad,** were my squad leaders. We were nervous but not afraid. We knew what we had been ordered to do and we were ready.

The German 19th veered west of Montelemar to escape the trap and next morning we dismounted and started north to try to cut them off at the Rhone River. The next three (3) weeks were wild confusion with people going 10-15 miles per day and not knowing where anybody was. Blowing bridges at 4:00 A.M., eating 12 eggs cooked by a French lady, paid for with 20 Francs, 2 "D" ration chocolate bars and three cans of "C" ration. Best eggs I ever ate and we ate all 36 at one breakfast, cooked by a French blacksmith's wife at 6:00 A.M.

REIMEREMONT, FRANCE: A NEW PROCEDURE:

As we neared Reimeremont, the abattis of large pines across the roads was becoming a real problem. While dug in on top of the hill just south of Reimeremont, we received a communication at 2:00 A.M. — "**Report to 1st Battalion C.P.-142nd Infantry.**" We had battled our way to this hilltop, set up all around defense and now we go back through an area occupied behind us by the Germans. We drove pure black out with a "**Make it if you can attitude.**"

Upon arriving at 1st Battalion Headquarters, Colonel Jim Minor said, "**Scott, get on the road into Reimeremont and start moving out those big pine trees. They are holding up our ammunition and we need ambulances down that road.**" We started at 6:00 A.M. using 2½ ton trucks and a small R-4 dozer to pull them out. We made about 100 yards per hour. The 111th Engineers had been well trained.

About 7:00 P.M. as dusk was approaching I instructed my **Platoon Sgt. Leonard P. Hooker,** a very outstanding leader and very combat savvy, to park the trucks, have the men get something to eat and bed down for the night. A few minutes later, Colonel Minor walked up and asked, "**What are you doing?**" I said, "**Shutting down for the night, Sir.**" He said, "**Listen, Scott, I've got men who need ammunition. We've got litter cases up there waiting now.**

(About ½ mile ahead.) Get those trucks moving and don't stop." "But Sir, the Germans are booby trapping some of these abattis and its pretty dangerous." "Scott, it's dangerous up there about 500 yards, too."

So, we started a new procedure, pull those damn abattis out regardless of time of day or night, shot or shell or booby traps. We got the road open without casualties and from then on Jim Minor described me as the only Engineer Officer who knew a damn thing because he trained me. From there to St. Marie pass it was the same daily routine. **Pull mines, pull out road blocks, hit the dirt to avoid 88's and work your way up the pass.**

THE ROAD TO SELESTAT:

As we progressed down the road from St. Marie' Pass toward Salestat, the objective of 1st Bn. 142nd, we made many night attacks with Colonel Minor and then I was sent to support temporairly for two (2) days, a column of the 143rd heading for the Colmar Pocket. I had a squad with me and we passed a column of Shermans, as we made our way to the head of the column.

As we surveyed the shoulders and road for mines, we came upon a small S curve in the road that blocked our view of the rest of the road ahead. As we walked around the corner, being the first ones in line, I called attention to Sgt. Biggs that a trickle of smoke was coming up from a shell hole in the road.

Everyone came over to look and it was like we had a football huddle in the center of the road. As I looked east to see what was ahead, a Tiger Tank sat in the middle of the road about 3 or 4 hundred yards away with front yard walls on either side. As I looked, two (2) Germans were running from the house, one was in mid-air between wall and turret. **"Tank," I yelled and we all ran back around the curve.** I had seen one of the new 76 mm guns on one of the Sherman tanks as we walked past so I ran back down the road thinking, **"I'm going to get me a Tiger tank."**

I brought the Lt. up, showed him where to position his tank in the ditch with his gun barrel right in the edge of a small bushy tree. **"I will climb up the hill, cut the tree down and you fire."** As I crawled up to the tree with a trunk of about 1 1/4" in diameter, I pulled my knife and got ready to chop. The first hack cut about 1" of the trunk but about 1/4" to 3/8" still held it up so I had to hit it again. When the tree fell over, the biggest ball of red fire you can imagine was coming straight at my head. There was no time to duck but just watch. The A.P. shell hit the Sherman tank on the gun shield and the gunner inside inadvertantly from the shock hit the trigger. The

gun barrel was about 6" from my head and the blast knocked me unconscious and I lay flat on my back. When I came to, there was no soudn. Actually the Sherman was busy backing out because the gun shield was welded to the turret by the 88 and the turret was knocked off the track. Men were yelling and the tank was moving but I heard nothing.

"**This is not a bad place, I thought,**" as I contemplated that I was dead and this was heaven. Beautiful white clouds were moving against the blue sky and it was very peaceful. Suddenly, I was aware of men pulling on me and decided that I was not dead, still alive, and the war was still going on. After awhile I began to hear a little bit and Lt. FIster came and relieved me so I could go back to Col. Minor.

THE LAST DAY OF COMBAT: NOV 30th, 1944

After briefing from Col. Minor on the cross country route to Selestat near the Rhine River, he requested that I look for a path to get the 736th tanks through the woods because he was going to outflank the Germans and wanted the tanks with him.

I set out through the woods looking. After about 200 yards I could see a black top road and now that was where I needed to get them. Just then two Germans walked by. I froze in place and they walked on without seeing me. But the nearby farm house was loaded with about 50 Krauts. I hurried back and found Butora and told him to find Col. Minor, appraise him of the situation and send a Co. down to clear the Germans out of the area.

I took a few shots at them from the edge of the woods and they scurried around but did not come after me. **Soon 1st Lt. Head, company commander of "A" Co. of 1st Battalion showed up with his Co. and we stood in the middle of the road discussing the situation.** I had gotten the tanks through the woods while waiting for Lt. Head as they were on the road waiting. However, the direction they needed to go had a big Pine tree ABATTIS across the road. I had jumped up on the tank to direct fire into the barn where the Germans were and they had already gotten out the back side.

As we stood there — one German GI came running out with a white handkerchief to surrender. Head pulled his pistol to cut him down. I pushed his hand down and said, "**He wants to quit, let's let him.**" He looked disgusted at me and walked away. I put the German on a saw cutting the big pine tree. Only Sgt. Hooker and four men were still with me. Suddenly from nowhere comes a Nebelwerfer (6 round screeming meemie) which bracketed us. Every

one was hit and sprayed with small pieces of shrapnel. One shell went off in the ditch next to the German whose body shielded my upper body and head so that I only had about 20 pieces in my legs and left arm and was paralyzed standing in the road. I tried to fall but my legs would not work. Finally as we heard another Nebelwerfer coming I shook my head and arms and managed to fall in the road.

The men got me to my feet and we started the 300 yards to the main road. About 100' short I could not take another step even with two wounded men helping me and directed them to go on to the road and send someone back.

What a strange feeling when you know have been lucky and hit hard but no bones are broken, no severed limbs, no eyes blown out and a fine war hospital not far away. The road to recovery was 6 months and I turned down a chance to go home because they would have shipped me straight to Japan. I figured I had earned the opportunity to occupy Germany in peace and return to the platoon I dearly loved.

This experience is a pretty standard one for Engineer Combat Platoons and Platoon Commanders. **The demand is great but the pride is greater.** To me, the finest 48 men in the United States Army were my 1st Platoon of "B" Co. I loved them, tried to fight for them and had unlimited respect for their calm and resilute determination to get the job done.

We as a group are some times maligned by the infantry as being aloof and clanish. Not so. Most combat engineers have spent many days as infantry either in attack or defense yet we never get to wear a Combat Infantryman Badge. It makes us feel that only we know what a combat engineer is and most others have no way to identify with us whereas we know precisely what it is to shoulder that rifle and walk down that road.

For the record, the 1st Platoon of "B" Co. I used up 5 Platoon Commanders, had 12 men out of 48 not killed or wounded and received precious few medals of any kind except the Purple Heart. A complete book could be written on the 1st Platoon of "B" Co. from Salerno to Austria but probably won't. However, this might make it possible for the reader to get a little better picture of that "**Old Combat Engineer**" he used to see walking with his mine detector or getting blown to smithereens from a booby trapped mine.

Jack L. Scott
Rt. 4, Box 442
Guthrie OK 73044

WAR'S END — Lt. Jack L. Scott just returned from 5 months in a hospital in England (returned to duty by demand) in Austria, May 1945 — in front of 111th Engineers CP. (age 24).

1984 — In Rome with wife Donna in front of the Victor Emanuel where ceremonies were held during the 36th Return to Italy tour (along with 150 other T-Patchers. Scott was president of the 36th Association in 1980, attends all reunions, has his own firm — Jack Scott, Architects & Engineers.

Part VI

"KRIEGIE"

Prisoner Of War In Germany

"Luckenwalde"

By Alan "Chum" Williamson

Riding in boxcars, our contingent of 178 Oflag 64 evacuees arrived at Luckenwalde, 50 kilometers southwest of Berlin, on 10 February 1945. We were marched route step to Stalag IIIA, which our guards had trouble finding.

Two contingents totalling 221 Oflag 64 Kriegies had preceded us. These included T-Patchers **Charles H. (Hal) Jones, Clarence M. Ferguson, and Randolph Robinson.** More would follow.

An estimated 17,000 PWs were crowded into the confines of a camp built to house a fraction of that number. Sleeping accommodations consisted of triple deck bunks, twelve to the tier. By contrast, Oflag 64 was like a country club.

The Stalag was divided into compounds. American officers shared a compound with United Kingdom (RAF and RCAF) aviators and Polish officers. About 4,000 American enlisted men were interned in another compound, including some 2,800 housed in circus tents.

The senior officer in our compound was RAF Wing Commander Smith. Our Senior American Officer was Lieut. Col. Roy Herte, who was too ill to function as such. The duties of SAO were performed by the very capable Lieut. Col. Walter M. Oakes, of San Antonio, Texas.

A professional soldier, Oakes was a former First Sergeant. He used the colorful language one might expect of a Regular Army First Shirt. One of his favorite expressions was, "**Time is a f--ing essence!**"

A compound adjoining ours contained the officer corps of the entire Norwegian armed forces, including Major General Otto Ruge, their former commander-in-chief. He was our Senior Allied Officer.

The Russian compound contained by far the most PWs. Since

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Russia had not signed the Geneva Convention and had not affiliated with the International Red Cross, **Russian PWs were given no Red Cross parcels.** Despised by the Germans, their daily ration was the tops off the soup. **An average of three per day died of starvation.**

Earlier, large dogs were turned loose at night in all compounds. The practice was discontinued. The Russians killed the dogs, ate them, and threw the skin, bones and viscera over the fence.

No Red Cross parcels had been available for our compound for a long time. The goon ration was even less than at Oflag 64. We became little more than walking skeletons. Starving, we could think and talk of nothing but food.

Col. Oakes sent a letter to the Swiss government, our Protecting Power, requesting that we be interned in a neutral country. "**The German Reich is destitute, and no longer able to care for prisoners of war.**" The letter called attention to our plight, but of course nothing was done.

French officers in another compound were getting American Red Cross parcels. They refused to share them with us.

The Norwegians were getting their own parcels, which contained no cigarettes. On Norwegian parcel day, Americans who still had them were sometimes able to trade a pack for a packet of cheese. Since there were more Americans than Norwegians who wanted to trade, coupled with the language barrier, many of us threw cigarettes over the fence and got nothing in return.

Two newly captured Americans arrived. As we gathered around them asking for news from the front, a veteran Kriegie exclaimed, "**Look! They've got blood!**" Their pink cheeks and robust bodies contrasted sharply with the sallow complexions and gaunt frames of the oldtimers.

The newcomers said they were captured on our side of the Elbe. "**We could have gone all the way to Berlin, but Eisenhower ordered us to go back. That's when we got captured.**"

The Germans were using daylight saving time, called war time. Wing Commander Smith ruled that we use time an hour ahead of the Germans. This meant lights out an hour earlier than required by the goons. No matter. The lights went out at dusk every day because of air raids. The night Potsdam was destroyed, we had ringside seats.

Unlike Vietnam, Americans captured during World War II were not promoted unless their names were on a promotion list when taken. T-Patcher Newt Lantren, 142nd Infantry, got his 'railroad tracks' at Oflag 64. Newt was our mess officer at Stalag IIIA.

A 1st lieutenant at Oflag 64 had been in the bag a year when a friend with the same date of rank as a lieutenant walked in wearing the silver oak leaves of a lieutenant colonel.

Former heavyweight fighter Max Schmelling visited the Stalag on 3 March. As fans gathered around him, he handed out autographed picture post cards of himself. He said, "**The war will soon be over. When it ends, I'm going to New York.**"

A Kriegie recalled that Schmelling visited a POW camp at Laterina, Italy a year earlier, where he said the same thing.

The air raid alarm sounded. This meant everybody except the guards had to be indoors. A guard said in English, "**Herr Schmelling, there is an air raid.**"

His fans followed Max into the nearest barracks. There, Col. Oakes ordered, "**Get your ass out of here!**"

The former heavyweight champion of the world, who knocked out Joe Louis, meekly complied.

On 8 March we received a shipment of Red Cross parcels. Remembering Col. "Pop" Goode's decision to cut our ration in half at Oflag 64, "**So they will last longer,**" Col. Oakes ordered the issue of two per man the first week, one per week thereafter. He said, "**The place to save food is in our stomachs.**" While a Kriegie, Oakes acquired the nickname 'KLIM,' the brand name of the powdered milk in American Red Cross parcels.

I learned to play chess at Oflag 64. At Luckenwalde I became a member of the U.S. chess team. With the permission of the guards, we played a match with the Norwegians in their compound. Team members were allowed to enter that compound through a gate. According to Senior Texas District Judge Clarence M. Ferguson, in his excellent book, **KRIEGSGEFANGENER (Prisoner of War)**, Texian Press, Waco, 1983, several spectators attended by crawling through a hole in the fence.

The match was called at the time set by the guards. Unfinished games were adjudicated. My game was adjudicated as a draw, although I had won the exchange, knight for rook. We lost the match.

Although I won my game, we lost a match with the Polish team in our own compound. We beat the United Kingdom team.

At Oflag 64, some Kriegies were traders. They went from barracks to barracks seeking to trade items from the Red Cross parcel for items they liked better. A shrewd trader could sometimes make a profit.

After the receipt of parcels in our compound, I became a trader. Few Americans visited the Polish barracks. I became acquainted

with the Polish and the UK Kriegies playing chess. The Poles were getting parcels containing mostly C-Rations, with no cigarettes. I traded cigarettes to the Poles for C-Rats, which I then traded to the Brits and Canadians for cigarettes. I often did no better than break even, but it helped pass the time.

At Oflag 64, an enterprising Kriegie raffled off a parcel for chocolate D-Ration bars. I raffled off a parcel for 35 D-Bars, then replaced the items I wanted with less than half that number. Next, I became the only Kriegie to raffle off a parcel for cigarettes. I got 300 packs, and replaced the items I wanted for less than a hundred.

War correspondent Edward W. Beattie, Jr. arrived about 1 April 1945. Captured in September 1944 along with Wright Bryan of the Atlanta Constitution, Beattie had been interned at Stalag IIID, Berlin. After the war, he wrote a book, **DIARY OF A KRIEGIE**, Thomas Y. Crowell Co., New York, 1946, in which he described in detail events occuring at Stalag IIIA while he was there.

We received word that American and UK Kriegies were to be moved to a "**Bavarian Redoubt**," where Hitler hoped to hold out for a separate peace with the western allies. The UK PWs were marched to the railroad station on 12 April, then marched back on 14 April. By the time the guards found a locomotive that would run, the Americans had cut the rail line.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt died on 12 April 1945. We received the news on 13 April. The headline of the German Volkischer Beobachter screamed, "**THE GREATEST WAR CRIMINAL OF ALL TIME DIES.**" But several of our guards expressed regret.

When a guard entered an American barracks, the first Kriegie to see him would alert his fellows by calling out a prearranged code sentence. This did the job without offending our hosts. The United Kingdom PWs had no such qualms. When a guard entered our barracks through the cold water wash room separating it from the United Kingdom half, a UK Kriegie would follow him to the door and shout over his shoulder, "**Goon in the block!**"

As the war drew to a close, our guards were Volkstrum and disabled Wehrmacht. Knowing our roles would soon be reversed, they became apologetic, almost subservient.

An American climbed a fence separating our compound from another — a no-no authorizing the guard to shoot him. As he edged toward a moat between two parallel fences, the guard, armed with a rifle, begged him to go back.

Onlookers persuaded him not to force the hapless guard to either

shoot him or risk his own execution by letting him pass.

On 21 April the German commandant announced, "**The Russians are only seven kilometers away. We (the guard company) are withdrawing. As far as we are concerned, you are free.**"

Using rocks, we spelled PRISONERS OF WAR in Russian and in German in the assembly area. Kriegies wearing white armbands were posted outside the perimeter area.

As German combat troops withdrew past the Stalag, an artillery gun was set up at a corner of the compound. The officer in charge told a Kriegie who introduced himself, "**I didn't know there was a POW camp here.**" Then he added, "**This wouldn't be too good a spot for a gun emplacement, would it?**"

The American agreed. The officer moved the gun further to the rear.

On the morning of 22 April, Russian tanks symbolically knocked down the main gate and paraded through the Stalag. They gave rifles to the able-bodied Russian PWs and put them with the spearhead. Later, we found the body of one of them near the Stalag, a bullet hole through his forehead.

They moved a detachment into the quarters formerly occupied by the Germans and posted their own guard. Col. Oakes asked that we be repatriated. The Russian commandant replied, "**If we evacuate you now, you will have to go through Odessa. Wait a few days, until we meet the Americans at the Elbe River.**"

For several days we could hear gunfire. Fighter planes strafed German positions and there were aerial dogfights. Every time we heard a burst of fire, an American chaplain ran to his bunk and crawled under it. The rest of us paid no attention.

The restriction between compounds was lifted. We cut holes in the perimeter fence. Russian guards looked the other way as Kriegies crawled through them to visit **the town of Luckenwalde**. Red flags and white flags fluttered from almost every window.

Russian troops in town were warmly dressed in bulky, quilted cotton uniforms. The lack of maintenance of American-made vehicles was appalling. Several trucks had the winch run all the way out and wrapped around the cargo body.

Meanwhile, of the 1,471 Americans who left Oflag 64 on foot, 981 escaped, were left along the way disabled, or were sent to Stalag IIIA. Only 423 officers and 67 EM completed the 345-mile, 48-day trek to Hammelburg, arriving 9 March 1945.

There they were interned in Oflag XIIIB, a camp for Serbian (Yugoslav) officers that was also used as a transient camp for Americans beginning 11 January 1945. In addition to 3,000 Serbs

who had been in the bag four years, 981 Americans were already there. The Oflag 64 Kriegies increased the American strength to 1,418 officers and EM.

There was no organization at Oflag XIIIB except a Senior American Officer and a Senior Medical Officer. Morale was low. On two occasions Americans were shot and killed by SS guards through an apparent misunderstanding of an order that all PWs be indoors during air raids.

Col. Paul R. Goode, the new SAO, reorganized the camp along the lines used at Oflag 64. He also held conferences with the German commandant, Major General Gunther von Goeckel, to make sure there was a clear understanding of camp rules.

There was very little food. The Serbs were getting their own Red Cross parcels, but only one per man per month. Unlike the French at Luckenwalde, they insisted upon sharing them with the Americans.

Combat Command B, 4th Armored Division, crossed the Rhine and was 60 miles from Hammelburg. **General George S. Patton asked Maj. Gen. Manton S. Eddy, CG of XII Corps, to send a task force to liberate Oflag XIIIB. Lieut. Col. John Knight Waters, a graduate of the U.S. Military Academy, Class of '31, Patton's son-in-law, was there. Eddy refused.**

Patton then phoned Brig. Gen. William Hoge, commander of the 4th Armored Division, promising to replace every man and every piece of equipment lost during the rescue mission. Hoge directed Lieut. Col. Creighton Abrams to assemble a reinforced company to make the attempt. Abrams, who would later gain fame as commander of U.S. Army Vietnam, protested that a company wasn't enough. "**It will take at least a combat command.**"

Hoge said, "**I can't spare a combat command.**" A reinforced company was hastily assembled. Captain Abraham Baum, a Battalion S2, was made acting commander.

Task Force Baum arrived at Oflag XIIIB on the afternoon of 27 March. Col. Waters volunteered to go out and meet the task force commander. He was accompanied by a German interpreter and two American volunteers, one carrying an American flag, the other a white sheet attached to a pole.

Enroute, a SS private shot Col. Waters, seriously wounding him. The tanks opened fire. Within minutes, the Oflag was in American hands. The commandant surrendered to Col. Goode. Waters was carried back in a blanket.

Capt. Baum was told there were 900 Americans at the Oflag. There were more than 1,400. He brought enough half-tracks to

evacuate 900, but some were destroyed. His force was 60 miles ahead of the main body and couldn't stay and fight.

Goode divided the American PWs into three groups: Those unable to leave camp; those selected to ride on the tanks and in the half-tracks (most were Armor personnel); those who could try to escape on their own or remain at the Oflag.

Shortly after beginning the return trip, Task Force Baum was annihilated. **All of its 307 men, as well as the accompanying PWs, were captured or killed.** Abraham Baum destroyed his dog tags before capture, so the Germans wouldn't know he was Jewish. Of the PWs who tried to escape on their own, all but 30 were killed or recaptured.

Next day, 500 were sent to Nurnberg by train, with the guards who marched the Oflag 64 Kriegies out of Poland. The able-bodied men were marched 90 miles to Stalag VIIA, Moosburg. **There, Col. Goode organized the 30,000 PWs for their final liberation, which occurred 29 April 1945.**

The Serbs were not evacuated. Also left behind were the sick and stragglers collected from the "**liberation**".

On 6 April, just ten days after the failed rescue attempt, the 14th Armored Division entered Hammelburg in force, liberating Oflag XIIIB without casualties. Lieut. Col. Waters was flown out to the 34th Evacuation Hospital, Frankfurt am Main. General Patton visited him on 7 April. Waters completely recovered from his wound. **He later attained the rank of 4-star general and was CINCUSARPAC from 1964 until his retirement in 1966.**

After the Russians arrived in Stalag IIIA, we received no more Red Cross parcels. According to German civilians, our parcels were "**liberated**" by looting Russian soldiers. **Hitler's prediction of looting, rape and murder had come to pass with a vengeance.**

A Russian-American foraging party was organized. Lieut. Eddie Berlinsky, an All-American football player, was our quartermaster. Eddie reported the Russians were butchering Holstein dairy cattle. But they were giving us horse meat, from butchered work animals.

The Russians met the waiting Americans at the Elbe on 25 April. **Amon G. Carter Sr., publisher of the Fort Worth Star Telegram, arrived at Stalag IIIA, where his son, Lieut. Amon G. Carter Jr., was interned.** Driving a jeep, he was wearing a steel helmet and the green armband of a war correspondent. After conferring with the Russian commandant, he took his son with him.

The Americans sent a convoy of 125 cargo trucks to evacuate us. The Russian commandant threatened to impound them if the con-

voy commander tried to take a single PW out. He said, "**We must register you. You are wearing mixed uniforms. For all we know, some of you may be Germans.**"

As the registration dragged on, the Americans grew impatient. One asked a Russian guard, "**Would you shoot me if I crawled through that hole in the fence?**"

"No," the guard replied, "**But there's a checkpoint down the road, and they will stop you there.**"

Not so. Americans began to leave by the score, and none were stopped.

I had brought from Oflag 64 a book, "**Staunton's Chess Player's Handbook.**" A fellow Kriegie asked to borrow it. I readily agreed. Two days later, I learned that he had escaped, taking my book with him. I had carried it 211 kilometers on foot, in zero weather. Later, in the states, I learned it was a collector's item and couldn't be replaced.

Several of us began to make daily visits to the town of Luckenwalde. We were allowed to leave and reenter the compound through a hole in the fence. Obviously, official Soviet policy was no repatriation until they were ready, while the unofficial policy was to let us come and go as we pleased.

Most PWs in our compound had run out of cigarettes and other Red Cross goodies. Thanks to raffling off the two parcels for chocolate bars and cigarettes, I had plenty. **A British Kriegie offered to buy cigarettes from me for $5.00 per pack, payable by check on the Bank of England.** Other Brits and Canadians followed suit. They set the price on other items, based on the value in cigarettes. The checks were made out on blank pieces of paper, lettered by hand.

One chap had several British pound notes. The Pound Sterling was worth about $4.00 at the time. He said, "**Since I'm paying cash, how about a pound note for a pack of cigarettes?**"

I readily agreed. All told, **I collected just over $1,000.00. After returning to the states, I deposited the checks in my bank. All of them were good.**

The war ended. On VE-Day, 8 May 1945, another convoy of trucks arrived to evacuate us. Again, the Russians refused to let us go. The camp commandant said, "**The war is over. The repatriation of POWs is no longer a matter between army commanders. It is now a matter between governments. There must be diplomatic negotiations.**"

The reason for the charade was that the Soviets wanted all Russian PWs liberated by the Americans to be forcibly returned to their control. Many didn't want to return to Mother Russia, where they might be charged with desertion and executed. The Polish PWs wanted to join the Polish government-in-exile in London. The Russians wanted to force them to return to Poland — and did.

I hid under the troop seat of one of the trucks. The convoy was stopped at a checkpoint, where the American lieutenant in charge, accompanied by a Russian, searched the vehicles. The American ordered me to dismount, as the Russian grinned. He said, "**I'm sorry. If I try to take you out, they'll impound my trucks.**"

As the convoy pulled out, I pondered my next move. A burst of automatic weapons fire helped me decide. I thought, "**The war is over. My marriage was on the rocks before we left Camp Bowie. What's my hurry?.**" I returned to the Stalag.

As more and more Americans repatriated themselves, we who remained were all moved into one barracks. Those made vacant were filled with civilian refugees. Most arrived on foot, some on bicycles. One family came pushing and pulling a quarter-ton trailer loaded with their belongings.

A pretty Belgian woman arrived with her family. A British Kriegie wooed, won and wed her in 24 hours.

A Norwegian lieutenant and I made friends with several German families in Luckenwalde. I was surprised to learn that Adolf Hitler retained latent popularity. One woman said, "**Hitler is not todt (dead)! He escaped to Argentina in a submarine!**"

A woman schoolteacher blamed "**the unjust Treaty of Versailles**" following World War I for the rise of Naziism. She said, "**They stripped us of our colonies and forced us to pay billions in reparations. We were on our knees. But Hitler made us a world power again.**"

"**How do you justify your treatment of the Jews?**" I asked.

"**How do you justify your treatment of the Japanese-Americans?**" she replied. "**We put them in camps, the same as you did.**" She seemed unaware that the Nazi regime had killed millions of Jews. So was I, at the time.

"**When World War I ended,**" she continued, "**Jews came in from the east, wearing their flat hats and their long coats, and they were the only people who had money. They had gold. They bought property very cheaply from Germans who were forced to sell.**

"**A Jewish family would buy a store, then cut prices so low that before long they'd have the only store in town. Then they would raise prices.**

"KRIEGE" - Part VI - Luckenwalde

"No matter how long they lived in Germany, they never became Germans. They remained Jews. They had their own religion, their synagogues. They intermarried only with each other."

I said, **"What you're telling me is that far from being inferior, the Jews were a superior people. You couldn't compete with them."**

"No!" she retorted angrily. **"They took advantage of us!"**

She and others I met did blame Hitler for losing the war. **"Hitler made the same mistake Napoleon made. He tried to fight a war on two fronts."**

On 20 May 1945, twelve days after the war ended, the Russians loaded the few remaining Americans into trucks and took us to the Elbe River. I was the only remaining officer T-Patcher. Clarence M. Ferguson and other seriously ill Kriegies had been evacuated earlier by ambulance.

We passed town after town that was completely destroyed. Years later, in Vietnam, I would remember it when an American major made the ill-considered remark, **"We had to destroy the village in order to save it."**

We dismounted and walked across a foot bridge to waiting American vehicles. A sign on the American side read: **MEET THE RUSSIANS WITH DRY FEET COURTESY OF THE U.S. ARMY ENGINEERS.**

Our return to U.S. control was anticlimatic. Thanks to the Russians, we were among the last American POWs to be set free in the European Theater.

NEXT: Part VII, The Road Back.
Conclusion of the series.

ERRATA: According to Ex-Kriegie Ormand A. Roberts of West Boylston, Mass., the third Kriegie repatriated with Col. Thomas D. Drake and Lieut. Austin E. Webb, confirmed by Webb, was Lieut. Earl Buckley, of Crown Point, Indiana; not a medical officer of the 143rd Infantry, as stated in KRIEGIE, Part III. Also, the tunnel entrance and dirt storage operation at Oflag 64 were in Barracks 3, not Barracks 2, as stated in Part IV.

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KERRIGAN'S KORNER

Fractured Foxhole Fables

By George (Wrong Way) Kerrigan

A GOOD NIGHTS SLEEP IN THE BARN

About Sept. 19th 1944, things got rougher by the day as the terrain changed, as we passed Luxeuil and **headed for Remiremont in Alsace Lorraine**, "France." A few weeks before we were traveling up to forty miles a day; now we were struggling it out, for every square yard of territory.

Co A. 142 was bogged down in beautiful farmland, this lovely day, but I developed an annoying cough and was barking like a seal at the zoo at feeding time.

When dusk fell my platoon insisted I go to the nearest Aid Station. They were looking out for themselves as I was drawing fire, so I figured they were right, and found a Tech. Sgt. from Medics who gave me something, and said go up into that Barn over there and lay down. As soon as I got into the hay I went to sleep and had one of the best sleeps of my life, I don't know what that guy gave me.

Well, I woke up the next morning and thought the war was over, as everything was so quiet and peaceful, but I saw no one around. There was a farm house near by, so I went in and there were two men from C. Co. 142nd. I asked where everyone had gone; they said our Battalion had pulled back. "**So what are you two doing here?**" I asked.

They said they were told to guard six prisoners in the Cellar. I said "**To hell with them. let's go.**" But these kids were good soldiers, and wouldn't leave unless ordered by their own Officers or Non-Comm's. I said I was a platoon Sgt. and ordered them to leave, but no good, they had their orders.

Then the Jerries started pounding on the cellar door, as they apparently understood English and were listening. I took a grenade and pulled the pin, but held the handle, put the pin in my mouth so they could see it, then told one of the two C. Co. men to open the

door and when he did, they were ready to take over, until they saw the Grenade, also three Rifles. I said, "**I know you understand English, do you want to die?" "If not go down that cellar, and if I hear one more knock on that door I'll kill you all; move!**" They went back down silently.

So I told the C. Co. men to speak in whispers, but let the Jerries know they were still up there. I said I will sneak out, so they won't know I am gone. I could see the kids couldn't throw a bluff to scare the Jerries below, much less kill unarmed prisoners.

I then took off for the rear to locate our Battalion. All along the way I saw a body here and a body there, including one of my own men that made me go to the Medics, "**Wm. Stabila" from Fall River, Mass., one of the best. (God Rest his Soul).**

About two miles back I surprised men on a Road Block. I told the Sgt. in charge that they would all be dead if I were a Jerry, so he laid it in to them all to keep alert or die.

After one more mile of hide and seek, I found my outfit and checked in again, then got permission to go over to Co."C" 142. **I located my old Platoon Leader, Lt. Al Cummings** (of the Velletri Road Block). At this time he was commanding "C" Co., and was himself killed a week or two later.

He was glad to see that I made it back, someone told him I was left behind. But I told him of the two young fellows in the Farm House. But he said, "**George they are gone because I sent a Sgt. back last night, when I heard about them guarding the prisoners after we pulled out, and the Sgt. reported back to me that the Farm House was empty.**"

So I told him of the events of that morning and said, "**Lt. those kids are still there and they have guts, but would not leave for me.**" He called for the Sgt. and when he arrived, he asked the Sgt. to tell him again about the Farm House and he said, "**I took a detail back last night and the place was empty of everyone. They must have been taken prisoners.**"

Lt. Cummings said "**Meet Sgt. Kerrigan from A Co.**" He left our two men, a few hours ago and they still have six prisoners in the Cellar.

I said, "**Lt. I will go back and bring those kids out, if you give me a note, as I couldn't order them out myself.**" But he said, "**No George, this Sgt. is going back and this time he won't lie, as he will have an escort to keep him honest.**"

I hope to God they brought those brave kids back.

George Kerrigan A/142nd
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the BIG HAUL

MAY 13, 1943 — Rommel's Afrika Korps Is Kaput . . .
Quarter-Million POWs On Our Hands,

The Untold Story Part II

This story is a follow-up of the one about THE BIG HAUL, which appeared in Vol. IV No. 2 Summer 1984 Quarterly

By
JOHN H. LINDSEY, Jr.
Co A 111th Engineers

Herbert G. Rausch of Ft. Atkinson, Iowa, was picked as a truck driver and I was to be his relief. He was one of the best truck drivers that I ever knew. He could shift gears so smooth in the 2½ ton truck, that you would think it was automatic.

I had driven a jeep while in the states, but never a truck that you had to double clutch and I was **picked as his relief driver.**

We left Casablanca loaded with hospital supplies and a trailer filled with rations. Rausch did the driving all the way to Bone, Tunisia, it was a 2,000 mile round trip. We unloaded the truck and trailer at the supply depot.

Then we loaded the truck with thirty or more Italian P.O.W.'s and some of their personal effects in the trailer. The P.O.W.'s were very happy to be going to America.

Soon it came time for our first rest stop, after which I relieved Rausch and took over the driving. Shortly we hit the mountain roads. I scratched the gears trying to find the right gear to gear the truck down. At times the trailer tires would go off the edge of the

THE BIG HAUL - Part II

The over 600 T-Patchers that made the 2000 mile round trip, admitted it really wasn't to be compared with Greyhound's Luxury Buses.

road and be air bound. I could hear the P.O.W.'s screaming and saying something in Italian, but I could not stop the truck as we were a convoy. **I still sweat thinking about that trip.**

After what seemed like a lifetime we had another rest stop. The P.O.W.'s got out, some kissed the ground, others got down on their knees and made the sign of the cross, praying. One of them spoke in broken English and said from a kneeling position to "**please let the other man drive**"!

Rausch was more than glad to drive as he loved his truck and always took good care of it. I guarded the P.O.W.'s for the rest of the trip, the P.O.W.'s were as nice as they could be to us for they didn't want me at the wheel.

After the war I learned to **double clutch and gear down a truck.** The amazing thing about all of this was how Rausch could drive and control the truck for such a long distance. I wonder how many other drivers had the same problem with their relief driver.

Rausch and I met for the first time since the war at the 36th Mid-West Reunion at Evansville, Ind., in 1986.

John H Lindsay
402 W Jefferson
Albany MO 64402

Here's Herbert G. Rausch of Fort Atkinson Iowa (at left) and John Lindsey when they met again for the first time in 42 years at Mid West Reunion.

Lindsey had an entry in the Quarterly in the 1986 Vol. VI No. 1 issue — "Lost in the Rhone Valley" a good one about the exploits of our 111th Combat Engineers. He has our thanks.

"T-Patch Teammates" Kenneth Leland and Homer Wise

Written by
Virgil Moore, Editor
BRECKENRIDGE AMERICAN
As Told To By
James W. 'Buck' Sheppard

Little did any of the men in Company L realize it that day in November, 1943, but the tall, slim 18-year-old who joined their ranks was to become one of the heroes of World War II.

Kenneth Leland of Fremont, Neb. was among the baby-faced replacements who joined the veterans of the 142nd Infantry, 3rd Battalion, 36th Division that day. The men of the 36th Division were in a defensive position on the lower slopes of the Camino-

Maggiore hill mass, a 3,000-foot bastion guarding Mignano Gap in Italy.

It was tough for the veterans, but even tougher for the new men. It started raining soon after they arrived and didn't stop for the next 17 days. German troops, who were well dug in, shelled the men of Company L and other T-Patchers 24 hours a day. **Both the Germans and the Americans knew the big push was coming.**

Leland was assigned to the second platoon under Sgt. Pete (Ma) Hart. **His third squad leader was Homer L. Wise, who was to later win the Congressional Medal of Honor.**

After dark on Dec. 2, Allied guns began a massive bombardment. Six hundred guns used up a million dollars worth of shells, **earning Mt. Maggiore the title of the Million-Dollar Mountain.** Before daylight the 3rd Battalion crossed the line of departure half-way up on the eastern ridge and quickly seized their objective.

It was Leland's first battle, and he proved quickly that he was a good soldier. **Later he was chosen by Wise to be his front scout, a job any infantryman can tell you is not a choice assignment.**

Leland, who turned 19 in December, 1943, wasn't just a scout, **he was a scout for Homer L. Wise, a man who boasted he was going to win the Congressional Medal of Honor and made good on the boast.**

After taking the Million Dollar Mountain the 142nd spent the rest of the bitter winter on Mt. Sammucro in the vicinity of Casico. A history of the 36th Division states, **"The physical discomforts of Washington's Army of Valley Forge could not have been compared to those suffered by the foot soldier in the Italian mountains."**

Supplies were short and the men did not have proper overcoats and blankets. Many men were carried down the mountain with frozen feet.

In late February, 1944, the 36th was relieved for a period of rest. While the 142nd was in R&R the Allies established a beachhead at Anzio. A bitter stalemate had lasted from mid-January when Allied troops established the 10-square-mile beachhead. The 36th Division was thrown into the struggle and Co. L and other T-Patchers hit the beaches May 25 after traveling all night on flat bottomed vehicle carrier boats. **The night of May 27th Kenneth Leland and the other T-Patchers started the big push.** More than 1,400 artillery pieces fired at one time. The 36th pushed through the front line defense on up to the hills behind Velletri, cutting it off from escape. Then the 36th took the Alban hills and Rome lay ahead.

German Fieldmarshal Kesselring saw that defending Rome was a lost cause and it was declared an open city. Leland and the other foot soldiers got a special treatment, they boarded trucks and headed for the Eternal City.

Buck Sheppard, of Breckenridge, Tx., who himself won two Silver Stars, wasn't in the same unit with Leland, but the two were constantly finding themselves together.

Sheppard recalls one incident that happened on the way to Rome. The trucks members of Co. L were in stopped alongside a big house near Rome. The house was surrounded by an eight-foot brick fence which enclosed an olive orchard of about 10 acres.

Leland and Slim Parks took the opportunity to visit Sheppard and other members of his unit. Two men were sent to the house to get water out of a well. They spotted a group of German soldiers who were approaching with machine guns. It was obvious they wanted to surprise the T-Patchers by mounting guns on the fence walls. The alarm was sounded and Sheppard, Leland and the other T-Patchers formed a semi-circle and began firing. **When the battle was over the Germans had 16 dead and 10 wounded.**

"Leland fought like a tiger," Sheppard said. **"I remember thinking I wish that young fellow was in my outfit."**

As always, Leland was with Sgt. Wise on June 14, 1944 when Wise won the nation's highest honor.

As scout for Wise, the young man overcame great odds. The average life-span for a scout on the front lines is six hours, yet Leland made it through the Italian campaign and the invasion of France.

Wise was credited with evacuating a buddy 100 yards to safety, killing two German officers and a number of enlisted men. He used rifle grenades and an automatic rifle to get the job done when his men were penned down. Then, to knock out a German machine gun emplacement, he mounted a tank-destroyer, unjammed its machine gun, and fired 750 rounds, clearing the enemy and allowing his men to advance.

From Italy it was on to France for the 36th. Leland and other members of the 142nd joined in the D-Day assault. The 142nd was to land in assault boats on Red Beach, but the Naval commander decided the landing would be suicide and sent the unit in on Green Beach. The 142nd swung an arc north and west over the mountains between the 143rd and 141st to attack Frejus from the rear. Both Frejus and San Raphael were cleared in a flurry of fighting in the

early morning of Aug. 14, 1944.

On the night of the 16th the 142nd broke the last German block before Le Muy in the Argens valley.

The next day the unit joined with paratroopers, who had jumped nearby, and Draguignan was entered. **From there the 36th Division raced across France, extended its lines 100 miles in a single day.**

Sgt. Sheppard recalls another meeting with Leland in France. Near Remiremont in September Leland and Sgt. Bill Gerrard were with Sheppard's outfit — he cannot remember why. When an officer asked for a scout, Leland, although not with his own unit, insisted on going.

With a grenade launcher on his rifle, Leland worked his way across a field to determine enemy strength. When he got almost to some nearby trees, Sheppard recalls, he realized there was an anti-tank gun. Germans on the gun were asleep and Leland fired his grenade into the gun emplacement, totally destroying it.

"That woke the Germans up," Sheppard remembers, **"and all hell broke loose."**

Leland was able to get back to other members of the squad, but the Germans opened up with everything they had. They used 20 mm anti-aircraft guns with shells which burst on contact, inflicting heavy casualties on the unit.

The men crawled back across the field to cover and the rest of the battalion, not alerted from a possible ambush, pulled back to a hill about 450 yards behind Leland and the other squad members.

Sheppard remembers that mortar fire with phosphorus shells, machine guns and the anti-aircraft gun fire wiped out most of the unit and some were captured. **Heavy artillery fire from fellow T-Patchers probably saved Leland's life that day, along with many of his buddies. The Germans retreated once the artillery barrage began.**

Leland was wounded three times in the war, getting a Purple Heart and two clusters.

"He should have received the Silver Star." Sheppard still maintains, **"That young man was one hell of a soldier and I'm amazed he lived through all the action he saw."**

Recently Leland was honored in his hometown of Fremont, Neb. The scene had changed greatly from the time he joined Company L back in 1943 as a slim 18-year-old. **This time Leland was honored for having completed almost 41 years as an engineer for Union Pacific Railroad Company.** The event was his retirement from the railroadd and came as he climbed off a slick locomotive after making his last official run.

After retirement new lives start

Fremont Tribune
Monday, Jan. 5, 1987

Conductor at end of the line—job wise

BY PATTI EMANUEL
Staff Writer

Kenny Leland sauntered across Fremont's rail yards, suitcase in hand. He and co-workers joked as they walked.

He had just hopped off C&NW's diesel engine No. 5089. Another overnight trip to Boone, Iowa, was over. Leland had safely conducted his train the 161 miles home.

When Leland smilingly waved goodbye to his buddies, lines around his eyes creased. The ordinary scene had been replayed thousands of times. But on this unusually warm New Year's Eve afternoon, there was a difference. Kenny Leland's last train had rolled into the station.

To mark the occasion, his family greeted him alongside the silver Chicago & Northwestern Transportation Co. building. Grandchildren blew noisemakers and hoisted balloons and banners. One read, "Congratulations Kenny. 41 years. A job well done."

Kenny Leland retired New Year's Eve

Dennis Leland videotaped his father as he walked toward them. Leland's wife Jeannie hugged him. Doug Leland took his father's bag and shook his hand.

It was a show of respect for a man who, after nearly 41 years of railroading, had just retired.

Leland, 62, figures he's ridden more than 10,000 trains. He has seen the evolution from steam to diesel power. From nationwide passenger service to limited Amtrak travel. From stopping in each small town to zooming 70 mph down steel tracks.

"No more bumps," he said, still hugging his wife. He faked a chuckle, trying to make it seem like retiring didn't matter. But it did. Tears plopped onto his white sweater. Unashamed, he wiped them away.

Leland glanced at the grimy green and yellow engine and the mile-long train of piggyback cars behind it. He said goodbye to sleeping in a railroader's trailer room, to working weekends and holidays, to a schedule of 12 days on, two days off.

But most of all, he said goodbye to supervising freight trains thundering across Midwest farmland.

"I've been married 35 years and I wouldn't leave my wife. What do you think about a job after nearly 41 years? It's hard to leave."

The stocky Kansas native said he hired on as a brakeman out of Norfolk in 1946. He was 22 and had odd-jobbed it after 3½ years in

Kenneth Leland and Homer Wise

the U.S. Army. With World War II over just a year, jobs were scarce. He felt lucky to find one.

Six years later, Leland became a conductor. As such, he supervised powering and movement of trains for more than 32 years. It's a life he leaves sadly.

But Leland won't sit around bemoaning the loss. It's time to set his own schedule, he said. It's time to enjoy life a bit.

He will travel the Nebraska horse-racing circuit with his two Thoroughbreds. He might go fishing. He'll probably spend more time with his wife.

In surveying more than four decades of railroading, Leland said fellow workers, a fair employer and supportive family helped him endure the past 41 years. And, he said, "It was very rewarding every two weeks ... on payday."

"I devoted my life to the railroad and to raising my family," Leland said. "I've been satisfied.

"I'm just a common man with a common plan."

Here's Ken and Jean Leland now enjoying the fruits of retirement, and staying busy having a lot of fun doing what they like best... with Ken, it's fast horses that take a lot of tender care. Ken received a great story, as shown here (reduced) in a special 'Retirement' section of the Fremont Tribune, Jan. 5, 1987.

Foto at right: Ken's brother Don Leland at left, taken in France 1945 (location not given). All data for this story was sent in by Buck Sheppard, P.O. Box 1013, Breckenridge TX 76024. He has our thanks.

142nd Lousiana Infantryman Lead Assault Squad To Smash Foe Near Magliano

WISE, HOMER L.

Rank and Organization: Staff Sergeant, Company L, 142d Infantry, 36th Infantry Division. *Place and Date:* Magliano, Italy, 14 June 1944. *Entered Service at:* Baton Rouge, La. *Birth:* Baton Rouge, La. *G. O. No.:* 90, 8 Dec. 1944. *Citation:* While his platoon was pinned down by enemy small-arms fire from both flanks, he left his position of comparative safety and assisted in carrying one of his men, who had been seriously wounded and who lay in an exposed position, to a point where he could receive medical attention. The advance of the platoon was resumed but was again stopped by enemy frontal fire. A German officer and two enlisted men, armed with automatic weapons, threatened the right flank. Fearlessly exposing himself, he moved to a position from which he killed all three with his sub-machine gun. Returning to his squad, he obtained an M1 rifle and several antitank grenades, then took up a position from which he delivered accurate fire on the enemy holding up the advance. As the battalion moved forward it was again stopped by enemy frontal and flanking fire. He procured an automatic rifle and, advancing ahead of his men, neutralized an enemy machine gun with his fire. When the flanking fire became more intense he ran to a nearby tank and, exposing himself on the turret, restored a jammed machine gun to operating efficiency and used it so effectively that the enemy fire from an adjacent ridge was materially reduced, thus permitting the battalion to occupy its objective.

Buck Sheppard Writes a Flock of Letters to all His Old Buddies, Keeps Company L Alive and Well in Breckenridge

BUCK SHEPPARD

Leland to Sheppard:
Dear Buck:

Thanks for sending me the print-out of **the story you and Virgil Moore put together.** Was really something for our whole family to be proud. All who read it said it was just great!

I'm sending a copy of my retirement story in Fremont Times, as it was really a great one for me. Guess you could call it — "**From Iron Horse to Race Horse**"... cause I have three Thorough Bred Horses at the Track (race on Friday, Saturday and Sundays).

But Buck, I'm working harder now than I did when I was on the Railroad. **I get up at 4:30 AM and clean stalls, feed and take horses to the track to get them in condition.** My wife is still Food Manager of Holiday Inn, been there 14 years and soon will go with me to the track. I've got a real nice Holiday Traveler Trailer and live in it at the track.

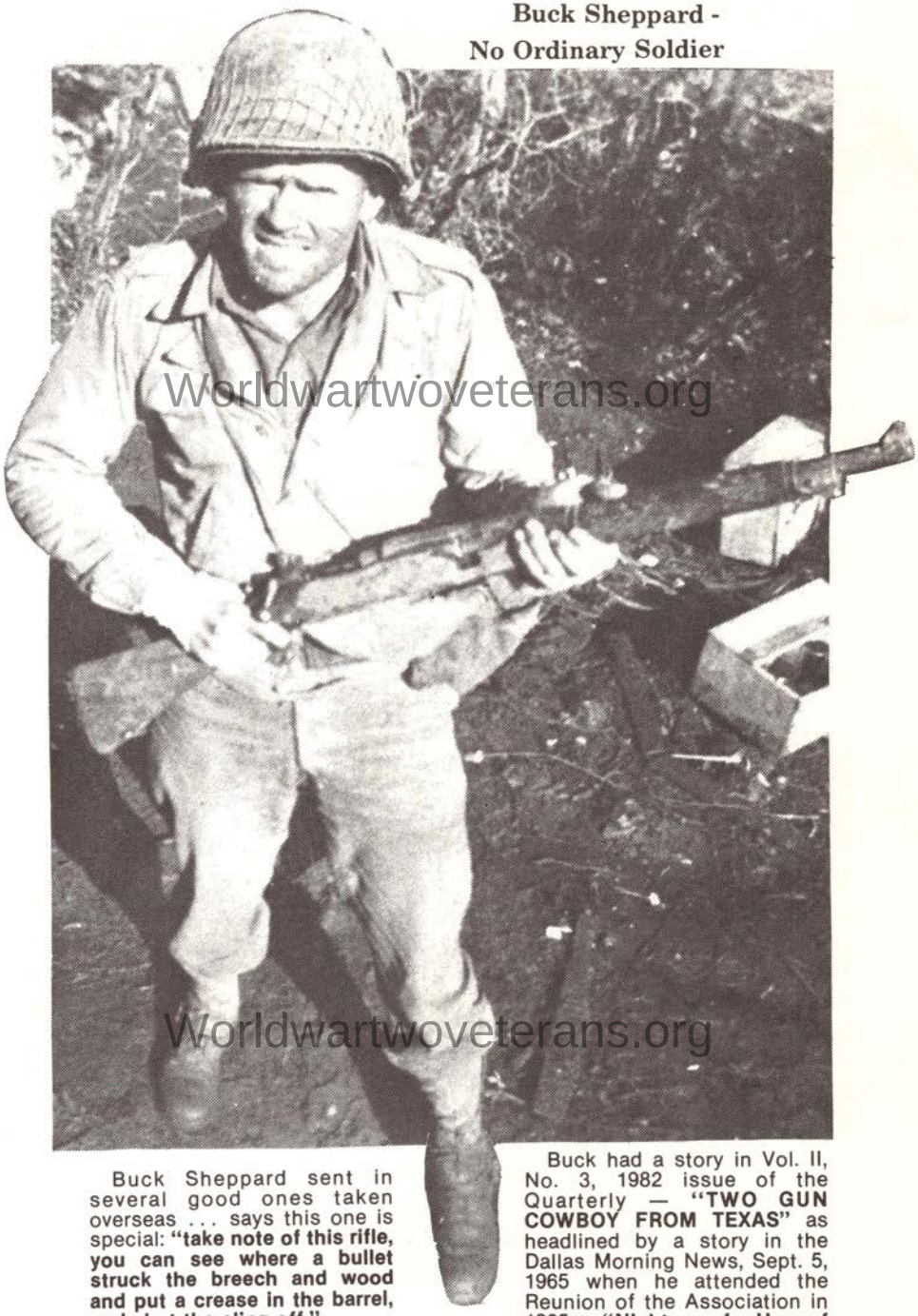
Also want to thank you for all the good "PR" work you do for ol' Company L 142nd. I know you write letters like crazy to keep us all informed. Hope to make your next Reunion in Breckenridge, provided health and wealth will allow me.

Pass the word to Editor Virgil Moore my thanks for the article about me and Homer Wise... that you had a hand in on the text. You see, my boys have asked me about — "**what did you do in the War**", which I never talked about... so this story will fill in the gap.

As ever, your Army Buddy,
Ken and Jean Leland,
605 Ridge Road, Fremont Neb. 68025.

P.S.: I tell my kids about how you had those two revolvers strapped to your legs — and draw, then say, "I'm still the fastest SOB that ever drew a pair of guns".

Buck Sheppard - No Ordinary Soldier



Buck Sheppard sent in several good ones taken overseas ... says this one is special: **"take note of this rifle, you can see where a bullet struck the breech and wood and put a crease in the barrel, and shot the sling off."**

Buck had a story in Vol. II, No. 3, 1982 issue of the Quarterly — **"TWO GUN COWBOY FROM TEXAS"** as headlined by a story in the Dallas Morning News, Sept. 5, 1965 when he attended the Reunion of the Association in 1965 — **"Nightmare for Hero of 36th,"** written by Eddie Hughes.

Kenneth Leland and Homer Wise

Old Camp Bowie is the site for this one — men of Co L 142nd in their WWI Campaign hats...

Front row from left: Weldon Brannon, Buck Sheppard and C. R. Tindall. Standing: Pete 'Ma' Hart and U.S. Williams.

The Company L Reunion Association was organized in Breckenridge, with Buck Sheppard as president, served until 1975, when Bob Mehaffey took the gavel.

Photo shown below as published in Breckenridge American — 1961 special two page section with old fotos of these warriors of 142nd (I'll Face You) Infantry Regiment.

COMPANY L OFFICIALS—The officials elected Sunday at the meeting of Company L are shown above, front row, left to right: June Holt, director; H. L. Gunlock, Jr., secretary-treasurer; Bob Mehaffey, chairman of the board of directors; James (Buck) Sheppard, president; and H. L. Bunkley, Jr., business secretary. Back row, left to right, Charles Groseclose, vice president; Pete Hart and Clyde DeMasters, directors; Mrs. James (Annabelle) Sheppard, Mrs. H. L. (Claudine) Bunkley and Mrs. Maurice Baggett, representing her husband who was unable to attend.

Just Call Me, Mutt

from

LEM VANNATTA
Svc. Co 143rd Inf.

Now is 1987, at my age of 67 years, **I live a lot in the past.** I enjoy the memory of W.W.II days in the 36th Division. I read and re-read all the history of the great old 36th.

I saw a good program on P.B.S. TV recently on the 442nd Japanese RCT during the war. We grew to like the 442nd very much, I can't remember ever hearing of a man out of the 442nd doing anything dishonorable.

This brings me around to my story about one of them I knew for a few days. I never knew his last name. He just said, **call me Mutt.** I'll get back to Mutt later.

When the war ended I had a friend who was C.O. of a rifle company. His company had a great pile of German Pistols, all new and well cared for. The friend told me to help myself to a few pistols, see he owed me a favor or two. I picked up five or six to bring home. Among them was a little 32 Walters-palm size, **the kind a prostitute would wear in her garter belt.**

I had 105 points to come home and was on orders to come home in the second bunch out of the 36th. We left out on June and wound up in a Replacement Depot in France, run by a Major Frye. He was a sadist old goat and gave us hell for ten days. He threatened to reclassify us for Pacific duty, etc.

We paid him little attention as we figured we'd had enough hell for one war. **In all this mess was Sgt. Mutt**, who was in charge of our group. He was tops — had been wounded three times. He never got a chance to get a German pistol to take home. He liked the 32 Walters very much and tried his best to buy it from me. I kept the price too high on him as I didn't want to sell it.

Another T-Five out of the field artillery, (see we were all high ranking in our group) and I got enough of the Major Frye crap, and decided on one last fling in Europe. **We went over the hill and had a two day visit in Luxenberg.** We came back in feeling no pain and expecting to be shot as deserters.

Sgt. Mutt had covered up for us. He had even walked guard for me. I had left my musette bag full of pistols in his care. They were all there. He had even cleaned and oiled them for me.

The morning we were to leave the Rpl. Depot, I got soft hearted and went into Sgt. Mutt's room and gave him the 32 Walters free of charge. **Tears were in both of our eyes as we shook hands.** I have always remembered Sgt. Mutt, as one of the great men I had a chance to meet in W.W.II.

Another Vignette

"A Post WWII Guard Tale"

In 1948, I was living in Mexia, Texas working in the oilfield. A WWII 36th Div. friend was C.O. of the local Guard Co. He asked me to join the Guard to help pass a Federal Inspection. I joined up and before I knew what was up, **we were in the Korea war and all Guard enlistments were frozen.** I put four years in as a Sgt. I was classified as a Communication Sgt. I refused all promotions as I didn't want to learn too much about infantry tactics.

Before long I had organized me an underground squad of **yardbird goons** to help set-up everything. The guard was made up of W.W.II vets, draft dodgers, and a bunch of kids from a local textile mill. **They, lint heads, were in the guard for fun and quarterly pay checks.** They were tough and not afraid of a damned thing. **These were my yard bird squad.**

We got a sissy boy, just out of University of Texas, whose Mama had pulled some strings to get him in the Guard to keep him out of Korea. We went to Summer Camp at North Ft. Hood. When we

went on the field for the 3 day, **Sonny Boy** didn't go as he had sucked-up-an-in-camp detail.

He was having a big church wedding in Mexia when we got back from camp. **I talked my Yard Birds up a high pitch about Sonny Boy receiving such preferred treatment.** We got in from three days in the Field. I had them all ready for Sonny Boy. That night they took him to the latrene and gave him a good shave in all private places. **They painted him up with Methiolate.** When the wedding was over, they called the bride and asked her how she liked the job.

Sometimes, the Yard Birds would mess up and I'd have to bail them out. **I always told them a good soldier never lost anything.** I told them to always steal-back their lost equipment and let someone else be loser.

We came in off the field once and one of them came to me and said, **"Some S.O.B. stole my whole bed roll."** I told them to get busy and steal someone else's roll. I failed to tell him to get one out of another company — insteady of our company. In a few minutes, all hell broke loose down the co. sheet.

The goon had got a WW II vet's bed roll out of our own co. This guy had marked all of his stuff like a good soldier would. I talked the vet off my man and got everything quietened down. A bunch from Co. A had come over to watch the fight. I took advantage of their being absent from their own area and went over and **"five fingered" a bed roll for my goon.** The one I got even had a carton of cigarettes in it.

All good things come to an end. The guard was going to be changed to Air Borne and my four years was almost up. **We got a smart-assed Company Commander who promoted me to Master Sgt. and platoon Sgt.** I took my discharge and got out. I enjoyed my peace time Guard hitch.

The Yard Birds all went on to their successes in life. I see some of them every so often.

We get a big laugh out of the good old days.

LEM VANNATTA says he's now among the Unemployed, has moved from Longview — new address: P.O. Box 2, Arp TX 75750. This is Lem's third time out with his special brand of memories of the old days — so long ago and so far away. You'll have to agree, the funny-side of the war sure beat the hell outta the other side of the fracus. Our thanks to Vannatta for these little jewels.

ONE BIG HAPPY FAMILY — 1938 as depicted in the Saturday Evening Post (weekly magazine) a dazzlin' cartoon by the famous HERBERT JOHNSON who knew how to capture the 'feel' of world conditions in those troubled days. Mama League of Nations was powerless to stop this charade. . . and a year later — **Sept. 1, 1939** when Germany invaded Poland — would officially start WWII. **Five and a half years later on August 14, 1945 it would end. . . with a tab of 40 Million DEAD!**

General Eisenhower inspects the Salerno battlefield with General Clark (extreme left) and Admiral Hewitt (center). Courtesy Imperial War Museum.

INVASION OF ITALY:

Errors Marred Allied Landing at Salerno

SALERNO, by Hugh Pond. Little, Brown & Co., $5.95.

Reviewed by J. W. KNOWLES

Operation "Avalanche," the invasion of Italy over the western beaches south of Naples by the Fifth Army, was designed to assist the northward advance of the British Eighth Army, which had crossed the Strait of Messina to drive up the toe of the Italian "boot." Naples and Rome were the principal geographical objectives. If all went well, the Fifth Army would constitute the left arm of a pincer within which would be trapped the German forces to the south, while the southward advance of reinforcements would be blocked by the left flank of this Anglo-American Army.

The code name "Avalanche" was to come to mean "avalanche of errors" to many of the troops serving in the U.S. VI Corps and the British 10 Corps. Landing on the right (south) and spearheading VI Corps was the 36th Infantry Division, brand new to combat. Backing up the 36th was the 45th Infantry Division, which had been in action in Sicily. On the left (north), 10 Corps put ashore the 46th Division and the 56th Division abreast, neither of which had shone particularly in the fighting in North Africa.

ALTHOUGH Mark Clark was in command, the usual arguments and intramural sniping between the commanders and staffs of the British and the American units took place. As a practical matter this time the British proved themselves to be much smarter. They at least decided that they would land after a fifteen-minute naval bombardment of the landing area, and it helped. The Americans decided to try to slip in without naval gunfire—and they were clobbered.

All of the errors of omission and commission are spelled out in the book and it makes for very interesting reading. The author, a major in the British Regular Army, pulls few punches and comments as adversely on the mistakes of his compatriots as he does on those of his allies. Maj. Gen. E. J. "Mike" Dawley, VI Corps commander, was made the scapegoat of the Americans and relieved of his command by Clark. The British, on the other hand, never bothered to announce the names of those gentlemen responsible for the administrative and command foul-up which resulted in the sit-down strike on September 16—(D plus seven)—of some seven hundred British soldiers.

This little mutiny came into being when these replacements just took seats on the beach, after having disembarked from their transports, and refused to budge. They claimed they had left hospital beds and foregone convalescent periods in North Africa upon being assured that they would rejoin their parent units in the Eighth Army. They failed to mention that a security leak had let the word get around that the 51st Highland Division and other units of the Eighth Army were to be returned to Britain for retraining and use in the Normandy landings. A speech by the Lt. Gen. Sir Richard L. McCreery had the happy result of causing the bulk of the mutineers to pick up their gear and move out, but one hundred ninety-two, who still refused to move, were arrested and subsequently sentenced to penal servitude.

Here's a THEN & NOW 1987

The Italian campaign: So it wasn't a piece of cake after all

TUG OF WAR:
The Battle of Italy
WWII History
Authors: DOMINICK GRAHAM & SHELFORD BIDWELL
Publisher: St. Martin's Press
Price: $24.95

Reviewed by
SPENCER TUCKER

Even before victory in North Africa, the Western Allies committed themselves to the invasion first of Sicily and then Italy. The Americans, fixed on the cross-channel invasion of France, were persuaded only reluctantly; the Brittish were enthusiastic about the possibilities of a successful quick campaign in Italy.

The invasion of Italy began in early September 1943, but from the beginning things went badly for the Allies. The Italian effort to surrender and switch sides was botched, and Allied leadership and planning were deficient. The Italian campaign dragged on until the end of April 1945.

Dominick Graham and Shelford Bidwell are distinguished military historians, both former career officers in the British army. In *Tug of War*, they have written an excellent account of the Italian campaign. They deal thoroughly with strategic questions, the difficulties of coalition warfare, the personalities of the generals and the capabilities of the fighting men whose Allied participants included British, American, Indian, French, Polish, New Zealander and Canadian units. There is little in the way of anecdotal stories of small unit engagements, but the reader will get a good feel for the fighting.

The Italian campaign saw some of the fiercest fighting of the entire Second World War. In intensity and conditions, at times it resembled the war of attrition on the western front in the First World War. The weather was vile and the terrain brutal — high mountains and fast-flowing rivers.

The authors are at their best in assessing commanders, command decisions and capabilities of forces. They have high praise for Field Marshal Albert Kesselring, commander-in-chief of the German forces in Italy, who persuaded Hitler to hold more southernly positions (the Gustav Line) and made the Allies pay dearly for their advance. German leadership at all levels and training were both excellent.

Although high in their praise of French Gen. Alphonse Juin in directing his excellent French corps, which prevented the Germans from consolidating on the Hitler line, the authors are scathing in their treatment of some Allied commanders. Gen. Harold Alexander, commander-in-chief of the Allied Armies of Italy, treated his subordinates too gently and failed to exercise a decisive role. The authors are especially critical of Gen. Mark Clark; too often his decisions were marred by jealousy and suspicion. Clark blundered badly at Salerno by dividing his invading forces, and — conditioned by this near-disaster — failed to encourage bold action at Anzio.

Particularly interesting are the authors' appraisals of the national forces involved; this includes discussion of training, replacement and philosophy of employment. For example, Clark and most American commanders insisted on sledge-hammer tactics that were costly in manpower. This was possible because replacements were available. The British had to be much more careful in preparation and training because of the need to conserve manpower. This did not mean that British generals were any less successful.

Like so many other campaigns, that in Italy during 1943-1945 took on a momentum of its own quite apart from what was intended. In the end, what was to have been a sideshow operation turned out to be very costly in men and material to both sides.

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

The Fighting 36th Historical Quarterly has only one mission — to gather, compile, edit and publish stories written BY the men — who were there — in their own words. Plus, we have more and more from other T-Patchers who find news clips, and or write 'about' a buddy they liked and sent in their report.

MAKES NO DIFFERENCE. . . the objective IS TO GET THE STORY NOW, from or about this man. IF you put it off. . it just may be too late. (The sands of time are now running out), but you know that.

WE BEG of all men of the 36th — who wish to tell a particular time and incident that stands out in his memory . . . tragic, funny or what ever. . . it needs to be recorded and captured now — for the history books — and historians who will continue to write about WWII for the next 100 years.

ALSO, of late we are getting many from — the WIVES, the SONS and the DAUGHTERS, and even a few GRAND CHILDREN, who took it upon themselves to "tell" the story for the T-Patchers, whom may have been reluctant (or shy) to tell about his exploits in Italy, France or Germany.

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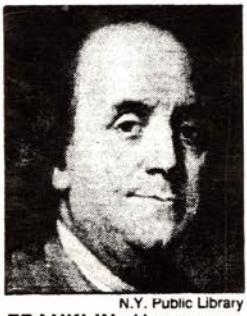
Ben Franklin, Founding Father for all seasons



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FRANKLIN: Humorous, satiric, profound

As drafter and signer of both the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, Franklin rightly earned his way into the history books as a one of the Founding Fathers. On this very day 200 years ago, the genial Dr. Franklin addressed the Constitutional Convention in words that resonate with the wisdom of his years as public servant.

'I confess, that I do not entirely approve of this Constitution at present; but, Sir, I am not sure I shall never approve it; for, having lived long, I have experienced many instances of being obliged, by better information or fuller consideration, to change my opinions even on important subjects, which I once thought right, but found to be otherwise.

"... I doubt, too, whether any other Convention we can obtain, may be able to make a better constitution; for, when you assemble a number of men, to have the advantage of their joint wisdom, you inevitably assemble with those men all their prejudices, their passions, their errors of opinion, their local interests, and their selfish views. From such an assembly can a *perfect* production be expected?"