The Fighting 36th HISTORICAL Quarterly

Vol. IX, No. 2 Summer 1989

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Reunion of the 636th

by Peggy Simpson Backer
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In December, 1941, the 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion was organized at Camp Bowie, Texas. On February 27, over 200 men, mostly from Nebraska and the states surrounding it arrived at the camp and were assigned to the Tank Destroyer Battalion. By April of '43 the 636th had arrived in Algeria, then on to Salerno, Italy, and Southern France and finally to Germany. They fought through seven battle campaigns, three amphibious landings, including two "D" day landings, and amassed over 600 days in combat. The Battalion carried out its assigments with distinction, and their record is one that stands out as superior to any other Tank Destroyer Battalion.

On the weekend of August 20th, nearly 100 remaining Battlion soldiers met in Aurora, Nebraska for a heartfelt reunion. Tom Sherman of Marquette Nebraska, who authored the book *Seek Strike and Destroy* a history of the 636th, hosted the reunion. "For most of these guys," said Sherman, "especially the ones who are coming for the first time, it is one of the highlights of their lives. They came to see their old comrads who shared their experiences or even saved their lives." Pockets of men were scattered throughout the large reception hall. A group near the far side were busy playing cards, ten or fifteen others gathered around the bulletin board that displayed old Battalion photographs, and others who sat on chairs in a circle, talked and sipped coffee from white Styrofoam cups. In 1942, Robert Graham of Sumter, South Carolina became a platoon leader for Company "A". He says he had been coming to the reunions since 1968. When asked what brings him back each time, he answered in his soft southern voice. "I have a lot of feelings for the people here." he said, "and it's particularly gratifing to talk to them on an equal basis, not as an officer. Comradship between soldiers fighting together bond you" he added. "You are part of a family. It's great to come back and see them and talk about things that went on. I've talked more about the war in the last two days than in the last two years." Lester Leggett, of Port Aransas, Texas, wasn't quite 17 when he joined up. "I had to fib a little about my age," he admitted. Leggett was in the service twenty-seven years and was a veteran of three wars: World War II, Korea and Vietnam. He retired as a Lt. Col. Speaking of his time with

636 he said, "We were afraid a lot of the time, but we were cocky, we were young and we were good, we had trained a lot. Sure we were scared, especially at times when we got into a fire fight; artillery falling all around us, anybody would be a fool not to be afraid of that. But they were good," he interrupted himself and leaned back in his chair. "We have one guy here that saw a friend of his for the first time in over forty years here today, he was one of the guys that saved his life. Knocked a German tank out just as it was getting ready to fire into a group of people on the ground...because he was doing his job," Leggett shook his head. "What I'm saying is we were part of a unit, they trained with that unit, they went over and fought with the unit, they knew where these other guys were and what they were capable of." When asked what the service had taught him, Leggett wasted no time in asnwering. "I've never had any trouble making a decision, and I think I get that from being in the military. And, Christianity," he added. "I know it's important to these guys. There are no atheists in a fox hole," he said with a smile. "When you get in combat, most of us see death for the first time, and it seems unreal until it's somebody you know," said Leggett. "And then you suddenly realize what a fine thread you are dangling on. Nobody was crying doom though," he was quick to point out. "For instance we didn't know how close we were to getting kicked off the beach at Salerno; we were fighting like hell, and we stayed. But you have time to think," he added. "When those shells are coming in and you are lying in holes, and they are getting closer and closer, throwing dirt down on you, and ration cans are rattling around you, you start thinking, maybe I'm not prepared for this. You're growing up fast, you're thinking more like an older person than you were when you hit the beach."

They say an army travels on its stomach, which made Joe Watson's job as Mess Sgt. in the 636 vital to the cause. Watson remembers a very special event. "It was Christmas Eve, 1943, we were camped in an olive grove near the city of San Pietro, Italy, and we were often under heavy artillery fire but with tanks surrounding the kitchen tents, my job was to provide a good Christmas dinner. It was cold and rainy, and the mud was boot deep in the kitchen tent," remembered Watson. "We served nearly 150 turkey dinners that Christmas, with all the trimmings," he added. Joe explained that if they were in an area for very long at all they would set up a tent. "We used a field-range, fueled with gasoline. We cooked pastry, bread, and hot cakes. Anything you could cook on your mama's stove we could cook too," he boasted. Watson has attended four reunions. "It's a feeling that's hard to explain. It's great to meet the guys you were with, it's a wonderful experience. I wouldn't take anything for the opportunity to see these men again. After the war Joe served as Police Chief in Hurst, Texas for 32 years.

Joe Delaney of Paradise, Kansas joined the 636th "Recon" Company when he was 29, and has been to seven reunions. "There isn't a reunion that goes by that I don't find out something that I didn't know," he said. "These men are special to me, I don't mind shedding a tear or two with them. We fight and win the war everytime we get together," said Capt. Moritz Brueckner of Orlando, Florida. Eddie Madden came to the 636th as a replacement. At age 17 he was fighting in Italy. "I feel that throughout my civilian career and the thousands of people I've known since, the only time I felt things were always off the top of the deck, was in combat. You didn't have to know anyone. If you did your job you had no problems," said Eddie. Nobody cared who you were, or where you came from. We helped one another. I seldom found that in later life. I come back to reunions because I'm with real people. It's not what you are now that counts, it's what you did then.

What is it about these older soldiers of war that make you sit up and take notice? Is it their age, their silver hair or gentle manners that make them seem special? Or is it their polite voices? No, it's something more. Behind the lines of age, deep in their eyes, one sees a twinkle. The twinkle of a young soldier, tall, proud and confident. These eyes that looked at Goering also saw the ruins of France, Dachau, the death of soldiers, comrades, and friends. And there are words...Last words, spoke to a fallen friend; these memories are rarely spoken of except on rare occasions when others who can fully understand are gathered together. Even then the words can come out choked. But, a pat on the hand, an arm around the shoulder, someone trying to comfort can make it better. There are good thoughts in the twinkle too, a laugh, a joke about a night in France when life stood still. Christmas dinner in an olive grove, these thoughts are with them also.

All these could be memories shared by other soldiers. Change the dates, and it could have been another war, another time. But, if Graham, Leggett, Watson and the other 636ers were special; and they were; then we can all be proud, because they represented the best in you...the best in me...THEY ARE AMERICANS.

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— WE HAVE DONE OUR PART —

Since the 36th is the ONLY group that has such a project, now it's your part to continue to support it...**WE NEED your renewal for VOL. IX, 1989.....**

Several of our contributors who sent in their story, have since passed on. We have preserved for the future - their own story, and it shall be read and re-read by future historians for the next century.

The T-Patchers record is second to none, all who served with us - wear their ol' T-PATCH with great pride (you know that), so let's not let this let it stop now, not as long as there are any of us left.

So, come on, gang, let's keep the old flag flying for many years - yet to come.

H. A. T. - (Editor)

WANTED *Your Story*

The Fighting 36th HISTORICAL Quarterly

We Didn't Like Him

by Rex Harrison, Jr.

In a previous issue of the *QUARTERLY,* "Duney" Philips wrote about an officer who wasn't fit to be a "T-Patcher." Duney felt that it would be justifiable and not a sin in the eyes of God to put that dumb guy out of his misery.

Unless a soldier can relate to an experience like that, Duney's belief will have pros and cons. I relate to Duney. This is the one that was working on a short life span as far as I was concerned. If I can induce you "T-Patchers" into the mood of the circumstances, physical condition and the concerned individuals, the time and the place; perhaps you would also agree that I would have been so justified.

The four of us, Sgt. Timothy E. Long, Pvt. Ernest M. Ethridge, Pvt. Albert J. (Polack) Schelinski (I believe that he was our fourth man) and myself, Pfc Rex Harrison, Jr. formed a litter bearer team out of the 3rd Battalion Aid Station, 143rd Infantry.

This particular night we were sent forward to the CP of Company "K", 143rd to pick up the Company Commander who was too sick to "walk in."

What the name of the village was cannot be brought out of my memory bank. However, most of the houses were burning and we were told to go through town to the other side where the CP was located. First, there was one great, big, anti-tank ditch about fifteen feet across, steep sides (almost ninety degrees) and since it was pitch dark, the bottom wasn't visible (unknown terror, how far to fall) to cross.

The medical jeep let us off at the ditch and agreed to await our return. Someone had dropped a 2x12 board across the ditch. It was raining. The ground was very muddy, and, what should have aroused our immediate suspicion, no company guide was there to meet us.

It was about a mile to the CP, when we arrived the guys were grouped around a fire and had two German prisoners. The Company Commander was in the barn, we questioned him as to his illness and would he be able to walk if we could support him. He appeared to be about 5'10" and to weigh around 170 pounds. The Captain told us that he was too sick to walk, we loaded him on the stretcher, executed a four-man shoulder carry and started off. We did not ask for help from any of the soldiers and no one volunteered the two prisoners.

Eventually we reached the anti-tank ditch, Sgt. Long and "Polack" carried the Captain to the medical jeep. The driver told us that "K" was lead company for the morning attack and we were to be attached to them

until they were relieved. Several restricted company words were spoken.

After re-crossing the ditch, we spied light around the front door of one of the houses just outside of town. Since we were cold, wet, hungry and tired, we knocked on the door. An old man opened it and bid us to enter. We did, and discovered that he and his wife were eating. They had some fresh milk which we heated up. We gave them some C-Rations and ate their version of hash browns with hot milk. Some two hours later, we decided to catch up with the men of Company "K".

The same guys and the two POW's were around the fire. A Sergeant told us that the Company Commander had returned to the company and learning that his lead platoon was held up by a machine gun firing down the road from the basement of a house and hadn't yet reached their forward assembly area. He started forward to punch them up.

Then the radio call came in, the Captain was too sick to go any farther. We were now expected to fetch him again.

The road down which the MG was randomly firing was about three feet higher than the fields on each side. The team walked in a crouched position toward the pinned down troops. We had to crawl over several fences before we reached the Company Commander. It was still the darkness before the dawn when a German soldier, who looked to be about seven feet tall and carrying a "Burp-Gun", came striding down the road toward us. When he was directly above where we were lying, he started to poke the area in front of us with his weapon. One of the soldiers near me shot him twice in the chest, he fell back onto the road and the MG commenced to clatter over our heads.

We rolled the Captain onto the stretcher and started dragging it back toward town. When a fence was encountered, one of the guys would slide forward and use his weight to press it down. Then a two-man carry would rapidly take the Captain over the hurdle.

When we arrived back at the CP a request was made to have a medical jeep at the anti-tank ditch.

At this time we were worn out. I asked the same Sergeant, who had pointed us toward his Company Commander a couple of hours before, if he would have some of the guys relieve us on the stretcher or assign a guard and let us use the two POW's. He refused.

Eventually we reached the ditch, delivered our cargo and suggested that he not come back until he was well. He never did come back.

March 21, 1988 a round of golf was played at the Orlando, Florida Navy Base Golf Club by Robert Farrington, Richard Talley (both old "K" 143 members) and myself. During the nineteenth hole session following the round, I mentioned to Bob that particular Company Commander had survived that time by not coming back to the unit that night for us to have to carry him out again.

I had refreshed Bob's mind about the incidents and he remembered the occasion. Why didn't any of you guys volunteer to help us I asked him. Bob answered, "We didn't like him." Nuff said.

Rohrwiller Relief Unknown Massacre

Rex Harrison, Jr.

Damn Sam Jackson anyway, why didn't he tell Lt. Colonel Andrews that we only had the equal of a good squad to attack that town.

It was raining, it was cold, I was cold and really mad. We were to attack down a road surrounded on each side by waist deep water toward a town that had swallowed up a company of USA tanks.

The town itself had been subjected to harassing artillery fire by our troops once we had entered the area.

The First Platoon of Company "L" 143rd Infantry consisted of First Lieutenant Francis E. Donovan, the Platoon Leader, who came ashore at Salerno as a Corporal, he was combat wise. The Platoon Sergeant was William N. Tanner. The Platoon Guide was Joseph E. Fitzpatrick. The Squad Leaders were Albert J. Smith and Bernard K. Wallin. An Assistant Squad Leader was Sergeant Clyde A. Lulham. Jerry Foss was Platoon Runner. Three riflemen Wylie E. Radke, Theodore R. Stansberry and I believe the third one's name was Earl C. Smith, who was killed a week after this action. Myself, Pfc Rex Harrison, Jr., the Platoon Aid-Man.

We started down the road. The rain didn't let up. Our nerves were jumping out of our skin. Start. Stop. Huddle. Move another thirty-forty yards. Stop.

I don't remember how I became point; suddenly, I came upon a tank in the middle of an intersection shaped like a "Y". The big gun was pointing right at my head. The turret machine gun was also aimed in my direction. There was a man huddling over the MG. I stopped. All stopped. We were petrified and suddenly shocked out of our OD shorts. Five gets you five thousand that our lease on life was fixing to expire.

Slowly I moved to my left, he didn't track me. I then moved about ten yards back to my right, again he didn't track me. Since I was now at an angle to the guns, I approached the tank—he was dead. The tank was USA.

We searched several of the barns at the end of town and found American tanks and dead GI tankers in each. One tanker survived by burying himself in the hay in one of the barns and staying there during the time that the village was occupied by the Germans.

Samuel T. Jackson, Captain Infantry, Commanding "L" Company, 143rd Infantry was notified that the town was clear.

The next morning we're sitting outside a house located on the left side of the "Y" intersection, in brilliant sunshine, when rapidly marching down the road in platoon column came our heroic relief. Donovan reported to the Company Commander that the village was clear. They fanned out. Very f...ing military like, we were very impressed. Was this a Fort Benning demonstration unit? Where was John Wayne and the movie cameras?

A jeep containing a wire team drove down the center of the village street in front of where we were sitting. There were three men sitting in the vehicle and a large reel of wire was also mounted on the jeep. It drove down the center of the street at a high rate of speed until the end of the village, turned around and came back at a higher speed in the same set of its own tracks. A short time later it came back on the same path again at a high rate of speed; however, there were now four men in the vehicle. When the German double Teller anti-tank mine went off as the vehicle passed over it; the engine flew through the air and ended up in the right angle village street, over a block away. Even though I was the nearest individual and had been idly watching the vehicle as it came by, I didn't see any human body sign anywhere. All but the engine and the two rear wheels disappeared at impact. It was one, great, big, bang.

In order to erase that scene from my mind, I started to wander through the village, never entering any possible booby-trapped areas.

As to who accompanied me, I don't remember; however, we wandered over to another road leading from the town. We came across a bunch of dead GI Tankers, about twenty as I now remember (GRO records should reveal how many).

At the end of and about ten yards in front of the dead troopers were many empty cartridge cases as happens when a machine gun is fired on fully automatic.

Now, as I think back, I believe that this was a massacre of prisoners and all of the US units involved thought that each other unit had so reported the action as it had occured. Thus no Germans were ever brought to trial in this case.

HALT: Who's There?

by Alan "Chum" Williamson (As told to Amil Kohutek)

It was during the Spring of 1941, at Camp Bowie, Brownwood, Texas. The 36th Division was conducting a field exercise called the Indian Creek maneuvers. As was usually the case, the exercise began on a weekend. This was standard procedure, to allow the troops less time to get into mischief.

At the time, Major General Walter Krueger was commander of VIII Corps. He would later be promoted to commander of Third Army and replaced as corps commander by Major General George V. Strong.

On the last night of the exercise, the 1st Battalion, 143rd Infantry, moved a long distance by motor convoy. After completing the necessary fatigue details, the exhausted troops bedded down late that night.

Later, Gen. Krueger arrived at battalion headquarters. He was greeted by Lt. Col. Napoleon Rainbolt, the battlion commander, and Capt. Claude C. Owens, the battalion S3. At Krueger's request, he was taken on a tour of the battalion area, beginning with Company A.

Captain Joseph M. Peterman, the company commander, had posted sentries. But they were all asleep—dead to the world. Krueger picked up several of their weapons, one at a time, and threw them on the ground. Despite the noise, nobody woke up.

Krueger said scornfully to Joe Peterman, "Captain, I'll bet you don't even have a pocket knife."

Sheepishly, Joe fumbled in his pockets. Sure enough, he didn't.

Meanwhile, Claude Owens managed to slip away and call Lt. Cecil C. Clark, commander of Co. C, the next unit in line, by field telephone. He alerted Clark to the situation. Clark found his sentires fast asleep, including Sgt. Salvador F. Maggio, the sergeant of the guard. He awoke Maggio and had him brief the sentries on the situation and tell them what to do.

PFC Alfred L. Langston, of Kountze, Texas, was the first sentry Krueger encountered in the Company C area. Called "Shorty" because of his diminuative stature, and also nicknamed "Pig" because of his rotund figure, PFC Langston was a cook, normally exempt from extra duties. However, he was more than equal to the occasion.

Posting himself in the road, he shouted. "Halt! Who's there?"

The car stopped. Krueger stuck his head out the window and said, "General Krueger and party."

Langston said, "Get out of the car! Advance one, and be recognized!"

"Don't you know who I am?" Krueger protested. "I'm the Corps Commander!"

"I've read about a General Krueger in the paper," Shorty replied. "But I don't know who *you* are. I said get out of that car!"

Krueger complied. As he approached, Langston ordered, "Halt!" Then he shouted, "Sergeant of the Guard! Armed party!"

Sergeant Salvador F. Maggio, hiding nearby, appeared almost immediately. He saluted sharply, recognized the general, and directed his party to pass.

At the critique following the exercise, Gen. Krueger had Sgt. Maggio on the stage with him. "Maggie" had excellent military bearing and made a very good impression at first sight.

Krueger related the events occurring during his inspection of the 1st Battalion, 143rd Infantry, including the horror story of the sleeping sentries of Company A. Then, "At Company C, I was halted by a sentry. A little fat man, but he was a soldier."

As for Maggio, Krueger praised him highly, then announced that he was being rewarded with a commission.

Krueger perhaps didn't realize that Sgt. Maggio was awake and on top of things only because Company C was alerted by Claude Owens. However, everyone else knew it. Maggio was not expected to prove that he deserved the honor.

During a field exercise not long after, some men were drinking water from a well that had been declared off limits. The battlion commander directed 2nd Lt. Maggio to make them stop. He did. However, he then drank from the well himself. He apparently misunderstood the military adage, "Rank has its privileges."

"Maggie" was fined half his pay by disciplinary action of the commanding officer. He was also given an unsatisfactory efficiency rating. As a result of the latter, he was never promoted and was relieved from active duty when the war ended.

He later enlisted in the Regular Army and did very well as an EM on active duty. He retired in the grade of master sergeant. Some years ago, M/Sgt. Salvador F. Maggio, US Army, Retired, died at Fort Bliss, Texas.

PFC Alfred L. Langston, the real hero of the Indian Creek maneuvers, also passed away a few years ago.

I Was Finally Really Scared

By
Jack L. Scott, 1st Platoon "B" Co., 111th Engr. "C" Bn.

My father, who left home in Michigan on a freight train for Oregon when 15 years old, was a professional boxer and a professional baseball player. A man with an eighth grade education who was wise and intelligent way beyond his schooling. He was a fearless person of outgoing, totally uninhibited, personality who would have been just as comfortable at a party for King Edward or the head of the Chicago Mafia. He was 5'11" at 230 lbs., a dominant physical speciman in his day and was his company's top salesman in the U.S.A.

I was born a sickly, skinny kid who spent most winters inside because of coughing and temperatures which caused me to very often slip out the door to run and slide in the snow and then slip back in the house as though nothing had happened. My Dad, though poor middle class economically, always saw to it that I had the best football equipment of any kid. From first through ninth grade, all the kids knew that come Christmas I would have the best helmet, the best football and all the other uniform items they did not have. When I was 11 years old, a fifth grader, deftly avoiding several kids who wanted to beat me up (because I was so small) by going off the southeast corner of Hawthorn Grade School instead of the southwest, I was merrily walking up twelfth street and reached the block I lived in feeling very smart at alluding my adversaries. Suddenly out of a house on the north side of the street across the railroad track (street car), Jimmy Sibley came running and full steam straight at me. Knowing his intentions which would include inflicting

some pain, I stuck it in high gear and sprinted the 100 yards left to reach home. As I crossed the yard of our next door neighbor, I knew I had made it and only had to turn down the driveway and head for the back door. But, there on the front porch was this 230 lb. giant who roared, "Where in hell are you going?" I said, "In the house, Jimmy is after me." He said, "You get your butt back down there and take him or I'll whip your tail myself." Knowing the sting and pain of Dad's razor strap, I turned and started back toward Jimmy. He, seeing that there was going to be a fight and some pain, turned and headed back over the tracks and into his house.

When I returned, my Dad called me over and said, "Son, I want to explain something to you. In all the world, regardless of age or type, there are really just three kinds of men. About five out of 100 are really mean and love to hurt people, about eight to ten out of 100 are truly cowards, afraid of pain and will not fight anyone. The other 85% don't want to fight and will try their best to avoid it as long as they have a way out. But if there is no way out, they will fight. So, never pick a fight with a coward because he can't help himself and you have done yourself no good. If you are attacked by a mean one, don't try to talk you way out, just get in the first blow because he intends to hurt you and he won't be dissuaded. However, the other 85% will back down and avoid a fight if possible, so always leave the gate open for the other guy to back down without being badly embarrassed. That will save you from a lot of unnecessary confrontation."

Shortly thereafter, I took up boxing with my Dad's assistance and advice. With long arms, I became pretty good and enjoyed volunteering to take on any 160 pounders at the Fort Sill, Oklahoma reception center in early 1943. My Dad had explained to me that one should never be afraid of anything or anybody since pain and death were the only real experiences that caused fear. Dad explained that when you are afraid, you cannot concentrate or do a good job of anything and that to do a good job in any contest you must be able to think clearly. I also learned that if you have a temper that that emotion will often blot out the tendency to be afraid. This had paid off for me on a number of occasions but at the time of this story, it was no help.

When I volunteered for the Paratroops in 1943, I reasoned that if I could jump from an airplane at 3,000 feet with only a large sheet over me, I should not be afraid of whatever the Germans or Japanese might have in store when I hit the ground. When I arrived at the 111th Engineer Bn. and reported to Col. Oroin Stoval, I was eager and anxious to get to the front to find out what combat was all about and test my courage. I was very proud to be assigned as Assistant Platoon Commander of the 1st Platoon of "B" Co. as we headed up the coast to land at Anzio.

The previous background story serves to make it easier to visualize the plight that each ordinary high school or college graduate had to contend with in the ordinary life of overcoming fear. All our military training was designed to do two things, make you aggressive in the fight with the enemy and not to be afraid. Each man down in his heart knows how confident he is to fight and do the job and also knows as no one else does just how afraid he is. One's home background training and religious faith are the two primary forces that the Army training officers have to work with.

In that short 30 days of combat at Anzio, I had received the full benefit of the German effort, including bullets, mortars, and artillary plus being deep behind the German lines at Velletri although unintentionally. In that period, with all the narrow escapes, I never really had time to be afraid or think about being hurt even though I was lightly wounded north of Velletri on the road to Rome.

On our return down the Italian peninsula to Rome, I was promoted to 1st Platoon Commander which was a complete surprise and totally unexpected. I put my platoon under rigorous training rules causing a little grumbling but I wanted my men to hit that beach unafraid and concentrating on getting the job done. As we headed into shore at Southern France, I felt no fear and knew that such an emotion would simply make me less effective and possibly cause some harm to my men. I was really proud inside as the 1st Platoon of "B" Co. headed to that D day, H hour landing still laughing and fully ready to do the job.

I was a devout Christian and believed that our mission was necessary to rid the world of Hitler, Stalin and Hirohito. I knew that several hundred thousand Americans would not return but that was the price of success and I simply had to accept my fate.

As we progressed up through France toward Alcase-Lorrain the terrain became difficult, the Germans became tougher as they backed up to the Rhine River and the artillery became deafening. Tree bursts took their toll. I had lost eight to ten men in my platoon, dead and wounded and those close friends do weigh on your mind but we moved on. About November 1st, we were called to assembly as we were driving toward St. Marie Pass and told that our battalion was to relieve a large segment of the war weary 3rd. Inf. Division and that they were in a more or less untenable position, dug in the rocks of the forward slope of a small mountain with the Germans across the valley having direct observation on them.

The plan as drawn on the map by Captain Cury, our Company Commander, was to unload by truck on the back side of the mountain about 5:30 at dusk, line up in reverse order - 3rd, 2nd, and 1st Platoon last. My trucks pulled up at the tail end of the line and we dismounted and got in line. We had orders to hold onto the rifle of the man ahead, elephant style, so we would not get lost in the dark. The asphalt road we rode up

on went on to the front of the mountain but we had to take a small gravel road up the back. This logging road petered out about halfway up and became a two track wagon trail.

Just as the company was ready to move out, Sergeant Pengressi came up to me at the head of the platoon and said, "Gerwitz is not in line." "Where is he?," I asked. "In the back of a truck," he stated. Whereupon I went to the back of the line to find him. Gerowitz was huddled up in the truck so I ordered him out. I explained that we were all a bit scared but he could not expect his comrades to fight his war for him and so to get in line and stay there. I returned to the head of my platoon to first squad and to my dismay, the rest of "B" Co. was gone. Not a trace. When we were reviewing the map with Cury, I remembered the red line showing going off the main road and starting up on a gravel road. Vaguely I remembered it trailed off into a very thin line meaning a cart trail. I tried to remember it but it had so many curves it was not possible. I immediately started forward, ordering the men to hold each other's rifle butt and to stay up close. Even though already very dark, I was lucky that I found the gravel road and started up the hill. I did not want anyone to know that I was getting nervous nor that I was getting close to lost.

We finally were on the trail but it was a matter of feeling our way and I could hear the men saying, "Let's go back down and wait for them." At this point I was totally lost, had no idea where we were except we were on flat ground. One or two men had started to whimper and I was really beginning to get scared myself. We walked slower and slower and came to what seemed to be a small clearing in front of a house. Leonard P. Hooker, my Staff Sergeant, and Eddie Butora, my Jeep driver, were alongside me. We stopped and I whispered to Hooker to have the men get down and take cover. I was going to walk out into the clearing and if there were Germans in the house, we could all be dead before we could hit the ground. We were really scared. I told Hooker that if we were fired on to get the men back down the hill as fast as possible. Hooker and Butora watched anxiously as I slowly stepped out into the clearing toward the house. At any moment, I expected to see that muzzle flashing as the machine gun opened up but I kept walking. Halfway out in the clearing, I called in a very weak voice, "'B' Company." A voice said "Lt. Scott." It was our 1st Sgt. Reasoner and I never thought I would be so happy to see a 1st Sgt. but5 he was "Life Itself" to us. He came out and led us to our positions.

Training, religion, experience and whatever else there is sometimes simply are overwhelmed by drama and circumstances. I was scared out of my wits and even though I was able to overcome it and walk out to what I was sure to be certain death, I actually found that I had been scared for nothing which went back to my father's advice that being afraid is simply something you can't allow to happen. Strangely enough, before that night, I never felt fear for my life and never have since. But that one night, I was really scared.

Another CMH/DSC Winner—Gerry Kisters

Sent in by: Joe Baker
1138 Pinehill Road
McLean, Va. 22101
Co. A, 142nd Infantry

The 36th Division Historical Quarterly, in Vol. VIII, No. 3, ran a brief article, a reprint from a former *Quarterly* issue, stating that Jim Logan of the 36th and Audie Murphy were the only two men who won both the Congressional Medal of Honor and the Distinguished Service Cross in the entire spectrum of World War II. Joe Baker of the 142nd Infantry sent your editor an article, "War of Attrition—Sicily and Italy" from Boston Publishing Company's book *Above and Beyond, A History of the Medal of Honor*, which tells the story of Gerry Kisters, an advance scout of the 91st Reconnaissance Squadron.

In Tunisia, near the end of the North African campaign, he was the point man for an armored column moving from Mateus to Ferryville. The fields on both sides of the road were heavily mined, so the vehicles were forced to lumber straight down the road. Kisters scouted ahead. Near a small creek he found a road block of captured British vehicles parked just past a small culvert bridge. Spotting two German soldiers hiding in the culvert, he threw grenades in their direction. Then he spotted a German 88mm artillery piece hidden on a high hill just behind the creek, the muzzle trained on the road block and road where the American armor would be coming.

Kisters followed the creek bed toward the hill, then crawled around the slope to the rear of the artillery emplacement. He threw three grenades and wiped out the unsuspecting artillery crew, leaving the armored column to continue unmolested. For this action Kisters earned the Distinguished Service Cross.

On July 31, 1943, Kisters and his unit were assigned to take out a roadblock on a winding mountain road near Gagliano, Sicily. Kisters and a newly arrived second lieutenant rode in the lead jeep at the head of a column of the 91st vehicles. At each turn of the road, they halted the column, edged around the bend, and nervously surveyed the terrain

ahead for any sign of Germans. At one of these bends, machine-gun fire surprised them but the fire fell short. They had found a roadblock. To their left, the moutain rose precipitously, to the right, the terrain dropped more gently toward ditches and a ravine. It was up to Kisters and the lieutenant to eliminate the German machine guns.

The two crept through the cover of ditches and moved behind the closer of the two machine-gun nests. They lobbed their grenades at the German gun, and the crewmen surrendered and were taken prisoner. The second machine gun opened up from its position on a higher ridge, taking them with fire. Kisters left the lieutenant guarding the prisoners and advanced ahead, alone.

Now out of grenades and armed with only a carbine rifle, he crept closer to the gun as German snipers, hidden in the mountain, found his range. He was hit by a ricocheting bullet that struck him in the leg, but he went on, dragging his useless leg, while firing steadily at the machine gun crew. Snipers grazed him twice more in the leg but he continued to crawl forward. As he closed in on the emplacement, he saw the crew above him scrambling to remove sandbags in order to lower their gun and aim it at him. That was the opening Kisters needed. He fired through the gap in the sandbags and killed the crew.

Just then, another sniper's bullet ripped into his arm and knocked him out. When he came to, his own men had advanced and routed the snipers. Kisters was carried from the mountain by the Germans he had captured in the first machine-gun nest. He had suffered seven bullet wounds, but his feat brought him a Medal of Honor.

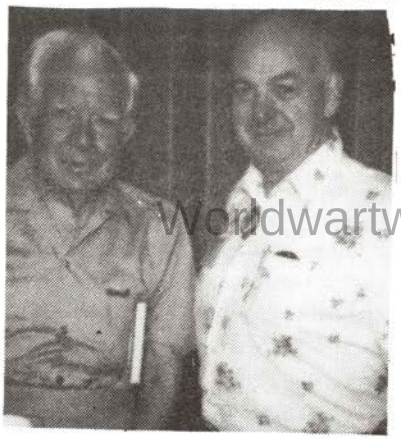
He was shipped home on the *Queen Elizabeth*, which had been pressed into service as a transport for the wounded.

There may be other men who won both the CMH/DFC. If anyone knows of another please send the story to the *Quarterly* editor.

The Editor

False Moonlight

R. K. Doughty



This Polaroid is a bit dark, but it's worthy of being added to this fine story from Ross Doughty. This was also made same time at the one with Puck ... San Antonio Reunion of 1981 - it was a FIRST for Ross. Surely - everybody knows that the man on the left is Col. Oran Stovall, the Bowie Baron.

During one phase of World War II so many fatalities from vehicular accidents were occurring in black-out driving conditions that some brilliant rear-echelon egg head came up with the idea of creating a false moonlight with batteries of anti-aircraft lights sending out their beams miles behind the front lines. This kind of thinking could only have originated with someone who had never heard of infantry night patrols or who, having heard of them, thought nothing of jeopardizing the lives of those hardy souls who ventured into the danger zone between opposing forces by silhouetting them against a bright background.

The 36th Division during part of that time was strung out on the west side of the Rhine River in the Gambsheim-Herrlisheim-Bischwiller area with my unit, the 141st Infantry, holding the Herrlisheim sector. In plain sight from our positions was a large water tower, located on the German front lines, which was being used by German observers in broad daylight to keep an eye on our activities. While it was a favorite target for artillery and TDs, hitting it was not easy so that its continued use by the enemy began to be a nuisance to all concerned. As a result, the Regimental C.O. one day called for an air strike against it.

The Regimental CP was located in a Herrlisheim private dwelling whose attic provided us with a convenient OP because it had a very low ceiling, with only a trellis-like framework holding roof tiles in place. By removing a few tiles one could stand on the attic floor, put his head through the opening in the tiles and just see the German lines across the ridgepole of the house. However, the opening was rectangular with its

long axis running east whereas the water tank was located to the north-east of the OP. This required an observer to turn his head once it was through the roof until it was more or less pinned in place across the short axis of the opening while his chin came to rest on the abutting tiles.

When the time came for the planes to bomb the water tower, Col. Donald McGrath, the Regimental Exec. and I went to the attic of our CP, positioned our heads in what might be termed a wooden noose, each, and chuckled at the sight of our disembodied noggins sunning on the roof as we eyed each other across a short span.

The planes came through on time and made their way well beyond the water tower in order to dive on it while moving toward our lines in order to recover flying altitude over friendly territory, after releasing their bombs. There were several planes but, after the first one dove and let go its bombs, a vast cloud of dust swirled up and shortly rose to considerable height as successive planes laid their eggs. Plane after plane emerged from the dust cloud climbing on a vector that took them directly across our roof-top OP. Finally, the last plane came hurtling at us while flapping around under one wing was a bomb that had not been fully released.

Very likely, the funniest picture I retain of the war is the way McGrath's eyes bugged out and a walrus moustache he wore came to attention as he tried to get his head back through the roof hole the hard way! Simultaneously, I half strangled myself trying to break through the wooden framework with my chin, forgetting in the excitement to turn my head properly in order to retract it into the attic. It was a frantic moment.

I'm sure too, that between us we executed some fancy new dance steps that were unfortunately lost to posterity because no one was present to take notes. Panic was a tame name for what took place! I nearly broke my neck and still hung there, as did McGrath, petrified. The bomb fell from its perch before the plane reached our position and appeared to be heading straight for us. We could only watch as it grew larger but, as the boys were fond of saying, our numbers weren't up that day for the bomb sailed on past us and exploded with a terrible roar in an adjacent field.

For days after, McGrath and I couldn't see past each other without chortling over the way we looked trying to pull in our necks. If I recall correctly, the air strike was not effective either.

At about that time a message came down from on high telling us that we were to be entertained by a movie idol who played "tough" parts. I had objected to bringing hundreds of our troops into a church near the front for a show simply because it was too dangerous that near the front lines. I was overruled and after dark one night, aided by the false moonlight provided by the anti-aircraft lights, I led a trio of entertainers including the "bad" guy to our CP from Division Hq. (I am not naming

the tough actor because he's long gone, now, and also because he was completely misled by the fact that the area was so well lighted that he had no idea where he was.)

In any event, it was a quiet night so far as concerned enemy action although we'd had some close-in patrol action the night before. After joining the Regimental mess for dinner the entertainers were to go to the church located at a distance from our CP. I led them across some fields and as luck would have it the "tough" character stumbled over something and went down to his knees.

"You people inject a lot of realism into your training, don't you?" he said, when he got to his feet. I had a notion as to what he was going to say next but couldn't refrain from asking him what he meant.

"I mean, putting dummies around like the one I just tripped over. I suppost it's to get recruits used to seeing bodies lying around," he answered.

"I'm sorry," I said, "That was no dummy but a dead German. It was supposed to have been cleaned up before you got here."

"What the hell are you saying?" he practically shouted.

"We had a German patrol come in here last night," I said, "and a couple of them were killed by our troops."

"Well, for God's sake," he yelled, "What in hell are we doin' here?"

"That's what I'd like to know," I answered. "You're right on the front!"

"Why've they got all those lights on?" he asked. "They really fooled me. I figured this was a training area and that's what we were told."

"You'll have to ask the bright guys that called for the lights," I responded. "We sure as hell didn't."

We reached the church where the troops were waiting and where the entertainer's car was parked. After about a minute of whispering the members of the troupe climbed into their vehicle and started for the rear, with only a handshake in the dark before they left.

Ordinarily it would have been a rough assignment to announce the cancellation of the show. However, when I entered the church to do so the predominant sound was that of snoring. Some of the men, honking on both the intake and the outgo, could have set a Guiness World's record. Like all good soldiers they were sleeping while they had a chance to do so.

I didn't tell them the reason for the show's cancellation and so far as I know, no one else did, then or later. It would have been too bad to ruin the tough guy's reputation as a celluloid hero. However there was one consolation in the whole episode, I felt: it was a satisfaction to know that Honest-to-God toughness began right there among the church pews while the other kind went scuttling back to safety under a false moonlight.

A Texas Size Hero

A Salute to Sgt. Manuel Gonzalez, Deceased

Staff Sgt. Manuel Gonzalez entered the Army at Fort Bliss, Texas, March 7, 1941, and was assigned to Co. F, 142nd Infantry, 36th Division on March 11, 1941.

A very modest young man, he was reluctant to talk about himself. After two years in the CCC he enlisted and took part in the Louisiana maneuvers of 1941. He was captured by the "enemy" and searched for messages and arms, being thoroughly frisked. The searchers found nothing on him. Then with a grin, Gonzalez drew four or five clips of rifle ammunition from various parts of his person. Since newspapermen were on site at this incident Gonzalez made headlines. Shortly after he was wearing chevrons.

Sgt. Gonzalez won the DSC, the Silver Star and the Purple Heart in some of the 36th Division's hottest fighting in Italy. He was shot three times and lay 36 days in a hospital, then had influenza and malaria but returned to his company.

In his first hour of combat he blew up an 88mm German gun that was shelling Americans landing at Salerno Beach and also exploded its ammunition, knocked out four machine guns and a mortar. He fought with hand grenades, an automatic rifle and his Gerand. In another episode he stood off German attacks, almost single-handed for 24 hours. At Castellone he took machine pistol slugs in his groin, but walked unassisted to an aid station.

Sgt. Manuel Gonzalez died March 11, 1947 at Fort Davis, Texas. He was always proud to be a Fighting Texan for the 36th. Sgt. Gonzales, we salute you and others like you. You could do no more for your country.

Battery C and the New Lt.

by A. F. (Amil) Kohutek

of C 132nd FA

Battery C was pulled out of the lines after the Bloody Battle of Salerno Beachhead. The Division as a whole was not pulled out. They more or less remained in position and the war passed it on, with enough follow-up troops from other Divisions who followed the Germans as they moved into another defensive position.

C Battery, along with the 132nd Field Artillery Bn was bivouaced in an area south of the Calore River, somewhere between Altavilla and Albanella. Possibly nearer Altavilla. Once or twice the Battery in training hiked the long, winding trail into the ruins of this small mountain town. For historians, this is the town where the late Commando Kelly won his CMH. The trail itself was still littered with wreckage, (both American and German), the dead long removed and buried in a shallow pit dug by a bulldozer. The climb to the town was especially hard on Artillery men. Many rest stops before entering the town, often while resting a cart, sometimes pulled by an old ox, and a few pulled by people. Some pushing bicycles, mostly old women and small children. The young men, and even old men, were in Germany, or still hiding in the hills. Some effort was noted to restore the town. Rubble was everywhere. In the middle of a courtyard a water fountain of sorts provided dank and green water. Goats, oxen and people all drank from this, likely artesian water built hundreds of years ago. Upon closer inspection, saw in the bottom, two unexploded grenades—one German and one American. The German grenade I leared to respect much later, along with an American gas mask.

Battery C Bivouac was near a muddy stream. BN Hqs was across this creek. To get to Hqs Battery by vehicle or jeep required a roundabout way. A foot crossing was found. I traveled this foot route many times, taking the morning report, bringing back messages from the Message Center, and escorting the sick to Bn Aid Stas. My jeep was left parked near the Captain's tent.

One day I was sent to report to Bn Hqs and pick up some replacements. Looking over about thirty men, just off the first liberty ship that entered the restored port of Naples, not one carried a gas mask or a rifle. What a way to fight a war! The four men I drew were Mason Kaufman, Leroy Hoffman, Wayne Stout, and I believe, Gene Ramsden.

Day or so later I was sent to Division Artillery to pick up an Officer replacement for the Wounded Captain Mark Hodges. Div. Arty. then was some miles southwest in the town of Agropoli. Typical seashore village with red roofs and white stucco houses, untouched by shell fire, yet still deserted by the natives. It was ideal for rear eschelon Hqs and service troops. There I picked up the new Second Lt. He looked like he was shy of twenty birthdays, wore a cap that did not seem to fit. If he had a helmet it was out of sight. Also, without side arm. Name of the Lt. I will not reveal. I am not sure I know his full name. The pictorial history book helps not. Some of the Battery men remember this Lt. Many do not. His stay in the ranks was short.

Soon after getting his feet planted, this Lt. made a pretty talk to the men of C Battery, flashing pleading blue eyes. With the fresh, scrubbed look of a Texas farm boy at a pie social, otherwise not impressive. In time he sounded like a carnival barker at a hootchie-kootchie. New shavetails are not known for driving home a point, among combat veterans.

It is believed that the Artillery OCS in Fort Sill, Okla. ground out new Lts. like a farm hand shelling ear corn. This Lt. arrived without doing his homework, or likely slept through class. Might well have been a friend of a high ranking officer back home, or a family in politics. Pictures himself with diploma safely tucked away, standing behind a four-gun Battery watching 50 men toil, sweat, grunt, groan. Lt. standing slightly to the rear and only yell fire.

Time spent in this Bivouac area allowed almost everybody to wander around. Many became scavengers. Almost everbody had a souvenir. The only non-issue I had was a Thompson 45 Sub Machine Gun that someone discarded onto my jeep on the beachhead. First Sgt. eye-balled mine before using his official status to take it away from me. I then drove to the beachhead where weapons of all kinds were stacked ten deep and twenty wide. Replaced it with a new one, along with 03 rifles for the replacements.

Every night the battle in the north raged. Sometimes gun reflections and sound reached us. We laid in shallow fox holes with some comfort. This was soon to end. The kitchen and cooks were not yet in Italy. We had been eating 10 and 1 rations. The Kitchen would join us at the next bivouac area.

About the middle of Oct. the Division pulled out of the Salerno area, supposedly well rested and replenished. My jeep and I drew the tail end of the convoy north. The new Lt. alongside, the back shared by Joe Kincaid and First Sgt. Tanner. The convoy worked its way across country to the road leading from Pastume to Battipaglia. The highway bridge across the Sele not yet repaired. We crossed over a shaky railroad bridge.

Uneventful trip at best. Arrived in the battered town of Naples to the sound of an air raid siren. The town seemed deserted, except for some activity at the dock side where construction crews were not aware of the sirens. Soon, a young lady, may not yet be thirty, walked up to my jeep. I was alone, the three with me had gone up to the head of the convoy, or were hiding in cellars. She talked to me in English. I was stunned and when I asked her where she learned English, she told me she was an American. "What in the world are you doing in the middle of a war zone?" I asked. She replied that she had married an Italian who was drafted by Mussolini, captured in North Africa, by the Americans, and was a POW in the states. This was the first time she ventured outside of her hiding place. She had seen some Americans before, but was afraid they were Germans. She said she had seen some Americans captured, marched north as early as five days back. I asked her if she had anything to eat. She said yes, they shared what they had, but was afraid that soon she would be left out. Two children, both born in Italy. The convoy moved out and before turning a corner, I saw her the last time in my mirror still standing there, with a heavy heart.

Next Bivouac may have been the apple orchard. This was the last Bivouac before moving into combat. Remained in this area through a couple of air raids—50 cal. machine guns positioned for air raids. We were told not to fire. Fallout from anti aircraft batteries was heavy. One slug went through the newly arrived kitchen tent, another large slug landed in the Slit Trench just when Butch Walker had his pants down, holding a copy of the Weatherford Democrat, in place of Delsey. Even religious people are prone to sometimes cussing. Butch could lead the pack. Billy Cooper, looking at the fading moon, with a nervous finger around a 50 cal. machine gun, thought he saw a German bomber darken the moon. He cut loose. Up to then, Billy the only C Battery man to fire at a German plane. He missed, the Bomber was already crippled. It crashed some distance away.

A new man arrived in C Battery, Rudolph Warchol, loaded with barracks bag, pack and 03 rifle. He stuck a warm paw to me, told me his name, and asked if this is C Battery. Rudy had the looks and grit, something like Joe J. Williams, all muscles. He told me he just became a soldier. He had been a lifelong coal miner from Penna. Assured him that a place would be found for him.

BN Hqs and Message Center was within walking distance. Captain Curtis approved my walking—my jeep was parked nearby. One day when at the Message Center, my jeep was driven out of the motor pool area. Jesse Wood—Jesse Wood driving First Sgt. Tanner and the new Lt. as passengers. It was never known what their mission was, or where they planned to go. It could very will have been unauthorized. The three men in a jeep were crawling around a hairpin curve in a mountain, when Jesse collided with an ox and a two-wheel cart loaded with grapes. Sgt. Tanner

leaped out of the back seat, over the windshield, over the cart and suffered a broken arm. The new Lt. was not injured, nor was Jesse Wood. The jeep was totaled. This was the beginning of the new Lts. problems. After that, they multiplied many times over. We then went into the lines and combat less one jeep. the First Sgt. could not write up a morning report and was left behind. Phil McClendon became acting First Sgt.

We moved into gun positions vacated by the third Division Art. Unit—mud hole and all. This was observed by the Germans, even though it was done in the middle of the night. The secondary road leading to the gun, not yet cleared of mines and fallen trees, skirted around and across an open and muddy field. BN Hqs was half mile back. The Message Center Sgt. handed me a brown envelope, told me to deliver it to Capt. Curtis. Capt. Curtis read it and then told me to give it to the new Lt. I then knew the contents of that letter. Before the Lt. drew his first overseas pay, he was charged for the cost of a jeep. I had to remain in his presence until dismissed. Instead, he turned around and walked away.

The kitchen was in a bombed out building near the gun position with table set up for acting First Sgt. Phil McClendon to do his morning report. This was new to him and between the two of us, having our first cup of coffee, Sgt. Phil had the misfortune to spill his coffee onto his lap. He was in a sour mood when the only door in the building darkened. The sight of two big Texas MPs with the new Lt. handcuffed between them was a shocking sight. Seems that the MPs wanted to rid themselves of the American prisoner. After Sgt. Phil had spilled his coffee, he looked as if he had wet his pants, and this was not the first time. Sgt. Phil lost his cool. I do not have permission, nor will I use the exact words that transpired. It seems that the MPs wanted to hand the prisoner to someone else. Sgt. Phil told them he did not have two men. Someone suggested shooting the Lt. All this time the Lt. said nothing—visibly shaken and in tears. Later, the two MPs took their charge to Div. Arty. and put him under house arrest. He was charged with deserting in the face of the enemy. My research fails to find anyone who was with him at the time. Likely it was a radio team going forward as Artillery observers somewhere along the muddy trail. The section was shelled by German mortar or artillery fire. Evidently the Lt. panicked and this might have been seen by some ranking Inf. Officer. The Lt. never returned to C Battery.

Meantime, the Lt.'s mail from home arrived in bundles. I was sent to deliver it to him. From Div. Arty., I was told that he had an accident and was in a hospital, near Naples. It seems that one dark night he was walking from his quarters to a latrine across a muddy stream. It was a narrow footbridge of sorts. The Lt. fell off this bridge, almost killing himself. Some suggested this was an attempted suicide. I caught up with him in

the next to the last bed far down one wing. I passed wounded soldiers in all kinds of shape, many needing change of bandages. The last bed, past the Lt. was vacant, but not for long. It had me sprawled out on it, recovering, tried to talk to the Lt. He was doped up, and never answered. He had many tubes attached to him.

As I walked out of this dismal place, shades of Patton come to mind. At the time I knew very little of the slapping incident. Among the wounded was a nineteen year-old Mama's boy, may have been shell shocked, suffering from a concussion, or raked with Malaria Fever.

About that time a man with the look of an eagle, piercing gray eyes that moved men and equipment in war, visited the bedside of a broken man, not yet twenty one years of age, broken in dignity, pride and spirit. He could never go home and face his peers. The visitor asked for the full report and court martial proceedings. He was handed the only copy—the one copy was never made public. The report somehow disappeared and was never seen. In time, the incident was forgotten. The man behind this was Lt. Col. John N. (Pete) Green. Perhaps Col. Green thought that a third court martial in Battery was too many.

More than thirty years after the war I talked to a man from Battery C. He told me when coming home from the war, June, 1945, and was awaiting ship home, he saw an officer he thought he recognized. And he soon recognized him as the Lt. that was once briefly in C Battery. Instead of a 2nd Lt. he was wearing Major leaves. It is not known if he ever paid for the wrecked jeep.

An Address to the Bradenton Retired Officers Chapter, Bradenton, FL

by Curt Walthal
144th Infantry Regiment, 36th Division

I welcome this opportunity to appear before such a distinguished group to tell you of a little known segment of WWII history. "We can't all be heroes", a history of the separate infantry regiments, published in 1975. Though thirty years late it is timely as most of these 50 regiments had received little recognition of their part in that global war.

The war department had been working since the 20's on the Rainbow Plans for Defense of the Western Hemisphere, and the 2nd division experimented late in the 30's with a new concept, the Triangle Division. Both of these plans were to have a tremendous effect on our mobilizing Army.

Some people think that political restraint on the military originated in the Korea-Vietnam era, but it dates back to an earlier time.

Congress, always suspicious of a large standing army, was afraid the military would get us involved in a war. It took Dunkirk in May 1940 to awaken them to our peril. The British evacuated twice as many troops from those beaches as we had in our active Army. Reluctantly, on August 27, 1940, they authorized mobilization of the National Guard, a call-up of the Organized Reserves, and an increase in the Regular Army. Eighteen days later, Congress passed the Selective Service and Training Act.

I say reluctantly, because even at this dangerous moment in history they added a rider prohibiting draftees and National Guardsmen from serving outside the Western Hemisphere. This eliminated Wake, Guam and the Philippines from any reinforcements, except Regulars and Marines.

The Regular Army and the Mobilized National Guard constituted the 400,000 man initial protective force per the Rainbow plans. This was to

include 9 Regular Army and 18 National Guard Divisions, 1 RA and 2 NG Divisions from each of the nine Corps areas. The protective Mobilization Plan would increase this IPF later to one million men. A force they considered adequate for defense of the Western Hemisphere.

The Alaska-Hawaii—Panama-Puerto Rica line constituted the Army's "Outpost" line for the defense of the "Main" position, the Continental United States.

In retrospect it is interesting to note that even with the restraints imposed, that we now have the largest group of combat trained officers and enlisted men in the world.

I enlisted in Company B, 144th Infantry, 36th Division, at Fort Worth, Texas February 9, 1939, and when the Division mobilized November 25, 1940, we still had the old trench fighting organization of 1918, complete with the same uniform, NP breeches, wrap leggins, and campaign hats. They did issue canvas leggins upon mobilization.

During the armistice parades that I participated in during 1940-41 I had not learned the technique of keeping the tie string of the leggins off the pavement, and we marched behind the 124th Cavalry. I thought at the time we were second in line because we paraded in cowtown. Later learned that this tradition was Army wide.

At Camp Bowie, Texas in 1941 General Walter Krueger sat atop 8th Corps Hill, and with the aid of a telescope could view any particular Company in the street in the 36th Division. Krueger was noted for a statement that he had never inspected a clean mess hall. We were in the field about 18 miles from camp one night and our old Regular Army Sergeant, Leonard Allen, rounded up a group and trucked us back to the mess hall. Sgt. Allen had been warned that General Krueger was to inspect it the following morning. We worked all night scrubbing, even turned the tables and benches upside down for a scrub. Just before daybreak we were trucked back to the manuever area, leaving Allen alone to watch for the inspecting party.

Next morning General Krueger arrived with the 8th Corps inspecting party. 8th Corps included the 2nd Division, the 36th, and the 45th Division, but we bore the brunt because we were closer. Allen was a tight-lipped RA all the way type, and hardly said a word, but one of the 8th Corps officers visited us in the field later that day and told this story. "Sgt. Allen reported to General Krueger at the orderly room—Sir, Company B is ready for inspection—Krueger headed straight for the mess hall, putting on white gloves as he entered. He was hard put to find any dirt, so he pulled over a folding chair and mounted to run that white glove along the rafter (one place we missed). Sergeant Allen stood below the General as Krueger dramatically lowered the smudged Glove for his inspection. Allen, tight-lipped and ramrod straight, saluted and said "General Krueger, a good soldier keeps his feet on the ground." The General stepped down, folded the chair, returned Allen's salute and

without a word walked out of the mess hall, inspecting party at his heels. No official report was issued on the Company B mess hall."

General Krueger later commanded the Sixth Army in the Pacific and Sergeant Allen was killed in a jeep accident in South Carolina in 1943. Two good Regulars who had a stand off in a National Guard mess hall.

We always marched in from that manuever area and the 144th Regimental Band would meet us at the edge of camp, where we formed into parade formation to march back to the Regimental area. Our tired bodies straightened up with pride, marching to that snappy military music. One GI remarked "Hell, I could have made it a lot easier if that band had been with us all the way."

The 144th Infantry was alerted for movement around noon December 8, 1941, right after President Roosevelt's "Day of Infamy" speech, by nightfall we had broken camp, leaving behind all Texas State Equipment, and the following day loaded our trucks on flat cars that miraculously appeared that day, our TO&E equipment in baggage cars. We boarded pullmans about dusk and pulled out of Camp Bowie headed west. That was a priority one mission—our last.

We arrived at Fort Lewis, Washington December 1941 and the following day started digging in on the Washington and Oregon beaches for an expected Japanese invasion.

Later Company B was assigned to Longview, Washington to guard a span across the Columbia River. One night a young girl approached our perimeter guard looking for one of our Texans, but couldn't remember his name. "He is a Texan", "Keep talking lady we are all Texans." She frowned and said "He owns some oil wells." "Yeah, all of us do, is there anything else he might have told you." Suddenly her face lit up and she said "Oh yes, he said is the top Sergeant of this cotton picking outfit." Old tight-lipped Leonard Allen had been identified.

In April 1942 the Regiment was transferred to the San Francisco area, principally, I believe, to teach street fighting to those Regiments destined to sail beneath the Golden Gate for Pacific duty. We had gained a little experience the night before we left Longview confronting our replacements, the 71st Infantry.

The natives were restless and so was General Dewitt, as we had alerts most every night, especially the night of June 3. The next day we read about the Battle of Midway.

We were transferred to the Eastern Defense Command in January 1943, but instead of a priority one movement, our priority was so low they issued each platoon a gandy dancer and said "Shuttle."

We had the longest Regimental front on record. It stretched from Wrightsville Beach, North Carolina to Key West, Florida. You can imagine our logistical problem. Regimental HQ and service units at Atlan-

tic Beach, 1st Battalion at Carolina Beach, 2nd at Charleston, and 3rd Battalion at Miami. Every supply and mess sergeant had to be a Sgt. Bilko for us to survive.

In March 1944 we were assigned to Camp Van Dorn, Mississippi. First time the Regiment had been at one post since Fort Lewis (28 months). Shortly after our arrival we shipped 1700 men to the Poe's and the rest of us became a cadre to retrain men from other branches as infantry replacements. We were called an IARTC.

Our NCO's reached England in time to lead squads and platoons of the 4th, 8th, 29th and 90th Divisions onto the D-Day beaches. Other men wound up in Italy and the Southwest Pacific.

Other separate Regiments were retraining troops also and in early 1945, eight of us were at Camp Rucker, Alabama literally turning out thousands of replacements daily, which was never enough for the ETO. All 8 regiments were inactivated in September 1945.

You've probably heard of some of the separate infantry Regiments like "Merrill's Marauders" and the Japanese-American 442nd, but most of them listed in my book received very little recognition for their service in WWII. Like the 147th (First Ohio) who were assigned temporarily to the composite Army Marine Division on Guadalcanal. The first time since WWI that Army and Marine units fought side by side in a Division. It also had the 182nd (Fifth Massachusetts) from the Americal Division, and the 6th Marines from the 2nd Marine Division. The other Regiments in the Americal were the 132nd (Second Illinois), and the 164th (First North Dakota) Washington State's 161st Infantry was also present on Guadalcanal assigned to the 25th Division. Five National Guard Regiments not allowed outside the States prior to Pearl Harbor. Shows what could have been possible in the Philippines in December 1941 instead of Guadalcanal one year later, had this restraint not been placed on the largest batch of available Regiments in the Army.

I am the 25th Division Association Historian and have completed their 37-year history titled "Lightning Forward", hopefully to be published after the first of the year.

While living in Virginia over the past few years I wrote a family history titled "The Walthall's, The Walton's and The Byrd's, Virginians All." Got the idea from John Boy.

My family has had an intermittent history in US military service since before the revolution, some in the old "first Virginia." I say intermittent because I could find no military record of my immediate ancestors service since 1964.

Our most famous member, General Edward Carey Walthall led the Walthall Brigade at Lookout Mountain and Missionary Ridge. Douglas McArthur's father received the medal of honor for pushing the Walthall Brigade off Missionary Ridge. General Walthall's next mission was rear

guard into Altanta and you know how that turned out...you might say he was overcome. He was more successful representing Mississippi in the US Senate from 1885 until his death in the Senate in 1898.

Another Walthall, Henry B, served as a Colonel in D.W. Griffith's "Birth of a Nation."

The old Walthall homestead in Chesterfield County, Virginia was the C.P. for both General's Butler and Beauregard in 1864. Depending on the progress of the daily battle, which one slept there that night. In all honesty I must say that Beauregard slept there the most often.

Nearby on the Appomatox, Port Walthall was in no-mans-land and totally destroyed. The old home survived until destroyed by fire in 1898.

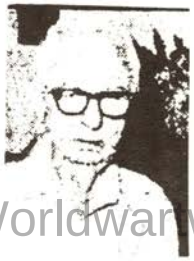
I am an XI Generation Walthall, from William Walthall of Virginia (1654). Five generations from Virginia, one from Kentucky-Missouri, and five generations from Texas. It is rumored that one of my early Texas relatives was the Get-A-Way man at the Alamo.

The Fighting 36th

HISTORICAL QUARTERLY

Over 38 And Out

By Alan "Chum" Williamson



C.A. WILLIAMSON
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If memory serves correctly, his last name was Horowitz. I've long since forgotten his first name. He came to Company E, 143rd Infantry, through the Selective Service pipeline from one of our northern states. He was unmarried and was over 38 years old.

It was late August 1943. Company E, along with other combat units of the 143rd Infantry, were at Arzew, preparing for Operation Avalanche, the invasion of Italy at Salerno. Captain James B. Bond, the company commander, was with the unit's combat platoons, undergoing amphibious training on the Algerian beaches. Division headquarters was at the neighboring city of Mostagenem.

Earlier, the War Department had issued a directive prescribing that enlisted personnel age 38 and over would be discharged upon request. Horowitz applied immediately. However, as weeks passed, he heard nothing concerning his request.

One morning when embarkation was only days away, Horowitz decided to take matters into his own hands. He began by buying sheets of postage stamps from the unit postal clerk, then selling them for a dollar less than he paid. After each sale, he claimed he had made a dollar profit on the transaction.

First Sergeant Hamilton D. Coleman was aware of Horowitz's problem. He had been checking at regimental headquarters daily for any response regarding the application for discharge, with negative results. He confronted Horowitz and asked for an explanation of his bizarre behavior.

"Sergeant Coleman," Horowitz replied, "You think this is an act, don't you? Well, you've got to admit it's a damn good act." Then he added, "Sergeant, I'm going home! And I'm going to take you with me!" Coleman was over 38.

It appeared to Coleman and other witnesses that Horowitz was motivated not by fear or cowardice, but by frustration. The government had made an offer and he had accepted in good faith. Now his acceptance was being ignored. It wasn't right.

But there was an edge in the man's voice, and a determination in his bearing that indicated to Coleman that it was not an act. He escorted Horowitz to the aid station, from whence he was evacuated to the field hospital in Mostagenem for observation and treatment.

Next morning, as officer in charge of company headquarters, I received a phone call from a medical officer at the Mostagenem field hospital. He said, "I'm very sorry to inform you that your man Horowitz died last night."

"Oh, my God!" I exclaimed in stunned disbelief. "What happened?"

"He was a manic-depressive. Last night he went into the manic stage and we had to calm him down. When we did, his temperature went up to 108. Blood vessels in his brain ruptured, killing him. Now we need you to come here and identify his body."

I wondered what they did to "calm him down." I later learned that he became violent and they had to restrain him, including the use of a straight jacket.

At the medical facility I was greeted by a captain of the Medical Corps. As I followed him along a hallway, he said, "Of course we know who he is. We just need your identification to make it official."

Ironically, Horowitz was not sent home, even in death; at least not until after the war. We buried him in a small cemetery in Mostagenem. I was one of the pallbearers, all of Company E. There was no provision for refrigeration or embalming of the remains of deceased Allied military personnel in North Africa. The odor from the wooden coffin left no doubt as to the condition of the remains.

A few days later, the men of Company E boarded the USS Elizabeth Stanton, along with the rest of the 2nd Battalion, 143rd Infantry, and regimental headquarters personnel. The battalion was in Division reserve. We suffered a very few casualties until "Black Monday," D plus four, when the battalion was overrun and destroyed by enemy tank-infantry teams, on the flood plain between the Sele and Calore rivers. Then most of Company E's casualties were captured.

We never learned what happened to Horowitz's application for discharge. However, if he had accompanied us on Operation Avalanche he would very likely have survived to become a prisoner of war.

Hope I Did My Part

by Earl A. Mansee

36th MP Platoon

Jan. 14, 1941 a Draftee (selectee), Sept. 20, 1945 a Combat Veteran. This veteran can still recall many incidents, dates, Army serial No, 38050477. I may not have a record of bravery, etc. to tell but I was just one more veteran who did his small part in the war against Adolph Hitler and his hunger for power.

On Jan. 14, 1941 I thought that I'd get my year in training over with and come back home and I almost did have my year in until Dec. 7, 1941, the Japs had to pull a sneak attack on Pearl Harbor. I reported down town Houston, Texas in the Main Post Office for induction into the Army. I was never one to do a strip tease act but that was the order of the day. The medics had to do their job and one more naked body didn't mean a thing to them as they probed us for defects. Being found sound in body, I was then inducted into the Army. We were given our noon meal at a local Cafe across the street and after meeting all the requirements, we were told we could return home for a few hours but to report back to the Union Train Depot at 8:00 for our trip to camp. We were given berths to sleep in on our trip but there wasn't any too much sleeping that night.

We finally arrived at our new home, Camp Bowie, Brownwood, Texas next morning. We wore our civilian clothes almost a week before we finally got our uniforms. It took some getting used to woolen clothes but they were not too bad after we got used to scratching. The uniforms were a mixture of WW1 and WW2 uniforms. How well I remember the old style helmets. I was assigned to Co H., 141st Infantry. I soon found out

how heavy an 81 MM Base Plate can weigh after shouldering it hours at a time. Those forced marches were a new experience that was not soon forgotten. I qualified on the M1 rifle and learned how to strip it down and reassemble it where it would work again. I slept with it at my side while on maneuvers and it became part of my uniform so to speak. I made the Louisana maneuvers and found that sleeping on the ground wasn't too bad and the mosquitos didn't keep me awake too much.

After the maneuvers in La. and some additional training it was about time we hoped to get out, as we almost had our year in. And then it happened, those dirty Japs pulled a sneak attack and we declared war. The Division was ordered to scale down from a Square Division to a Triangular one. We lost the M.P. Company and a new Platoon of M.P.'s were selected from out of the whole division. I don't know how I was selected but I was only too glad to get shed of that 81 MM base plate. This all happened for me at Camp Blanding Fla. I still remember the accident that happened in the company street, while yet in the infantry where the 37 MM gun was loaded with a dummy shell and it went off blowing off one of the men's head that happened to be in the line of fire.

The Division was ordered to make maneuvers in S. Carolina and I was somehow selected to remain in Blanding to guard the camp. There was a remodeling job that took place while the Division was out on Maneuvers. The tents got a face lift and got a permanent roof in place of canvas. We never did get to live in them however, as the Division was transferred to Camp Edwards after the Carolina maneuvers. I enjoyed the train ride up the coast to Edwards. It was in the fall of the year and many colored leaves were on the trees and many green apples in orchards we passed through.

On our last day on the train the cooks who were in baggage cars up front began disposing their excess black pepper when they saw us GIs sticking our heads out the windows of the train. Boy that pepper can sure clear your sinuses if you know what I mean. It was a great trip all in all and we soon arrived in Camp Edwards where the temperature got down to 17 degrees below freezing many times and we'd have to wear two of everything to keep warm and the main part to the division was in tents again. I'll always remember doing MP duty in Old Buzzard Bay Mass. It was a different life for me. People just spoke so fast that it was hard for this old southerner to always understand.

Then there was the time the Division was all loaded up on the train for overseas duty somewhere. The train pulled out and we thought we were on our way, but after a halt in movement, the train began to back up and kept on backing up until we landed back in Camp Edwards again. I never did know what that was all about, but the next time we loaded on the train we landed on the docks and walked the gang planks into waiting ships for overseas duty. I got onto the USS Brazil. The crossing wasn't

too bad as there wasn't too much rough water. We only received two meals a day, as I guess there were so many of us on the ship that they couldn't manage three meals a day. But they always gave us plenty to eat and we took all that was given us and had left overs which we'd eat later on while waiting our turn again for our second meal. I never did know why but it seemed that we always were given pickles each meal. I don't know if that was to help keep us from sea sickness. The rough sea didn't bother me but it sure had some men making trips to the head or letting it out overboard. The dice games seemed to be everywhere. I wasn't a gambler, however, and I'd find a place to lay down outside under life boats and sleep it off.

There was this submarine attack and the ships began to go in circles and depth charges were being used. It was an exciting time if you can call it that. We lost some of our equipment I understand as we were in short supply when we did land at Oran North Africa. I can recall seeing a narrow gage locomotive on one of the ships deck which came in good use in transporting the troops to Rabat. It was here where I did duty in Rabat walking the walls around the city. It was here too I was the one who drove a 6 x 6 and hauled food supplies over those mountains, possibly a 1000 mile trip, unloading on the Mediterranean seaport of Bone. We then were loaded up with German prisoners which were brought back to Casablanca and shipped back to the states to work in the states. It was in the Cork Forest that Axis Sally entertained us and told the 36th Division to come on out of there, we know you are there. We were never allowed to mention her in our letters where we were stationed, but Axis Sally seemed to know all about our where abouts anyway.

Our Division was again assigned duty on the Mediterranean, sea training the 45th Infantry Division for invasion duty. While there I got in my share of swimming till I discovered a shark fin sticking up out of the water, that took all the fun out of swimming.

After the invasion of Sicily, the 36th was given their orders to load up and make ready for the invasion of the main land of Italy. For some reason or another I have always remembered the name of the ship, the USS Fred Fungstan which I was loaded on. We were on the waters only a few days when we neared the Gulf of Salerno where we were to be put ashore in landing craft by the Navy. Those Navy boys did a great job and were to be admired for their skill in getting us ashore. As we hit the beaches, we were told to move swiftly inland. Those 88's sure are fast. You didn't hear them coming till the last second and boy you learned to obey orders real fast. There was an irrigation ditch near where we landed and we followed it inland. It possibly saved a lot of lives as we made our way inland. I can recall the fields of tomatoes and peppers which we passed through where baskets of them were spilled out on the ground as the Italians made haste to get to safety as the invasion took place.

As we passed through Paestum, I made note in my mind that this place must have some history behind it as I saw many columns still standing of historic buildings. We made our way down a road and I recall a German plane coming down strafing and we scattered to both sides of the road and hit the dirt. This soldier didn't do much sleeping that night. The chocolate bar was to give us energy for a day or two but I'd prefer a good steak in place of chocolate.

The next day was my birthday and I found myself at a road crossing near the tobacco warehouse. In the field across the road from the warehouse, equipment began to arrive and an airport was being hastily constructed. It wasn't long before planes began to land. I'd seen many 6 x 6 Ducks bringing in wire mesh and others with loads of 55 gallon drums of gas. I remember the 45th Division boys coming through as well as the 34th. The invasion seemed to be holding its own. While near the tobacco warehouse, I made a barn my sleeping quarters. It had hay in which to sleep on but it also had chicken mites and boy those things can sure make sleeping miserable. I was glad when we were able to take a bath in a pond even though it was cold. It got shed of the mites.

The next thing I remember still was Altavilla. This town on top of this hill had many shallow graves that had just been dug and the dead were still being buried. The stinch of a dead body is something that isn't easy to forget. From the appearance of buildings with their roofs blown off I figured they had been bombed. I was able to speak to an Italian questioning him and he said no, that naval guns had shelled the town and not bombs dropped.

There are many more places I recall being but after over 45 years it is hard to put it down on paper. I do recall being in a house across the river from Cassino when we were keeping warm with a 5 gallon can with charcoal. We would toast our bread over the can of hot charcoal when it got so hot on the floor (concrete) that the cement literally exploded. This sent the can up into the air and hot charcoal flew everywhere. One of our Sgts., George Blanton, ended up with a hot coal down his shirt and who in turn did a turn over to get the hot coal to drop out of his clothing. At first we thought that a shell had hit the house, little did we realize that getting concrete hot in one place will make it explode.

While here on the front lines I was given 3 days R&R and it sure felt good to get back where it was quiet. The hot shower felt so good and to get clean clothing felt good also. Speaking of taking hot showers, I also remember another time when we were in a tent showering. A German plane came over and dropped a bomb right near the tent and an Italian standing near the tent was killed. Here we were, all wet only half way through our shower and no place to crawl into for protection. One other MP was also bathing at the time. We ran for cover and I hid in a chicken

house scaring the chicken out. When it got quiet again I came out to go back to the shower and there stood the owner of the house with his wife and daughter. The chicken house was attached to the house. I covered up my privates with both hands and got back into the shower and finished showering and tried to calm my nerves. War can have its embarrasments, too. It was on my 3rd day of R&R that we were just leaving from across Cassino that our Air Force destroyed the Abbey which the Germans were using. We could see the dust and smoke ascending as we drove from the front.

It was soon afterward that the Division was relieved and we were being refurbished that I was reclassified and sent back to the States. They found me deaf in one ear. I spent a few weeks at Naples doing mechanic work before I was loaded for my return to the States. Just as our ship was about to go through the Straight of Gibraltar we could see off to our right many, many ships preparing to make the invasion of Southern France. I was given a 30 day delay in route and told to report to Fort Sam. I was again assigned to do mechanic work at Fort Hood, Texas. I spent about 6 months here repairing GI vehicles. I was assigned 5 German prisoners to help me. This was a mobile ordinance unit which was finally assigned overseas duty. I was then placed in 1848 SCU and was again doing MP work at a GI prison camp there in Fort Hood. While at this job I had a Class "A" pass and was free to go to town after work if it didn't interfere with my MP work. I got me a chauffeur's license and drove a bus to Belton and Temple, Texas, making myself a little extra money. It was from Fort Hood, Texas I got my discharge on September 20, 1945. I was so glad to get out and get a new start in life and to find a job.

My story hasn't been quite as exciting as most, but it has been more exciting than I care to think about. Most people think of MP work as policing in towns, etc., but men in the 36th Division saw us right up there near the front with a rifle slung over our shoulder. I trust this article will bring back a few memories for those who read it. After 45 years away from action, it is getting difficult to remember.

There Is Not Wealth But Life

by Sam F. Kibbey

I enclose a copy of a tribute I wrote for Bill Jary. I have not written this with an end in mind that it be published. If it does find its way to print well and good. Bill believed in the power of the pen. He, also, revelled in how enjoyable or informative the written word could be. I agree.

Consider, as you read this, how many lives Bill Jary brightened.

"That country is the richest which nourishes the greatest number of noble and happy human beings; that man is richest who, having perfected the functions of his own life to the utmost, also the widest helpful influence, both personal, and by means of his possession, over the life of others."

Title and the above introductory statement taken from "Unto This Last" (1862) by John Ruskin.

This one is for Jary. I believe he would approve. Bill Jary understood me perhaps better than others do. Bill knew how important writing was, and is, to me. He encouraged me to write. He, thereby, encouraged me to live.

Bill Jary encouraged every one to live in their own special way. That was an unusual talent Jary possessed.

He is gone from us now. Death came and took him away as it will us all. Death didn't have any easy pickings with Bill Jary. He fought death with Texas tenacity.

Bill would want us to get the date of his death right. He was a stickler for detail when he had time to verify the facts. Lacking time he might exaggerate a mite. Bill Jary's exaggerations were delightful like the way he used pseudo-alliteration: "Kentucky King Kibbey Konveys Kentucky Korn."

The date of Jary's death was February 8, 1989. Exactly how old Bill Jary was when he died—I really don't know. From the time I first met him in the early 60's until the last time I saw him at the Reunion (wasn't it Fort Worth?) he possessed that young at heart attitude that made him a pixie with a very high I.Q.

He was such a joy to be around, this great guy, Jary. The eyes sparkled with laughter, and voice pierced screechingly and overall there was a charisma instantly noticeable because of its rarity. It is said that some people are sent into the world to bring joy to the lives of others. I wrote my pal, Hank Gomez, that this epigram suited him. I'm sure Colonel Gomez will agree that this epigram is very descriptive of Bill Jary.

And the way ke kept things going! Jary took another T-Patcher under wings; and George Kerringan became a hit at all the reunions. Jary howled while George wowed them with his one liners. Another protege was Del Kendall of Muskegon, Michigan, a talented writer and premier person. Countless others received Bill's artful Jarymandering.

To get a letter from Jary always brightened my day. In one he wrote me he had written the lyries to a Country and Western song that was sweeping the charts. The words, Bill said, ran:

"I can't get over a girl like you,
So will you get up and answer the phone?"

In another (or perhaps this was in a "T-Patcher" column), he wrote:

"Sam Kibbey's new girl friend's name is Delta
becausse Delta is ready when he is."

His value to the 36th Infantry Division Association was too immense to describe accurately. In the "T-Patcher" or in the Quarterly (surely a unique publication) Bill Jary was a beacon encouraging war buddies to band together and to forge in this land a unity of strength both unconquerable and uncompromising.

Was Bill Jary a proud man? Your damn right he was proud. Your damned right he had the right to be proud. He was proud to have been born a Texas. He was proud to have served his country in time of war in the "Texas" Division. He was proud he could serve others with his fertile mind and infectious imagination in Texas and beyond that principality.

With it all, he was yet a modest man. He didn't like to offend. In one of the stories I wrote for the Quartley, I wrote something like:

"What are you doing, Kibbey?", the Sergeant asked. "I'm taking a piss," I replied. In the published version "a piss" came out "a pee".

It wasn't censorship. Jary probably didn't want to offend any of the lady readers. (I agree, but I probably just did.)

It is difficult to believe that Bill Jary is gone; that I will not again see his gentle face or hear his melodious laughter or feel the clasp of his talented hand as we met or departed from each other.

In something I wrote I observed that "death is a clumsy dancer." (Either that or I read it somewhere as I unconsciously plagiarize from time to time.)

This statement is my very own, I think: "Death has passageways to eternity; its stations are deeply steeped with loved ones who sleep therein."

The ultimate transition for us all is life to death. The transition is not for those alone who die. Those who are left behind are also transformed. Our lives are changed when we lose to death those we love.

Nobody grows older on purpose but we all grow older. The older we get the more we tend to mellow. This winding down process was perhaps best described in Rollin John Welss' verse "Growing Old":

"A little more tired at close of day
A little more anxious to have our own way
A little less ready to scold and blame
A little more care of a brother's name
And so we are nearing journey's end
Where time and eternity meet and blend."

In "The Apocrypla" much wisdom of thought is found. Tonight, I went to that source. My key word was "noble" because nobility was Bill Jary's modus operandi. I found a passage in the Apocrypha that fits Jary to a T-Patch:

"The noble acts which he did, and his greatness,
they are not written: for they were very many."

But, I want to close this inadequate tribute to Bill Jary with the thought that hit me shortly after I learned of his death.

KIBBEY ON JARY: "I never met a man I liked any better."

KERRIGAN'S KORNER

One Of Our Better Nights

by: George Kerrigan

In December 1943, A. Co. 142 was holding a mountain top position, near Mt. Longo, Italy. One night I took a squad of men and headed down a trail to get rations, as we could not move in the day time. But the Germans were in Italy for years, and had all the trails zeroed in and blasted away every night at random.

So the men had to keep as far apart as possible, and still keep the man in front of him in sight.

This particular night I led the way down the trail, and every few minutes I turned around to check in the dark; everything seemed normal, until I reached a clearing and saw a long line.

I stopped the column and walked back, checking each man and sure enough, instead of eleven men, there were 23. Eleven were Germans, they had no rifles or helmets and were the friendliest Jerries I ever saw.

One spoke good English, said they had enough of the war, and wanted to quit. They knew of the Ration trail, so planned to get over there after dark and hide behind large trees. Then, when a Ration detail came down, they would try to infiltrate in the dark and would step out in the Gap between men, and the man in the rear would think he was too close to his Buddy in front, and keep his interval by slowing up.

So to keep them honest, I paired each one up with one of my men and when we reached the Ration Dump, I had each Jerry take a case of "C" Rations along with my men, and they were only too happy to accomodate, so we doubled our ration haul that trip.

When we got back up to our Company at the top, I sent them back down with an escort to turn them over to Headquarters for a trip to a P.O.W. Camp. I told the man in charge to go slow, and watch for more Jerries that wanted to desert. (Unarmed of course).

As they passed me, each Jerry smiled and saluted me. If only every night could end that way.

A Day to Remember

George (Wrong Way) Kerrigan

On September 21, 1944 , Company A-142 had just taken a town called "LeGirmont Val D'Ajol" near Remiremont in France, when "Lt. Colonel Minor" came up in a hurry and said he had Tanks on the way, that we were to mount, and move on to a hot spot, where we were needed badly.

The Tanks arrived, we boarded them, and moved out of the Village, but we didn't get fifty yards out of the town, when all hell broke loose. The fields were crawling with Jerries. "William Murray" of Granite City, Illinois was killed before he hit the ground.

We immediately spread out in the prone position, and with targets popping up all over the place, we did the job we were trained to do. Jerry got into a fit of panic, when we didn't run as they expected, so they seemed to lose control of their men, as they got up to escape any way they could, and we got our share.

After fifteen minutes of fighting a jeep came along in my rear. It had two men in front and a Lieutenant (Tank) firing a machine gun, mounted in the rear. I asked if I could get aboard. He said, "O.K., if you can catch us." So I galloped and caught a piece of the jeep and climbed aboard. There was the driver, also a Polish civilian that the Tank Outfit adopted and gave a uniform to, he was firing a M-1 from the front seat. The Lieutenant firing the Machine Gun, and I was firing my M-1 from my seat in the rear — what a crazy sight to behold, but the adrenalin was flowing. (I found out a few days later that my B.A.R. man "Deodata Ruiz" had taken off to join me, but he carried too much weight, and I lost a great fighter.)

Later on we were stopped by a barbed wire fence. There was a barn and other farm equipment about 100 yards further on in, so I jumped off, as I carried wire cutters on my belt, and as I cut the wire, the Lieutenant told the driver to pull up by the barn, so I said, "Go ahead, I'll meet you up there", as I wanted to make sure I pulled the wire clear, and no use jumping on and off again at the barn.

When they reached the barn the Lieutenant stayed with the Machine Gun, and told the other two to check behind the barn. Then as I was about fifty feet away, the Lieutenant was hit and killed by shells from a "Ack Ack 40 M.M. Gun."

The Polish fellow came running back and started to cry like hell. He adored the Tank Lt. and wanted to avenge his death, but I know you can't fight something you can't see, and the shells came in steady, so I took both him and the driver behind the barn and under a concrete water trough, out of sight. But the driver wanted to take off to the rear, I pointed my rifle at him and made him lay down. I said, "They think we

are all dead over here, as the firing has stopped." An hour later he wanted to go, so I said, "Okay, but stay in the ditch." The Polish fellow shook my hand and followed him, then 15 minutes later I heard shooting and yelling in their direction, then silence. I found out later (3 months later) that the driver got back to the Tank Outfit (736th Tank Bn?) and told the story of how the Lieutenant was killed, but the poor Polish fellow didn't make it.

(Later on we found out that there was a small airport nearby that had 40 MM Guns set up around it, and that's where the shells came from. They used them like rifles, when they saw our jeep.)

When I heard the latest shooting I headed straight ahead (away from the shooting) and arrived in a open field where I rested before I reached some weeds about three feet high. I had to crawl so I couldn't be seen. Then Lo and Behold, ten Germans stood up in the weeds thirty feet in front of me, three in front, four behind them, and another three in the rear (like bowling pins). They were just as surprised to see me, as I was to see them, but I started firing from the prone, and when you are being shot at, you don't stand up any more than you have to, so they hit the deck in the high weeds. After four shots, I threw two grenades at them, then rolled over and over to my left. I heard yelling and screaming in pain, and crazy as it was, they didn't fire back, I believe because of how they were assembled, afraid of hitting the ones in front, and I'm sure I hit the front three men at least, with the rifle fire and the grenades did damage too.

I was cursing because I was on the bare ground, and they had cover, but it saved my life as they couldn't see me without standing up, so all I could do (besides praying like hell) was to keep rolling to my left towards what looked like a field of corn, away to the left, in the meantime keeping an eye on their positions back in the weeds.

Between rolling and crawling sideways like a crab, I finally reached the cover of the corn field, and went in about eight rows, and laid between the corn, in the ruts or whatever they are called, with my eye back where I saw the Jerrys and knocked off a load of "Hail Marys" while getting my breath, and put a fresh clip in the M-1.

Suddenly one Jerry got up, and stumbling in my direction, he fell once or twice, and as I saw no weapon I didn't fire. I could see he was hurt bad, it seemed that he was heading for the same sanctuary that I had seen, and when he got in a few rows, he fell, not six feet from me, and laid there a few minutes before he opened his eyes, and saw me with my rifle pointed at him. I expected him to yell, but he closed his eyes again and laid there silently, and when he didn't move for twenty minutes I crawled away, and two days later got back to my own lines.

I don't know the Lieutenant's name but he should have been in the Infantry instead of a Tank, but then, that is why he got killed. I was proud that I fought alongside him, if only for a short time, also the Polish fellow, May God rest their Souls!

My Longest Day

by George J. Kerrigan

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

After fighting in Italy for almost a year, we boarded transports, and headed northwest. After three days at sea, we made the invasion, at the bay of San Raphael, Southern France, August 15, 1944.

Our beach could not be cleared, so we landed at another, and to me it was like landing at "Coney Island in Brooklyn", the only thing I could see was an L.S.T. loaded with 155's. A Jerry "Drone Plane" hit it, and it burned for days.

Outside of a few old Germans (we really surprised the Germans) it was a picnic, at least for me, so we took off, and made 20, 30 or more miles a day. Once we woke up to hear that a U.S.A. Hospital had passed us during the night.

Most of our fighting was due to delaying tactics, so it was hit and run, *until* we hit Alsace Lorraine. We came to the town of "Luxeuil", noted for its Famous Baths, and Sulphur Springs.

The Brass decided to let each of us have 10 minutes in the private rooms. A. G. stood outside timing us, then we put our filthy dirty O.D.'s on again and waited outstide for the rest to finish their baths.

While outside a photographer from "United Press" asked Mike DeLeo (Avenel, New Jersey) and myself, to pose for a picture by a small waterfall. We agreed and eventually our picture was in the papers around the 48 States. I still have mine.

About an hour later, Mike DeLeo stepped on a mine and was killed. From then on the whole picture changed, each Battle worse than the previous one. The Germans had the area that was a Natural Defense Line, ideal for them.

This brings me to September 29, 1944, high up above the town of Tendon. We were battered constantly by tanks, artillery, mortars and rifle fire. Sgt. Paul Ford and I were laying behind a stone wall, when a shell hit the wall. Part of the stone wall disappeared. I could not see, with the smoke and dust, and suffering from concussion. I then heard Paul say, "I am going to the rear George." I grunted, "O.K." as I couldn't see

him. As I lay trying to get my bearings, a fellow came up to me and said, "Paul Ford is laying dead back there." I said, "You are crazy, he left me after the wall was hit, and that was the last shell or bullet fired to now, in fact, he told me he was going back." He must have been half dead when he left me.

Rip Cord Davis came over to me and said, "George give me that squad you were talking about." (An hour earlier I had asked him, but he refused me.) He was standing up and pointing, "I know where the S.O.B.'s are, I'm going after them." I yelled "For God's sake, get down!" He then turned around, and I saw he had both pant legs torn by shrapnel and bloody. I had to knock him down and called a medic over to treat him. He had to get badly wounded, before he wanted to do some fighting.

Jim Britt had just returned from a hospital, and was wounded again. He gave me his brand new navy jacket which was lined. I was glad as it was rainy and cold up in the Vosges Mountains, but 15 minutes or so later, I was hit in the right shoulder, and loused the jacket up good.

By this time, I couldn't find an aid man. Some guy asked for my rifle and bandoleers, as he had none, so I said "Sure, I don't need them anymore." I thought there were all friendly troops to the rear.

As I walked down a path in the woods two rifle shots went off and passed my head. Shocked, I turned around and not more than 20 yards from me were two Germans, very nervously looking all around holding their rifles at the ready.

I then raised my left arm (my right one was all bloody) and said, "Kamerad" and then like a drowning man I saw everything at once. We were all mixed up (Germans and Americans). They couldn't take me prisoner, I was walking nice and slow along the lane in the woods, all they had to do was yell and I would have surrendered. But they fired and missed (at least 20 yards) so I did a fast pivot and took off. If they couldn't hit me at 20 yards they must have been blind. They were more scared than I and didn't fire anymore. Thank God!

After a while I came to a small village and entered the first house. There wan an old French couple about 80 years of age and a son about 55 or so. The sweet old lady sat me down when I told her I was an American, and fried some eggs for me, and as she put the plate of eggs in front of me, I passed out, due to the loss of blood. I woke up later as she was washing my face which was covered with eggs. Her son picked up the broken plate and wiped the table. The poor old doll was crying while smiling at me.

Then I heard loud noises outside the house. The old man was looking out the front window. I said "What is it?" He said "Americans." I jumped up to look as the old lady tried to keep me down so she could fry more eggs for me.

I damn near died; there were two Nazi tanks out there. I yelled "La Boche" and was afraid of what they would have done to the old lady and husband and son. I then kissed the old doll, and climbed out the rear window, and back into the woods again.

After a few more hours of ducking Germans, I reached a road with two ditches, one on either side, nice and deep. An ambulance came from the town of Tendon, to my left; it was flying as the Germans fired 88's at it.

So I stumbled along the ditch toward to town when I heard the most beautiful words, "Is that you, George?" I knew it was my old buddy Joe Lanza, he was with Anti Tank Company 142. They had Anti Tank Guns pointed down the road and Joe recognized me and cried like a baby to see me all covered with blood. (While in basic training in Camp Walters, Texas, I took care of a load of young recruits. I was like a father to them and they didn't forget me. I was a Drill Sergeant before the war.)

Joe was a tough fighter (127 lbs.) and would take on anyone, any size. Now here he was carrying me crying like hell telling his gang as we passed them, "My buddy is hurt." I tried to get down as I was 40 pounds heavier, but no good.

We found an aid station in Tendon and he put me down on a chair. The aid man asked me "What outfit are you in?" I said, "A. 142." He said, "You have to go to the 1st Battalion aid station on the other side of Tendon." I got up to go when Joe screamed "No, you b....., take care of my buddy." He hit the aid man and down he went. I went out the door, heading for my aid station when Joe caught me and picked me up again. We reached the station and they took care of me cutting all my clothes off and dressing my wound. When Joe saw I was taken care of, he left to go back to his gun (still crying).

The 36th Division had a load of Good Mexicans, but Joe Lanza and Deodato Ruiz "A" Co. were the best.

After being taken out of four ambulances due to worse causes, a guy said, "Get in and hold tight, they will be shooting at us for a mile or two." We finally took off like a bat at top speed.

When we were in safe territory and slowed down, I looked around the ambulance. Above me on a litter was a fellow who had a foot blown off. He was real gay, and asked where I was hit. As I told him, he said, "I'm sorry for you." He had a foot off and was sorry for me. I asked why. He said, "I am happy as I will go home, but you are going to go back as soon as you are well enough."

Only then did I realize why he was so contented, with a smile on his face. He was so right, I did go back for more of the same, and I wasn't able to lift my arm above my shoulder, but casualties were very heavy and I was needed. Yes! It was the longest day of my life! Amen.

They Tried To Escape, Sir

by A. F. (Amil) Kohutek
Battery C 132nd

They Tried To Escape, Sir.

How many times have you heard that? An American combat soldier reports to his Commanding Officer after he had been detailed to escort unarmed German soldiers to stockades in the rear areas, or to be interrogated by Regiments.

He did not deliver the unarmed German prisoners. Instead, somewhere down the way, out of sight of any other troops, he murdered his captives in cold blood.

I had been with L co 142nd Inf. about ten days, along with Herman Gilbert and Lt. Conley. In four days we were to be relieved and returned to our own Battery C. None of us, including Lt. Conley, had had a change of clothes or socks. Cold C Rations and no coffee, and enough water for drinking but not to shave.

Herman Gilbert and I were in a shallow draw, with only raincoats on the ground. We had been in this one position so long that both raincoats were under several inches of mud and much foot traffic across our small entrenched position. For once we had phone connections with FDC fire direction center, along with 610 radio. Lt. Conley was up on a ledge with a pair of field glasses. Target area was foggy, some smoke from fires, just hanging low, nothing to observe, though we were from time to time firing on suspected target marked the day before. The Infantry Captain was nearby. Except for being uncomfortable, we felt secure. The phone I manned was sometimes used by the Inf. Captain to his own 3rd BN. An argument was heard from the Captain supposedly to the Major, telling the Major, "How in the H... can I hold that ridge with twenty men." The Major was somewhat more polite, when he told the Capt. that the Germans did not know there were twenty men, thinking more like two hundred. "So, they might not attack the ridge" the Major ended by telling that the twenty men were most likely facing ten Germans. The Captain returned to his OP after a string of curse words—even religious men use profanity.

Soon after, and out of the blue mist, three German soldiers walked up to us unannounced and unescorted. They were also unarmed, otherwise the three could have mowed down everybody. Instead, they were waving hankies. They were blonde, blue-eyed, clean faced, and not a day over 18. An effort was made to get them down in the shallow place, as one of our riflemen was taking a pot shot them. The Captain sent his runner to a squad nearby. Soon a rifleman appeared. The Captain gave instructions to escort the three Germans to Bn Hqs. Less than ten minutes later, the Guard reappeared and announced, "They tried to escape, Sir." The Captain did not believe it, nor anyone else. I then observed the guard—he showed arrogance, a silly smirk on his dirty face, and he didn't seem concerned. The Captain was angry. Word soon got around "that SOB murdered three young unarmed German soldiers." A few soldiers milling around were thoroughly disgusted. I told Gilbert, "I am getting sick," as I lay in the mud, thinking the world had gone mad, stark raving mad. My guts were crawling. The few C rations I spooned that morning were racing up. Somehow I signaled Gilbert that I had to get out of there. Over and down a hill I tried to walk. Before I got out of sight of anyone, I upchucked all the cold rations I had eaten, along with two attabrine pills. I returned to my hole. Lt. Conley saw my predicament. He suggested I start walking back. We were in an area where motor vehicles could not get through. I started walking—walked through an Aid Station, into a clump of trees and a burned house. I saw no doctors nor aid men. I saw many wounded on stretchers. One man had a leg off near the top; he was not moving, may have been dead. I continued walking and soon I saw some troops pushing an ambulance out of the ditch, the radiator steaming. I knew it wouldn't go far, even if pushed out of the ditch. I walked past them and they didn't even notice me—time means nothing. I walk, seems to be easier. I am going downhill, towards C Battery, arriving there physically exhausted. My boots weighed a ton. I sat down near a wire truck. I felt the cold mud seeping through. The First Sgt., Ed Tanner, walks up, said nothing, felt of my forehead and said, "Kohutek, you have fever. You'd better get to the aid station." I staggered down a hill into another village, the 132nd Aid Station in a burned-out service station. Captain Alex Wintzer, a Jewish doctor, and a fine one was there. He might have been concerned being that close to the front line and that he might have gotten captured, and sent where all Jews were sent. After shuffling some papers to appear busy, he then asked me if I had taken my attabrine pills. I said yes, but I puked them up this morning. He gave me some more and sent me back to the Battery. On the way out, I almost collided with Knox Payne. He looked me over, and said, "You need a drink." I was in no mood to argue, so he poured about three fingers, give and take a few fingers, in my canteen cup. I took a sip; it was like fire water. I asked Knox, "What is this?" "86 Proof," he said. "No," he said, "it is 300 Proof." I told

him to pour me some water in the cup since I wasn't used to straight whiskey. He poured several more fingers out of his canteen cup. I should have known better—Knox carried only 10 percent water and 90 percent bourbon.

I arrived at the Battery in time to fall in the chow lines. Eddy Johnson, longtime mess Sgt. every once in a while actually had a heart. This remark is debatable. He might have seen my plight or heard of it. He piled on the grub—three slices of dry bread covered with lumpy gravy and a thin stew, black coffee. It was the first hot meal I had eaten in ten days. Knox Payne's prescription settled my guts and I enjoyed the hot meal.

Five days later, First Sgt. Tanner told me to report to Lt. Conley. Arrived at a jeep driven by Asa Smith. Awaiting me were Lt. Conley and Herman Gilbert. He handed me my muddy raincoat that I had forgotten. We were off for another tour with the Infantry. This time a narrow, muddy road leading into a dark dank forest. The troops walking alongside were the 100 Bn of the 442nd Japanese American forces. My time with this group was short, but I loved every one. Within a few days we rejoined Co L 142nd Inf. Many of the Japanese American brave soldiers would be dead, trying to rescue the lost Bn of the 141st. These dedicated Americans did not fight by the book. They wrote it while many of their parents were herded into makeshift camps and died. These young survivors carried the American flag to Victory.

Thirty Co L men and three Artillery men took to the hills, up over and around and doubled back assaulting a road block while the main body moved from the south. Pouring down rain, the progress was slow. We crossed a road, and up another hill. Lt. Conley was shot by a sniper. He rolled down an incline, through a barbwire fence and into a ditch full of water. Gilbert and I shed our heavy radios, took in after him. At first we did not see him, only to learn he was completely submerged in deep water. Gilbert and I got hold of him; he was stiff. We called for medics and after a long time a couple of stretcher bearers arrived. They had to return the long way around—we may have saved his life. He recovered and returned to the Battery before war ended. Gilbert and I were left without an officer. We were not allowed to direct Artillery fire. Before nightfall, we were relieved. Paul G. Adelsperger with Lt. Lang arrived. Gilbert and I returned to the Battery. We never saw nor heard of the American soldier that murdered the three young unarmed German soldiers.

I walked many more times with the Infantry and carried the radio, and followed a Lt. I never again heard the remark, "They Tried to Escape, Sir." And I am glad.

Silver Star

27th April, 1945

SUBJECT: Award of Silver Star
TO: Staff Sergeant DAVID ARVIZU, 36880612
Company B, 143rd Infantry Regiment

Under the provisions of Army Regulations 600-45, you are awarded a Silver Star for gallantry in action.

CITATION:

DAVID ARVIZU, 36880612, Staff Sergeant, Company B, 143rd Infantry Regiment, for gallantry in action on 25 November, 1944, in France. Sergeant Arvizu and a comrade were with a Patrol about 150 yards beyond friendly outposts, when they were subjected to heavy small arms and bazooka fire. The patrol fell back a short distance to a more favorable position. Sergeant Arvizu and his comrade sent the others back for help, and took up the defense of the area. Before help arrived, the enemy launched an attack with a force of approximately twenty men. Although bullets struck all around them and they were at times badly shaken by direct hits on their position by bazooka shells, they steadfastly maintained their position against the full force of the enemy assault. When help came thirty minutes later, they had inflicted several casualties on the hostile soldiers. As a result of the courage and determination of Sergeant Arvizu and his comrade, their platoon was enabled to counterattack and drive off the enemy force. Entered the Service from Detroit, Michigan.

John E. Dahlquist
Major General, U.S. Army
Commanding

It's A Only Me, Tony...

by Rex Harrison

D-Day July 10, 1943 at or about 0500 hours, the second unit of the United States Army 11th Field Hospital, attached to the U.S. 45th (Oklahoma) Infantry Division, landed on the shores of Sicily.

As usual, the screw-up had started. Some idiot thought that 11th Field was an artillery unit and mixed us up in the second assualt wave. Fortunately for us, Italian soldiers had been guarding that particular beach area and as a result, the assault troops had thoroughly cleared our landing zone before we arrived. We moved off the beach about forty yards and some of us proceeded to dig slit trenches.

Those who would wonder how units like us could survive have never had to remain on a hostile beach. All classes of supply (except class VI alcohol) are brought ashore and stacked as various dumps. Each individual would simply wander over to a dump to get water and his pick of C-rations.

Twice during the day a sortie was flown against our beach area by the German Air Force. The beach was strafed. One captive Polish national serving in the German Army, was shot through his buttocks by his MP Guard when he started running to avoid being shot from the air. My first patient.

After the second strafing, an anti-aircraft Quad Fifty Unit mounted on a ¾ ton trailer was transported ashore and emplaced in our general area.

That night, the Germans mounted several air attacks against the offshore ships. Flares were dropped, giving the whole area a ghostly appearance. At this time, while the entire fleet was in a highly nervous state, a US paratrooper air-drop by air and glider planes commenced.

The troop carriers came in low over the assembled ships from the sea side and were immediately greeted by all AA guns aboard. The Quad Fifty, 20mm, 40mm and 3-inch anti-aircraft fire was very intense and from the angles, at times, appeared to hit each other. One of the gliders, in flames, crashed inland about fifty yards from our position.

Several of the anti-aircraft crew members dashed toward the crash site. At that moment, like wild-fire, word spread along the beach that German paratroopers were attacking along the front.

The AA crews loaded and readied their weapons. The medics dug out their entrenching tools. They were ready to join the battle.

At this moment, a lone individual showed himself atop the sand dune immediately to the front of a Quad Fifty Unit. The gunner sang out, "Halt—Identify yourself." In broken English with a decided Italian accent, the answer was, "It's A Me, Tony." The gunner pulled back the fifties operating-arm handle; the Quad was ready to fire.

The individual (it was too dark to identify as to the type of clothing being worn) on the dune suddenly realized what was happening. He immediately threw himself upon his knees, raised his hands in prayer and said, "You know me. I'm Tony from Brooklyn. Please, don't shoot."

The gunner said, "Come in you crazy Wop. You're about five seconds away from being our first casualty."

So ended Day-One, July 10, 1943. I didn't know then but I had only twenty-six months and seven more campaigns to go.

A French self-propelled gun firing on German position in Rhine Valley.

Notes of World War II

Lieutenant Colonel Remus L. Jones (retired)

April 2nd, 1943—The 36th Infantry (Texas) Division sailed from Pier 13, Staten Island, N.Y. I was a 1st Lt. assigned as the Executive Officer, Battery "B", 132nd Field Artillery. We sailed on the S.S. Argentina, a converted tour ship that sailed from N.Y. to South America during peace time. The swimming pool had been floored over and double bunks set up throughout the ship in order to accomodate so many troops. Army field kitchens were set up on each floor and our cooks prepared the meals. The men ate out of their meskits and washed them in water heated in G.I. (trash) cans. On this boat with us was the 142nd Infantry Battalion, the unit we would support almost exclusively throughout the war.

Our Battery was billeted down about the 4th deck in the stern. No troops were allowed on the top deck during daylight and no smoking was allowed there at night time. This was done in an effort to keep us from being identified as a troop carrier which was indeed a prime target. The officers were billeted in cabins but instead of two people sleeping there, they had arranged for several. We had seven in ours. Our shower had salt water for bathing but our cabin boy would bring in a pail of fresh water to rinse us off. Our ship's personnel were the regular crew that served it during peace time. There was no place for us to make purchases on the ship but our cabin boy could buy candy and toilet articles from the ship's store. We would give him the money and he would buy these items for us. The officers ate in the dining room and ordered from a printed menu. Sometimes if we had a hard time deciding between two meats or desserts, our waiter would suggest he bring us some of both which, of course, made us very happy. We were served two meals a day.

There were no port holes and very little ventilation down where the troops were. An officer was assigned to a two hour shift down with the

troops. We really hated this duty but never complained where the troops could hear us. Their deck was hot, stuffy, smelly and noisy. Each time the ship hit a big wave the propeller came part way out of the water and made a loud grinding noise.

Sgt. Joe C. Jones (deceased), my older brother, was in the same convoy on the S.S. Brazil. He was the Supply Sgt. for Co. "C", 141st Infantry. He said a large number of troops on their ship got dysentery and when they went to the bathroom and all the commodes were occupied, they just went on the floor. It wasn't long before it was going across the room in waves. 1st Sgt. Greeley Aston (deceased) told me he was on this ship and he was so sick he just tied a towel around him and laid in bed. He was 1st Sgt. of Battery "A", 133rd FA Battalion.

It seemed like we hardly made any time at all one some days but were told one of the ships was having engine trouble and they had to keep the convoy together. We were just fortunate that we didn't run into any bad weather.

April 13th we arrived in Oran, Algeria, and started to disembark immediately. We were glad to get out where we had plenty of fresh air. We went to a desert-like area outside of town and set up pup tents. There were a lot of Arab children running around but we had to keep them outside our area as they would pick up anything that was not nailed down. At about 4 a.m. the next morning I was checking the guards and noted some barracks bags were missing. They were there just a few minutes before. The area was barren for miles and there was enough light to see that there was no one in sight. I took some men and started searching the area and there was a ravine a short distance away and there we found the bags. The tops of the bags had been cut open and after the men checked them, nothing was missing but cigarettes. We also found a fez nearby that would fit a 10 or 12 year old boy, but they were long gone.

After we got all of our equipment unloaded, we moved up to a Cork Forest and started training out of this area. The trees were evenly spaced and were numbered. We were told the French Government owned them and if you cut one down, we would be fined $100.00. The bark of these trees were made into corks. We were getting a lot of mutton now from Australia and it had quite a bit of wool on it. The men got so they just could not eat it. I asked the cook if we couldn't fix it so it could be eaten and they said, "Yes, barbecued." They dug a pit, put bars and screen wire over it and we were in business. The wood was the problem. Later on when I checked, they had a good fire going. I asked them where they found the wood and they said we just cut down one of those trees. We had to get busy then, dig up the stump, fill in the hole and smooth the ground over. Guess they never did know whatever happened to tree 794. At least we didn't have to pay for it. Incidentally, the BBQ was great. We had a 2nd Lt. Oscar B. Colley, Jr (KIA) from Boston, Mass. who loved

to eat and we had a hard time filling him up. Once we had some hot cake batter left over at breakfast. He ate 18 and finished it off. I tried to get him to fill out an allotment but he said his dad was a banker and didn't need it and he was single and was going to get killed anyway. 1st Lt. John Wickham, Battery "A" 132nd was later on wounded in action, and when he returned home to Boston, he got to visit Lt. Colley's dad.

While in the Cork Forest the men were given passes to go to Rabat. If some of them ran short on money, they would take a sheet to town and sell it to an Arab for $10.00. Sometimes the sheet they sold had been snitched from a buddies bed. This was forbidden and the MP's would confiscate them when they could. Some of the men were showing up with V.D. The higher ups decided to set up a house where they could inspect and control this. This seemed to work fine until the mothers at home read about it in the papers and F.D.R. put a stop to this.

The middle of October 1943 I was sent to Oran and assigned as a Transport Quartermaster Officer (T.Q.M.) The TQM is the Army Officer in charge of the Army supplies and personnel on board and responsible for loading and unloading. I was assigned the Liberty Ship Charles Piez. I was given a scaled plan of each deck, and the areas where equipment could not be placed was blacked out. Also available were small scaled pieces of paper that represented various major pieces of Army equipment. The plan was simple. If the unit had 24 2½ ton trucks, you took 24 pieces of paper out of the box so designated, then placed them in the open area on the deck plan. Continue with the other equipment until all of the open area is covered. Ships going in on "D" Day carried the fighting portion of the units, with maintenance, kitchens, supplies, and their personnel, coming in later. The Charles Piez was scheduled for D + 3 so we had kitchens, supply, maintenancee and heavy engineer equipment. The heavy equipment, such as road rollers, bulldozers, cranes and bridging material was loaded first on the bottom deck. One problem we had with some of the units scheduled were still in the States. Col. John N. Green (deceased) from Abilene, Texas, my C.O. came to me and said he had equipment scheduled for shipment later and would appreciate it if any of it could be worked in on my ship. This I did quite successfully. While we were loading, the C.O. of the 443rd Anticraft Arty. Bn. also came by and stated he wanted to pull his kitchen and maintenance trucks off and put his AA guns on. I told him I couldn't do this. He said the ship his guns were scheduled to go on had broken down. I lived to regret this decision. Anyway, we put his kitchen and maintenance ashore while the fighting was in progress and his guns came in after the shooting was over.

Our convoy sailed on Sept. 5th, 1943 for the invasion of Italy. "D" Day was announced as Sept. 9th, and "H" Hour at 0330. I ate with the ship's officers and we had good food. On Sept. 8th, (my birthday) it was

announced over the PA system that Italy had surrendered. A loud roar went up from the troops and we thought the invasion would be a snap. Our ship arrived in the outer harbor of Salerno on Sept. 12th. Three German Aircraft came over and dropped two bombs. They hit the U.S. Cruiser #72. The AA guns on our ship were manned by Navy personnel and they said the Cruiser was the Boise. One bomb hit the #3 gun at the middle of the ship and the other one, the stern. Black smoke rolled out of the middle and the ship started to list. A short time later the smoke turned white, then the smoke quit so they apparently had the fire out. An American P-38 came in and ran the German AC off and we didn't receive any more bombings that day. At noon we pulled into the inner harbor, about 2 miles off the beach, near the old Roman city of Paestum. We anchored next to a big British repair ship. On Sept. 13th the German AC started bombing again and they were apparently after the big British ship. We moved. I was having hell to get the ship unloaded but did get quite a few vehicles off. When I was able to get barges, I didn't have the men. When I had the men, no barges. Five ships in our convoy were given first priority for unloading. Mine was not one of them. The Merchant Marines came aboard and unloaded some ammunition. I was glad to get it off the ship. On Sept. 14th we were still getting air raids and a few of our barrage balloons that were over some of the ships and along the shore, were shot down. Our ship now had all their booms and cables extending over the hole in the center of the ship. The ships crew warned our Navy gun crews not to fire over them because if they hit a cable, it would take a day to replace it, and if they hit a boom, it probably could not be replaced. I finally got some men but they had been working for 48 hours and had to be pushed all the time to keep them awake. I fed them, then they left. The big British repair ship was hit with a bomb so it pulled out. One bomb hit near the bow of our ship, buckling some plates and making a dent about the size of a helmet. One man on board was looking up during a raid and a piece of fragment knocked out an eye.

Sept. 15th was the most trying day yet. More air raids and about 1500 hours a bomb hit the Liberty Ship Bushrod Washington which was a sister ship to ours. The two ships came off the building dock at the same time. The Washington was anchored close by and I was watching it when it was hit. Pieces of deck and men were blown overboard. The ship caught fire and it spread down #4 hole where gasoline was stored. A fire fighting ship came in and started fighting the fire. Men were jumping overboard and now the flames were really roaring. Small boats were coming in and picking up the men. One man jumped from the deck of the ship into a life boat that was in the water and it split the life boat in two. We could hear men on board ship screaming. We picked up two survivors. One man on our ship split his head open on a railing while

scrambling for cover, and one of the ships officers was almost blasted overboard while he was chasing a puppy. Aboard ship is a terrible place to be during an air raid. If you are on deck, you can get blasted off, and if you are below deck, you can be trapped.

Within an hour the Bushrod Washington was in flames from stem to stern. Word came over that part of their cargo were 500# bombs. We moved again. The fire fighters also apparently got word about the bombs so they pulled out, too. One of the crewmen by the name of Tracy helped me and we finished unloading trucks. The ships crew got nervous about the gasoline on board so they got busy and unloaded it. There was some ammunition on board and they unloaded that too.

The battle ashore wasn't good. We got word to, "Stop unloading, be prepared to evacuate troops." We could see the artillery and bombings at Altavilla.

Sept. 16th we got word to start unloading again. Apparently the tide ashore had turned. The air raids are killing us. Every time we have one, all operations stop and it takes a while to get the men back to work. I went to the beach for a while. While there a German AC shot down a barrage balloon over my head and it came down in flames. I was doing some ducking. Another Liberty Ship was hit, and 30 men were killed while eating. The ship caught fire, and a landing barge tied up to it was loaded with gasoline and it went up in flames. Fire fighters put out the ships fire but the Navy towed the barge out and sunk it with a depth charge. The air raids continued.

Sept. 17th I finally got some men and barges at the same time. They started on the cargo. We were still getting air raids but I made the men continue working. The ship officers received word to be prepared to pull out by 14:30 hours. Our #3 gun crew shot down a German AC, and it went down in flames and crashed on the beach. We were working our butts off now trying to get a Bailey Bridge unloaded, but we just can't get it all off in time. Sailing was delayed one hour so we got everything off except 5 telephone poles. The poles were pitched overboard hoping they would float ashore. I signed for the cargo and got aboard the last barge.

The Bushrod Washington continued to burn most of the night, then early the next morning there was a low rumble in the stern. The ship sank and settled on the bottom, but the bow still protruded above the water. I thought perhaps it would remain there as a memorial to those who died.

The crew of the Washington were volunteer civilians and were they ever anxious to get out of there! They said they made one invasion of Sicily with the 45th Inf. Division but were never bombed and even got to visit ashore, picking up souvenirs. The Captain of the ship stayed in his cabin most of the time (drunk). One old man kept pacing the deck, talking out loud but to no one in particular, repeating "My daughter told me I was too old for this. My daughter told me I was too old for this." etc.

The crew was getting extra pay for hazardous duty pay and they sure earned it on this trip.

Almost every night we were in the harbor Jerry would send an observation plane over. We knew the sound of his engine as it went putt, putt, putt. One night we received orders not to fire at any aircraft that night as the British night fighters would be out. At about 2000 hours we started to hear the fast whirl of another AC, then we could see a stream of tracers streak across the sky, looped over and plunged to earth like a comet. When it hit, there was a big flash and flames leaped up, lighting up the whole countryside. The next day, when I went ashore, they said the pilot had been captured when he landed on the beach. As we approached the shore with the last of our cargo, our barge was stopped off-shore and told to remain there until morning, which we did. The Navy crew operating the barge were real friendly, invited me to dinner, and after dinner a drink made from alcohol and grape juice, they provided me with a bed that night.

Sept. 18th our barge pulled ashore. My jeep and driver were supposed to wait for me when I got off the barge, but he was not allowed to wait on the beach so I had to hitchhike to our outfit. Found the 132nd that afternoon. I was glad to get where I could dig a fox hole. We had a total of 26 air raids.

Sept. 19th. Went to the front, saw 4 German artillery shells explode. That night the Germans pulled out. Sept. 20 I went to a rest area. Reporting back to the Battalion I was assigned Liaison Officer # 1, for the 1st Bn, 142nd Inf. I replaced Lt. John Shirk who had been captured. Big John Shirk was from Oklahoma City, Ok. I was advised Lt. Colley was killed in Altivilla when he was a forward observer.

The rest of Sept., all of Oct. and the first 2 weeks in Nov. were spent in getting replacements of men & equipment and in training. Had time to visit with Lt. Col. John J. Garner, (Deceased) Bn. Commander, 133rd F.A. Bn my old Battery Commander in Corsicana, TX. He said Capt. Randolph Robinson (Deceased), Battery "A" Commander was captured the first thing on every maneuver and he was also captured the first battle they got into. Col. Garner said one thing Capt. Robinsons record was 100%.

Monday, Nov. 14th. It rained all day long, colder than heck. To make things worse we folded our tops back and the windshield down in order not to reflect the sun rays. Lt. John J. Wickham, and Lt. Paul V. Reiley from "A" Battery were our Forward Observers. Wickham lives in Wellesley Hills (Boston area) and Reiley in Johnstown, Pa. We got into Vocha about dark, managed to find a vacant room and spent the night there. The mission of the 36th Inf. Div. was to relieve the 3rd Inf. Div. which had been in combat since Salerno. Early in the morning of the 16th I located Major James L. Minor (Deceased) and reported in . The

weather was still cold but the rain had stopped. Ruts were knee deep from the several days of rain and 4 wheel drive had to be used most of the time. Most of the British trucks were not equipped with the 4 wheel drive and we spent a lot of time pulling them out of the mire.

Nov. 16th. We arrived at the bottom of Mt. Defensa at noon. Here we unloaded our equipment and started climbing. The Inf. had one mule but he could go only about ½ way up; then it was climb and pull by hand the rest of the way. The heavy rain started in again and night caught us about ¼ the way from the top. Everything turned completely black and we were totally blind. Although we were close enough to touch each other, we had to keep in contact with each other by hollering out every few minutes. Bed rolls, clothing, equipment and all were soaked. We felt around to try to find a flat place to sit down but there were none. We finally found a place where someone had started a fox hole and stood there the rest of a miserable night. In my section now I had Sgt. Earl C. Wacker (Chicago, Ill.), Cpl. Paul R. Davidson McKeesport, Pa., and the driver was Pvt. Ralph Ferguson, Jefferson City, Mo.

Nov. 17th. As soon as it was light enough, we started to climb again. This warmed us up some. Found the Infantry on a ledge up near the top of the mountain. Lt. Wickham and Lt. Reily set up observation posts (O.P.s) and Wickhams men set up a tent about 15 feet above my section. About dusk I was manning our O.P. when I heard this God awful noise, and when it passed over it sounded like a runaway freight train, CHEW -CHEW - CHEW. The round hit in the valley making a big flash and bang. This I learnded was a German Nebelwefer. It was like a giant firecracker, a lot of noise but very little damage. It was supposed to affect our morale. The only damage I ever heard of it doing was one hit a truck and destroyed it. They usually fired several at the same time. By noon we had both radio and telephone communications with our fire direction center. We could see for miles and fired on some German Infantry; but the enemy was staying well hidden.

Nov. 18th. The weather was clearing and we could see for miles. Very little was going on and we were sure most of their movements were at night. We fired a few rounds to check our guns. Rained and sleeted all night, tents leaked and we got soaked again. We had eight men in a pup tent that was made for two.

Nov. 19th. Still cold. Fired on a German artillery battery where 3 guns were supposed to be. We used the 155mm guns but after adjusting on the target, they stopped firing as they had to save on ammunition. Fired our 105's on one gun position and never saw any more firing from either position. Fired in a ravine where I saw some Germans going in and out, shells fell in real nice. The Germans fired on us with mortars, killed five of our infantrymen. I hated mortars; they just drop in on you without making a noise, and when they fire they do not make a flash where you can spot them. Then they are such a light weapon they can move in seconds.

Nov. 20th. Things still quiet. Fired on one gun position and got a good adjustment. Rained all night. There were 6 dead Germans and 2 dead 3rd Inf. Division soldiers still in our positions. The 3rd Inf. Div. left them when they moved out. Maj. Minor had really been fussing at the Div. HQ's to get the 3rd Inf. Div. to get the dead people out.

German artillery rounds came in on us, killed 3 Infantrymen.

Nov. 21st. Shot on check points, thing fairly quiet. 3rd Inf. Div. people finally got up to take away their dead. Too steep to use stretchers so they just tied ropes around and drug them down. No rain so we crowded 9 men in our pup tent that night.

Nov. 22nd. A beautiful day. Fired at a couple of vehicles in some woods. An 80mm mortar round came in and killed 1 man, wounded 4. Some of our own artillery rounds hit too close for comfort during the night and early this morning. Lt. Reily fired on a Neblewerfer position. Later on one of our Inf. Co's reported friendly artillery hit in their position but no one was hurt. I called my Bn. They had fired some harassing fire that night, so had the 155's and the Long Toms. All guns fired would be checked.

Fired on Lt. Wickham's and Reily's OP's. Made a lot of noise but no damage. They couldn't locate the launcher sites. Fired on one gun position.

Nov. 24th. Fairly nice day. A 150mm gun was reported as being in a cave at Coordinates 96-10 which had fired and killed one of our Infantrymen and injured 3. One of the injured died later. 2nd Lt. Robert E. Buckley, Chicago, Ill., replaced Lt. Reily. Rained most of the day. Lt. Buckley fired on one gun position. At 2140 hours our artillery laid down a barrage. A few rounds fell short on our positions. One 155mm round fell on Battery "A's" radio tent. PFC Billy P. Horton and Pvt. Charlie J. Deuvall were killed instantly. Both were from Paris, Texas and had come in with the Guard. The round hit between them, throwing one in a tree and the other several feet away wrapping his body with a blanket. The only thing left where the tent was, was a hole and a battery pack for a radio. One man from the Infantry was also killed and 8 injured. Two of them died later. We were devastated. Division Artillery requested permission to fire on the reverse slope, close to our troops and asked me to observe. This request was denied as Maj. Minor said we all were in a very nervous state.

Nov. 25th. Rain and cloudy. Worked all morning repairing and replacing parts of our telephone lines that had been destroyed by our Artillery. Lt. Charles L. Hearn replaced me at 1330 hrs. Went down the mountain to a cave where some of our men were staying. This crew helped maintain our telephone lines and brought up supplies. Our kitchen sent up turkey and all the trimmings. Gee, but it was good!

Nov. 26th. Sun came out, shaved, cleaned up and put on clean clothes. Rested mostly.

Nov. 27th. Took it easy that morning, went back to the Infantry's rear echelon that afternoon. The 1st Bn. 142nd Inf. were making plans to circle around the high peaks of Mt. LaDefensia and take a high ridge 368 and Mt. Maggorie. Ate supper with them and they had turkey. I timed that just right.

Nov. 28th. Didn't feel very good today. Had a can of "C" rations (beans) for lunch but got ham for supper.

Nov. 29th—Dec. 1st. Got things organized and prepared to move out with the Infantry on their attack.

Dec. 2nd. After dark we moved out ¼ mile to the side of a hill. Spent the night there.

Dec. 3rd. At 0430 hours we received a heavy shelling which lasted until we moved out at daylight. Started raining at noon and continued throughout the night. We carried our overcoats and rain cotas, but no bedding. Everything had to be carried on our backs. We were supposed to take our last objective and register by noon but were held on the side of the hill until afternoon. We were shelled but had no casualties. A Jerry mortar round hit the steep rocks just above our heads but fortunately all of the explosion went over us and we just got a good shower of rocks. There was practically no warning, just a swish and then a bang. By then it was too late to duck. The 2nd Bn., 142nd took our objective so we occupied it and they moved out. Jerry pulled out during the night and left two of their Artillery Observers sleeping and our troops captured them. They said their Infantrymen didn't like them because every time they fired a round, the Americans fired 10 back and the Infantrymen were the ones who got hit. The 2nd Bn. fixed bayonets before leaving for their objective. I started back to our C.P. at 1630 hours and got caught in a Jerry Arillery barrage. Had Cpl. Paul Davidson and Pvt. Ralph Ferguson with me. We huddled under a rock ledge for a while but things got too hot so we made a mad dash for a ravine. I fell and cut my hand. We passed one of our Infantrymen sprawled out on the ground. We didn't slow down enough to check him but with a quick glance we thought he was dead. Later, after the shelling slowed down, we went back to check on him. He was gone, must have just fainted. Heard another Infantryman calling for a medic, we got one for him. When we first started out, they gave us 4 chocolate bars each. Ate one today, no other rations were available. It rained all night. Davidson, Ferguson and I sat in the same fox hole the rest of the night with my raincoat and overcoat over us.

Dec. 4th. Continued to rain all day. Jerry shelled us some but the rounds either hit the front side of the hill or went over us. Sgt. Earl Wacker and PFC William Eller joined our party. Rain continued all night, Sgt. Wacker, Eller and I sat in the same fox hole under our raincoats and overcoats. Ate another chocolate bar.

Dec. 5th. Rain continued all day. Jerry continued to shell our position and an Infantry Sgt. got killed. Word came in that Jerry was expected to

attack our position, but he didn't. The Inf. supply train was supposed to bring in rations the first night but still had not arrived. I took Cpl. Davidson and we went back on our supply route. Part of the trail came around the front side of Mt. La Defensia and was exposed to direct fire from Jerry's 88's. Jerry continued to shell this part of the trail regularly. A dead mule and various supplies were scattered along and down off the trail. They had been caught by the 88s. Davidson and I grabbed a case of "K" rations and hurried out before the next shelling started. Went back to the Inf. C.P., gave Maj. Jim Minor a case of rations and told him where the supply was. He sent a detail out and got enough for the Battalion. Got about an hour's sleep and was then advised to get ready to move.

Dec. 5th. At 130 hours we started back to the rear on the dark supply trail. More rations and dead Infantrymen were found along the trail. The 88s started coming in again. One round hit right, the next left, the next over and we knew where the 4th would be but it never came. The Artillery observers our Infantry had captured said their Artillery was limited to 3 rounds for each target, guess this is what saved us. Got back to the rear area at daybreak. It was wet and muddy and we were cold, tired and hungry. Prepared a cup of hot beef broth (which I never could stand before) and I thought it was delicious. Curled up then and slept till noon. An Italian Infantry Battalion, located nearby, invited me over for a steak lunch and I accepted. Went over to our Infantry Bn. and had supper with them. Capt. John R. Gabbert from Paris, Texas relieved me. We slept in a cave.

Dec. 6th. Capt. Gabbert moved out with the Infantry and I returned to the 132nd Bn. C.P. Was told I was going on R & R.

Dec. 7th. Cleaned up, rested, ate and slept.

Dec. 8th. Left early for the rest camp. Rode all day back to Salerno then cut back on the coast road to Sorrento. Stayed in a hotel there overlooking the Bay of Naples. Really nice, just eating, sleeping and resting.

Dec. 14th. Went to the Isle of Capri. One of the native guides kept calling "Blue Grotto, Blue Grotto." I finally said o.k. and we went down to the shore and got into a wooden row boat. He rowed us out until we came to a cave in a high rock wall. Other boats had gathered at the entrance and as the sea swelled, the water would close the entrance, then the cave would open when the sea receded. A boat loaded with a guide and a tourist would shoot through the opening just at the right time. When it came our turn, we both lay down and at the precise moment, the guide caught the rope and pulled us through. Once on the inside it just looked like an ordinary cave with a water floor but once the entrace was closed by the water, the interior darkened and the water turned a bright blue-green and so did the interior. We could then see a variety of fish swimming below. I wondered what would happen if a boat got stuck in

the entrancec No sooner had this thought come to mind when I heard a loud scream and a boat was trapped. The men stuck their heads out of the water and pulled the boat on through. It was full of water but they bailed it out. After we got back on shore, some guides started hollering, "Green Grotto, Green Grotto" which was another cave. I said, "No thanks, not for me." Spent the night on the island.

Dec. 15th. Returned to the 132nd C.P. then went up to the 1st Bn., 142nd Inf. and joined in their attack on Mt. Lungo. According to the information we received the Italian Inf. Regiment, which was now fighting on our side, attacked Mt. Lungo on a frontal assault with 500 men. It was a complete disaster. The whole Regiment was just about wiped out. The 142nd moved out at dusk from Mt. La Defensia, crossed the valley and attacked up the back side of Mt. Lungo. Just before we moved out, word came down to "fix bayonets." It give you a funny feeling when you are armed with a caliber 45 pistol. We just walked up and took the back side of the mountain without firing an artillery or rifle round. We dug in.

Dec. 16th. When morning came Jerry started carrying supplies to their troops on the front of the mountain. Our Infantry captured them. Word soon got back to Jerry, and their Artillery opened up with everything they had. One of our Infantrymen, in a fox hole next to mine, received a direct hit and was killed. Cpl. Davidson's helmet was blown off and the concussion burst his ear drums and shattered all the tubes in our radio. The shelling also cut our telephone lines. Cpl. Davidson went out and repaired the line and we were able to give our troops Artillery support after a short interuption. Cpl. Davidson was later awarded the Silver Star for his action. That night the 15th Inf., 3rd Inf. Division relieved the 142nd Inf. the 39th F.A. Bn., the 15th Inf. direct support Arty. Bn, was unable to get into position so the 132nd and our observers remained in position and gave them direct support. We moved our O.P. back 30 or 40 feet in order to have better protection from Jerry's Artillery.

Dec. 17th. Things are fairly quiet today, real cold, guess everyone is trying to keep warm.

Dec. 18th. Capt. John D. Bennett from Corsicana, Texas (and an Aggie) relieved me and I went back to our C.P. that night.

Dec. 19th. Rested.

Dec. 20th. Back up to 1st Bn., 15th Inf. C.P. Rained all night.

Dec. 21st. Went over to our O.P. and relieved Capt. Bennett. Jerry's artillery gave us another going over.

Dec. 22nd. The observers from the 39th F.A. Bn. had been oriented and their guns in position and adjusted so we checked it to them and went back to our outfit. Got back by noon.

Dec. 23rd. Our gun Batteries and most of our outfit moved to the Venafro sector yesterday and we followed suit today. Rained all night.

Dec. 24th. Almost all of our area and roads are under enemy observation. All trucks and men that are not necessary to fire the guns, were left back with Service Battery where they had cover.

Dec. 25th. Christmas. Things are quiet, had a big turkey dinner with all the trimmings.

Dec. 26th. Rested.

Dec. 27th. Snowed, still taking it easy.

Dec. 28th. Back to action, went up on Hill 950. Friendly units are holding this hill and we will be ready to support them.

Dec. 29th. A cold day. The 142nd took over the responsibility of the area. Registered on a check point.

Dec. 30th. Still cold but things are quiet.

Dec. 31st. Started snowing, then it changed to rain, then to sleet in the afternoon. I now had Sgt. Earl Wacker, Pvt Ralph Ferguson and a Pvt. James Comer from Bonham, Texas with me. We dug out an area, cleared the rocks and spread 3 shelter halves over it. The 4 of us slept there.

Jan. 1st, 1944. HAPPY NEW YEAR. High winds and a heavy snow hit us during the night, our tent had just eased down on us. We were so nice and warm for a change; we didn't dig out until noon. It was still cold and everything was covered with a foot of snow. The snow around the edge of our tent started melting and wet our blankets.

Jan. 2nd. Still windy, things are quiet, had to sleep on wet blankets.

Jan. 3rd. Weather finally cleared and we had a beautiful day. I adjusted our Artillery on a trail through the mountains. About the only thing that could use it would be a donkey or foot personnel. Lt. Loois N. Quast was from St. Paul, Minn. and was manning another O.P. not very far away. His radio went out so I gave him mine as we had telelphone communications. Pvt. Kenneth T. Redman from Arp, Texas and our jeep driver brought me another radio. Had a little snow that afternoon.

Jan. 5th. Cold, windy and a few snow flurries. Everything quiet.

Jan. 6th. Cold, windy and snow. Still quiet.

Jan. 7th. Weather finally changed and we had a beautiful day. Jerry sent some shells toward us but they went way over.

Jan. 8th. Went back down the hill. Arrived at noon and had a good lunch.

Jan. 9th. Promoted to Captain. Col. John Green and Maj. Clifford M. Snow (deceased) from Abilene, Texas did the honors of pinning on the new bars. The effective date of rank was Dec. 1st, 1943.

Jan. 9th. Given the day off.

Jan. 11th. Appointed Commanding Officer of Headquarters Battery. Capt. John Bennett was appointed Liaison Officer #1 in my place. The rest of Jan. and Feb. I was kept busy seeing that the men were properly fed, supplied, disciplined, clothed, and treated fairly and properly. I was

also to see that they were physically and mentally able to do their work. As a unit commander I had the responsibility of censoring outgoing mail, see that the equipment is not abused, used properly and operational. I also had to post and keep records. During this time we started to prepare for the Rapido River crossing. We laid miles of wire. We had started to move in to position to attack when our part was called off. Two Inf. Regiments had already been wiped out. Our Battalion then moved within view of Cassino and Abby Montecassino and watched as our Air Force reduced it to rubble in a few hours.

Censoring mail was really a pain in the neck. Usually it was late when you got in and maybe you would take time to write home, but no, there was a pile of letters to be censored. We had a switchboard operator who wrote his wife one to three letters every day. There was little he could write about but he always filled several pages and after it was censored there sometimes was little left.

I decided to take the mail up to Capt. Charles Hearn from Italy, Texas and his men who were up with the Infantry. As I approached his area, I asked one of the Infantrymen if he knew where Capt. Hearn was located. He told me where he was and then said "and he's the best artillery officer I ever saw." I said what makes you think that. He said, "He fired one round at a moving German truck yesterday and hit it, setting it on fire." I said "Yes, that is good." After talking to Charlie I asked him if he hit a moving truck with just one round and he said "Yes, and a funny thing, I wasn't even shooting at it."

Before the Air Force had bombed the Abbey, we had strict orders not to hit it. Well, some artillery outfit, and I don't believe it was us, accidently hit it with a round. Well, there was a big investigation over that.

Mar. 1st. The 142nd Inf. was pulled out of the line yesterday and we are now in the role of general support, reinforcing the fires of the 1st Bn, 67th Group, D.I.A., French Forces.

Mar. 3rd. I went up to our Bn O.P. on Mt. Castellone near Hill 706. The French Forces were manning the defenses and we were to provide Arty. support when needed. This hill stuck out in the German's positions and it was possible for the Germans to shell it from both the right and left flanks, as well as the front. This was a barren hill and the Germans continued to work it over. It rained. I had a communications problem with the French as they couldn't speak English and I couldn't speak French. We had 2 prearranged barrages, called Red and Blue. These 2 English words they knew. The Blue Barrage was well out in front of their lines and the Red Barrage was very close in. I had an O.P. out on the hill, the radio, tent and personnel down in what probably used to be a wine cellar. The cellar had about a 20 foot roof of rock and dirt. When the shellings got too hot on the O.P., we would make a made dash for the cellar.

Mar. 4th. It has been raining off and on all day, cleared enough to adjust on some check points. At 1700 hours the French reported that the Germans were attacking, "Blue, Blue, Blue" so I called in Fire Blue Barrage. Our Battalion laid down a barrage out in front of our position. Shortly thereafter they came running up yelling "Red, Red, Red" so I called the Battalion to fire the Red Barrage. Well here it comes, a few rounds hit behind us, some on top and a bunch out in front. This would have been fine if we were engaged in hand to hand combat but I was not going to call for any more Red Barrages. Some of them might have been Germans mixed in with ours but I wasn't taking any chances. Luckily nobody got hurt. Found out later the Germans attacked the unit down on our right flank but weren't even close to our troops.

Mar. 5th. Morning cleared, fired on some mule pack trains coming along the mountain trail. I could tell when our shells got in close as the mules started bucking and running when the shrapnel hit them. A heavy snow moved in that afternoon and just about shut things down.

Mar. 6th. Was relieved at noon and came down off the hill.

Mar. 7th-11th. Back with HQ's Battery running the unit. From most of the roads and around our gun positions we could look up and see Cassino and the Benedictine Abbey on Montecassino. Likewise the Germans could see most of our positions and movements. HQ's Battery's kitchen was in a mill that ground grain. The mill was also attached to a home where the owner lived. Col. John Green had been giving the cooks a hard time about not wearing their helmets when they were outside the building. One day I complimented T-4 John A. Gusman, Jr. from N.Y. City for wearing his helmet. He said, "I always wear my helmet now like Col. Green said. One day I step out, I had my helmet on and bang a piece of shrapnel hit it. I never take it off now." He showed me a big dent in his helmet to prove his point. Around the bend in the road was the 132nd's C.P. and F.D.C. located in the upper floor of a 2 story home. It was typical Italian, rock walls, tile roof. Col. Green had his tent put up beside the house and slept in it a couple of nights before Jerry Arty. rounds hit fairly close, putting 4 or 5 holes in it. The next day he had his cot moved inside. The old woman that lived there kept living in the bedroom. Her daughter had married and was staying out in the woods.

They had dug a cave and were hiding from the Germans as they were drafting the young Italians into a labor force. He was going to be sure the Germans weren't coming back before he came out. We often gave the old lady leftovers from the Officer's Mess and she was so appreciative. One night she invited Maj. Clifford Snow, M-Sgt. Billy K Skidmore (Deceased) from Paris, TX, and me down for supper. We told her we knew she was having a hard time but she insisted and said it was already cooking. We went down and she brought out a big platter of spaghetti and set it in front of Maj. Snow. I figured she would bring out plates and we could all

get some as it seemed to be enough for 3 or 4 people. Imagine my suprise when she brought out a big platter and set it in front of me and one for Sgt. Skidmore.

It really was delicious and after a couple glasses of wine, I managed to eat it all but did have some difficulty to keep her from giving me some more.

Col. Green spent a lot of time up with Col. George E. Lynch from Orlando, Florida and the 142nd Inf. Regimental C.O. One night while he was up with Col. Lynch I was the Officer in charge of the F.D.C. We could hear the Nebelwefers going off and see them explode in the 142nd's area but none of our observers could locate the launcher sites. Anyway Col. Green called the F.D.C. and asked for me, "Jones", he said "What are you shooting at?" I told him "Nothing sir." Then he said "Well dammit get to shooting." I asked "Where, sir". Then he said "It doesn't make a dam, just get to shooting". I started sticking a pin in likely launcher sites on the map and firing volleys. We would fire at several then wait a while until the Nebelwefers fired again then repeat the procedure. This lasted most of the night but we had no further complaints. Later Col. Green told me the Infantry were happy when they heard our shells going over even though they were catching heck.

Our cook, John Gusman could speak Italian. One day he said, "Capt. I never leave the kitchen again. I asked him why not and he said, "Well I asked an Italian civilian if he knew where I could get some wine? He said "Sure, follow me." We walked quite some time in the dark, finally I asked him "Aren't we behind the German lines?" He said "Yes". I said "Oh please, let's get back right now." Gusman said "Boy, I'll never do that again".

Mar. 12th. Elements from the 131st F.A. Bn. arrived today and started replacing our units. We started infiltrating back to Service area.

Mar. 13th. All of our units are completely out of the line and in a rest area near Maddoli, Italy.

Mar. 14th.-Apr. 30th. We have had some time to rest, clean up and visit Naples and Pompeii before starting intensive training again. According to my figures the 132nd F.A. Bn. has been in the line for 122 straight days. I visited both Naples and Pompeii. The harbor of Naples is still full of sunken and wrecked ships and the people still live in caves or near an air raid shelter. The German planes pay them an occasional visit. Pompeii was very educational and I really enjoyed my visit there.

May 1st. At 1300 hours I left the Bn. area which was bivouaced near Avellino, Italy. I went to the front to find a place to move our C.P. No rain for some time and the roads were real dusty.

May 2nd. Maj. Snow and I ate lunch at II Corps HQ's. We were up in the Miturno sector. We crossed the Margelono River and had to have a

special pass from Division HQ's to go to the front. We had lost some vehicles and personnel who had passed through the front lines before they realized it, they were taken prisoners. M-Sgt. James T. Foster from Corsicana, TX and with the 36th Inf. Div. Arty. was one that got captured this way. The passes were an effective way to eliminate the lack of knowledge on the situation. We selected a house for a C.P. and put up a sign "RESERVED - C.P. 132nd F.A. Bn." This was a nice house. There was no damage and it was located in an orange grove where the fruit was ready for picking. The C.P. was located at the back and SE of Minuturno. We looked around in the town and found several buildings that would make good O.P.'s. This sector had been relatively quiet for several months, and there was very little damage to the town. I brought in a detail and they laid wire to the Battery positions. Men working in the new A Btry's area reported some 170mm rounds hit in real close to them. We selected a building for an O.P., sandbagged and cleaned it up.

May 3rd HQ's Btry. arrived in a bivouac area near Qualiano, Italy and after they were settled, I went back to the front. That night we laid wire to the O.P. which was about a mile from the C.P. We tried to keep our movement a secret so radio silence was maintained. Most of the movements were after dark and as quiet as possible. Firing was also limited and we were allowed to register only one gun. The weather remained nice but the roads were still dusty.

May 3th. Sent Lt. Marion B. Findley from San Antonio, TX with a detail to clean and guard the house selected for the C.P. The Batteries were bivouaced about 30 miles from the front and the new area was about 3400 yards from the front lines.

May 5 -7th. Worked on new area then went back to get Btry. ready to move.

May 9th. Brought HQ's Btry. up but didn't cross Garigliano River until after dark. Moved in, got everyone situated. The gun Btry's also closed in that night. It was pitch black dark. I checked my men and was headed back to our C.P. when a big black dog ran up behind me, stuck his nose in my butt and went "WOOF". I must have jumped 40 feet, pulled my pistol and swung it around but the dog was gone. I couldn't shoot it because of the noise. Walked back toward the C.P. and dang if the dog didn't do the same thing again. I must have jumped another 40 feet.

May 10th. At 0400 hrs. a lot of Arty. rounds (about 75) went over our C.P. toward the crossroad. Later about 50 more rounds went over. They were believed to be 75mm and no damage was reported.

Went up to the O.P. in a castle, smoke limited visibilty so I went back to the Btry.

May 11th. Capt. Floyd D. Gattis from Dallas, TX and I went up to the Bn. O.P. Very little going on so went back to HQ's at noon. Ate lunch

and went back to the O.P. at 1500 hrs. My men said some rounds hit close to the house where we were sleeping last night but it never woke me up, too tired. We were in direct support of the 85th Div. Arty. and 2300 hrs. we started firing a heavy Arty. preparation. The 85th, along with the Poles, French, British and other units, were starting a big push. A German shell hit in the room next to us and blew a big hole in the floor.

May 12 - 14th. Continued heavy Arty. firing.

May 15th. The front lines were now moving away from us and we only fired a few unobserved missions.

May 16th. Got orders early this morning to be prepared to move out at 0800 hrs. but at 1030 hrs. the move was cancelled. We got some rest, wrote letters, cleaned up and ate oranges. We found out that oranges weren't just for breakfast.

May 17th. At 1500 hrs. we started infilterating back to the Qualiano bivouac area.

May 18th. At 1600 hrs. our units started out for the port of embarkation at Bagnoli, Italy. We started loading on a LST (Landing Ship Tank).

May 19th. At 1715 hrs. our convoy departed the port for Anzio.

May 20th. Weather windy, scattered showers during the night and the sea was rough. The weather was misty and drizzly when we docked at Anzio at 0830 hrs. We moved out to a bivouac area. The 10th F.A. Bn., 3rd Inf. Div. had prepared gun positions and laid wire lines for us. We make improvements during the night.

May 21st. Our units moved into their positions during the night. Things have been fairly quiet since we landed here. Col. Green took a group of us up to look over the area. We were looking for some roads out. There were quite a few dead soldiers in the area (30-40) and most of them were Americans. They had been there for quite some time as their bodies had turned black and the odor was almost unbearable. I was told they had been unable to recover the dead because of earlier enemy rifle fire. I heard a groan and moved a blanket back that covered one of the bodies and the man was still alive. He didn't know how long he had been there. I got the Medics.

During the night there was one heck of an explosion in Anzio. We assumed it was the 1 round fired nightly by the Anzio Express. We stayed away from the downtown part of Anzio as most of the Artillery rounds seemed to land there.

May 22nd. Registered a gun and were ready to fire missions.

May 23rd. We were in direct support of the 39th F.A. Bn., 3rd Inf. Division. Started firing a heavy preparation at 0545 hrs. for a big push to start at 0600 hrs. Heavy firing continued all day and night. Observed and unobserved missions were fired.

May 24th. Orders were received to prepare to move out but were later cancelled and firing continued throughout the afernoon and night.

May 25 -26th. Front lines very fluid causing our units to displace several times.

May 27th. Our mission was changed to general support of the 27th F.A.Bn., 3rd Inf. Div.

May 28th. Our mission changed to general support of the 131st F.A. Bn., 36th Inf. Div. Some missions were fired.

May 29th. Our mission changed to direct support of the 142nd Inf.

May 30th - 31st. Efforts were being made to break out of the beach head but stiff resistance was encountered and no progress to date.

Jun 1st - 3rd. Bn. continued to support the 142nd who were attacking the hills to the north. Still little or no progress.

Jun. 4th. Word came in this morning that it is apparent that the Germans have pulled out completely. We were instructed to form a combat team and pursue the enemy until resistance is met. Part of the 142nd Inf. was motorized along with the artillery's fighting elements. Tanks, tank destroyers and recon. troops moved out and reached the outskirts of Rome that afternoon. The column had stopped and Col. Green came back and had us pull off the road and next to a 2 story building which was previously used as a tavern. We assembled around Col. Green and a sniper fired at us, knocking a heel off of Lt. Marion Findley's boot. Col. Green told us to get ready to set up there. I told Lt. Findley to search the building for snipers and booby traps. Snipers continued to take an occasional potshot at our column. A few minutes later there was a rattle of machine gun fire and Lt. Findley came running out, covered with a chalky dust and exclaiming "A sniper almost got me". Upon checking, we found out when he passed a window, one of our tankers thought he was a sniper and opened up with his 50 cal. machine gun. The bullets just exploded the white stone wall and covered the inside with white dust. Lt. Findley wasn't hurt physically. Rear guard action had been reported and we set up for a possible tank attack. In order to assist the Inf. in moving, we loaded them on our ammunition and gun trucks.

Jun 5th. After midnight the column started moving into Rome. The movement was very slow, move a bit then stop, move a bit them stop again.

My jeep reached the Coliseum at about 0300 hrs. and 1st Sgt. W.E. "Abe" Spangler (Deceased from Trenton, TX was in the back seat and decided to cook breakfast. He had a little oneburner gas stove, a can of bacon and some fresh eggs and he was in business. Later on one of my officers said he was in a truck behind ours and he said he was so hungry coming through Rome & he thought he kept smelling bacon cooking. I just didn't have the heart to tell him where it was coming from. Our part of the convoy had moved well out of Rome by sun up. Later on we saw pictures in the paper showing the Italians welcoming the Americans into Rome. I said I wished we had been there. An Italian woman said the Italians in Rome treated the Germans the same way when they were leaving Rome. Big crowds, people giving the soldiers wine and bread and showering them with flowers and the girls kissing them. Guess that's life.

Some do the work and others get the glory.

About 4 miles out of Rome our front elements hit a road block. Our trucks were stopped along the highway. I had not heard anything from Col. Green lately so went forward to see what was happening. The Inf. were deployed in a ditch below a hill so I stopped the jeep and started walking. Went over the hill, past a 2 story house, cut across a bend in the road and was about to pass a house and cross the highway when the German Arty. started falling. I ducked inside the house as rounds fell in both the front and back yards. When it stopped I made a mad dash for the 2 story house when a German machine gun opened up from the 2nd story. I detoured around the house and had just about reached my jeep when Gen. Fred Walker came up in his jeep. I stopped him and advised him of the situation. He said "Capt. get those men out of that ditch and go up and wipe out that German machine gun nest". I quickly explained I was Arty. and had a unit on the highway and needed to get back. (I didn't tell him I didn't think a 45 was any match for a machine gun.) He said O.K. and said "Hey you Lt. in the ditch, come up here". I got busy getting back to my Battery and never did learn how well the Lt. made out. Found out Col. Green was up near the head of the column with Col. Lynch and they had been pinned down with anti-tank fire from a road block and were temporarily unable to get to their radios.

LBtry. "A" was put in position and with their support in Inf. soon wiped out the resistance.

Jun. 6th - 24th. Movement became very fast and most of the communications were by radio as there was not enough time to lay wire. Resistance was very little to none. Our units advanced approximately 150 miles. We were now 10 to 12 miles past Fallonica, Italy.

June 25th. Received orders to remain in place, be prepared to be relieved.

June 26 - July 4th. Our unit moved to a bivouac area North of Rome. The men were given passes to visit Rome. I visited the Vatican and the Pope came out on a balcony and blessed objects the people held up. I held up a cross that Lt. Wickham had given me. It must have worked as I was never wounded. After the war was over, I gave it back to Lt. Wickham with the Popes blessing. Wick is Catholic and I am sure it means much more to him now.

July 5 - Aug 9th. We moved to an area near Salerno and started training for the Southern France Invasion.

Aug. 10th. Loaded on a LST near Naples, Italy.

Aug. 15. The 36th Div. started landing at 0800 hours in the vicinity of St. Raphiel, France. I watched one single German aircraft come over the invasion fleet. He was flying very high and dropped one bomb that started down in a normal drop, then the bomb leveled off until it was over one of our LST's, then it dropped and hit the LST. All during this time no shots were being fired. Immediately after the bomb burst, the air

was filled with AA fire. It was too late as the aircraft was well on his way back home. I was told some men from the 131st FA Bn were killed. Our Bn. went in on "H" hour + 153 minutes on a beach established by the 143rd Inf. We were reinforcing the fires of the 133rd F.A. Bn. We went into firing positions about a mile from the beach. I didn't hear of any resistance to our landing. Quite a few German prisoners were already lined up at the beach and they started surrendering when the first units landed. Those that I saw were old men. No wonder they didn't offer any resistance. The 142nd Inf. came in at 1530 hours and we gave them our fire support mission.

Aug. 16th. The 142nd met some resistance but continued their drive and were some 10 miles in by nightfall. Col. Green continued to move us up in order to give the Inf. artillery support. During one of the moves Col. Green had the Battery Commanders and was selecting areas for the Batteries to move up to. A Frenchman ran up and yelled, "Germans, Germans". He then pointed to a house a short ways up. We asked, "How many", and he indicated 20 on his fingers. There were only 6 of us and we wern't about to get into a fire fight with 20 Infantrymen. We told the Frenchman, "No and pointed to our 45's". He said no, and indicated they had laid down their arms and were ready to surrender. We said well that was different so as we approached the farm house, some 40 Germans came out of the celler with their hands behind their heads.

Aug. 17-Aug. 30. The regimental combat team entered into a fast moving situation, some days covering a hundred miles. We headed Northeast, near the Italian border and over to Montelimar. The Division was making an effort to cut off the German 19th Army from moving up the Rhone valley. Here a big battle took place. A German Infantry Regiment attacked the 142nd. The attack was stopped and the 1st Bn. counter attacked but was pushed back. Our artillery continued heavy firing and our ammunition was running low. The enemy continued to come through. Our combat team made another sweep and occupied the high ground near Livron-sur-Drone, overlooking the Rhone River. The 155th FA Bn. reinforced our fires and we cut the flow of trucks and horse drawn artillery. When our artillery destroyed a truck and the column stopped, another column would pull up beside them in an effort to pass. When the artillery stopped that column, another would try to pass and soon there were masses of burning vehicles and dead or wounded troops. This action destroyed the fighting ability of the German 19th Army.

Sept.-Dec.—The 142nd continued to pursue the Germans and our unit gave them their artillery support. Things moved along so fast at times that a Fire Direction Center (F.D.C.) was sent with an individual battery to give the infantry close support.

One position, where we had our officers quarters set up in a French home, Lt. Findley came in to wash up for supper and started to pour water in his helmet from our drinking water. I told Findley not to use our

drinking water to wash with, but to go out in the yeard to a pump. He departed and came back shortly and said, "I just can't wash my face in that water because it stinks so bad." I laughed and told him he used the wrong pump. One pump was well water and the other was from an underground cistern where residue from the barn was stored until it could be pumped out and hauled to the fields in what we called "honey wagons."

We moved into area where the Germans had burned quite a few French homes in order to clear out a field of fire. The French families had doubled up in many cases and rooms were extremely scarce. I had set up our kitchen under a shed connected to one of the homes and some of our men were sleeping in the attic which was full of hay. Early Thanksgiving morning my cooks started to light a gasoline stove. It flamed up catching some of the hay on fire that was sticking out between the cracks. In seconds the whole thing was in flames. My men sleeping in the attic grabbed a handful of their clothing and dashed out. Their shoes, rifles and other belongings burned. They alerted the people inside and they got out but their home, furniture, clothing and a bull and cow were destroyed. The people living there were so mad at the Germans because they said they returned during the night and set it on fire. I just couldn't tell them any different. I called Capt. Herbert C. Bishop (deceased) who was from Joshua, TX and had our Serrvice Battery and told him our kitchen and turkeys all went up in smoke, and before noon he had a completely new kitchen set up plus turkeys and trimmings. There just wasn't a better supply officer anywhere.

In one of our positions we had the C.P. and the F.D.C. in adjoining rooms in a French house. Maj. Floyd Gattis was on duty in the F.D.C. I had found a couple of bottles of champagne in a cellar and took them to Maj. Gattis. It was about 1000 hours and B. Gen. Walter Hess was in the C.P. talking to Col. Green. I asked Gattis if he thought the champagne was any good and he said "Let's open a bottle and find out." He twisted the wire loose that held the cork and nudged it, then POW the cork flew off. Gen. Hess and Col. Green opened the door to see what all the noise was about and there stood Gattis trying to hold the champagne from foaming out but it just made it spray further. Gen. Hess just laughed.

Our C.P. was now located just outside Atrasbourg. I went through some large warehouses overlooking the Rhine River for possible O.P.'s. One was filled with Russian women that the Germans had brought in as laborers. They were in various stages of cleaning up. Most of the warehouses were filled with boxes of supplies for the German armies. In the basement of one there were half dozen large barrels containing several thousand gallons of wine but none had a spigot. I returned to the unit and told Col. Green about the wine and he said to take some 5 gallon water cans and fill them up. By the time I got back, the infantry had been

through and when they wanted a cup they just shot a hole in a barrel. The wine continued to pour until the barrel was empty. The next soldier then shot a hole in another barrel so he could fill his cup. Before long all the barrels had a hole in them and there was about a foot of wine all over the floor. I managed to get enough out of one to fill my cans. When I returned, Col. Green sampled it and said it was good so we had wine with our meals.

My O.P. crew at this time was made up of Cpl. Paul Davidson, Pvt. Francis Z. Gawrych from Jersey City, N.J., HQ's Battery and 2 men from A Battery, Privates Newton Bethel and Vernon D. Paradise from Dallas. Went back up to the warehouses and the infantry had been through opening every box there and throwing it down.

While in Italy I had promoted Benjamin Calderio from Philadelphia, Pa. to Cpl. He had received a letter from his mother congratulating him on his promotion. Calderio said he had two older brothers, one was a Col. in the Air Force and the other one a Capt. in the Navy. His mother wrote that the other boys had done O.K. but just think he was a Cpl. Caldero laughed and said his mother didn't know the difference between a Cpl. and a Col.

The cook for our Officers' Mess was a Sgt. Fred L. Jones from Corsicana, TX. I knew Fred's family and his dad ran a butcher shop. Fred worked for his dad along with four other brothers and could butcher a calf and have him in a freezer in minutes. When Col. Green assigned me as HQ's Btry. Commander, he gave me one rule, "No powdered eggs." I appointed Lt. Royal H. Seward from St. Queens Village, N.Y. that in addition to his Communications Officer duties he would be the Mess Officer and see that we had fresh eggs. During one of Col. Green's Officer meetings he read a letter from the Division HQ's which stated in part, "Due to the shortage of food with the French people, there will be no barterings as this will just increase their shortages." Col. Green said he expected his men to obey this order. After the meeting, I told Lt. Seward to cancel his tour to get eggs, which he did, so the next morning we had powdered eggs. When breakfast was over Col. Green told me "I thought I made it clear that there would be no powdered eggs." The only thing I could say was "Yes Sir." I then told Seward to get the eggs again but not to get caught.

One day Sgt. Jones said he knew where he could buy a calf and we could have some steaks if I wanted him to get it. We had fixed "C" rations every way imaginable and they still tasted like "C" rations and if I was going to get court martialed over eggs, I might as well make it steaks too. He said it would cost $50.00 so I gave him the money. Next day, Sunday at lunch, the Division Chaplain dropped in and of course we invited him to eat with us. When he left he said, "That was the best "C" rations I have ever eaten."

When we left Italy, Lt. Stanley Haywood from North Carolina was in the hospital. After we got to France Lt. Haywood came back to our unit and we picked him up on our Morning Report. Later on we had an officers meeting (without Lt. Haywood present) and Col. Green read a letter from the Commanding General of the Peninsula Base Command in Italy which read something like this: "1st Lt. Haywood Stanley was hitchhiking and two of our MP's passed him on the highway. Lt. Haywood called out, "You Son-of-a-bitch". This letter is sent to you for appropriate action." All of our officers present got a big laugh out of this. Col. Green said he was going to ask the group what kind of punishment they thought would be appropriate but the laughs pretty well indicated what action he should take. Lt. Stanley told me that when he got well enough to leave the hospital, he was afraid they were going to assign him to a unit in Italy and he wanted back with us so he went AWOL and hitchhiked to France and back to his old outfit. It's pretty tough to court-martial an officer who goes AWOL to get back in combat. Most of our men hated the PBS MP's as they never were in combat and when they went to Naples, they were given a hard time over dress, shaves, etc. Later on this was changed by putting front line troops in their place.

Pvt. Ralph Ferguson was a jeep driver for our Liaison Section #1. He was a good soldier when we were in combat but let us get into a rest area and he would manage to get into trouble. He said he had the same trouble at home. His dad was the chief of police and he left town before he got into trouble and got his dad fired. Anyway he went to California, got a girl pregnant and joined the Army before they had a shotgun wedding.

I court-martialed Ferguson a couple of times for getting drunk. When we were in a rest area near Letholy, France, Ferguson took his jeep, drove to town, bought some wine and on the way back clipped and broke a wagon wheel off a farmers wagon. Again I gave him a Summary Court, fined him and made him pay for the repair of the wagon.

The 1st Bn., 142nd was in a holding position. Nothing was happening. I decided to go up and check on Ferguson as he was up with the infantry. I stopped at a house and asked the infantry soldiers there where the artillery section was. They said, "next house". Just before I got to the house, I heard several shots and upon entering, Ferguson was laying on the floor, covered with blood. Several infantrymen there said they had been drinking and Ferguson pulled out a U.S. Army Colt 45 pistol and was waving it around. One of the infantrymen took it away and shot him 3 times. He was taken to the hospital but died a few days later.

The Battery Commanders were required to write the parents telling them about their sons deaths. I wrote his parents stating that their son had given his life for his country and that he was an outstanding soldier in combat. This was sent through channels but when Col. Green got it, he sent it back and told me to tell them how he was killed. This I just could not do so I filed it away. A few days later a Division directive came

down stating the chaplain would write all the letters. I gave my letter to our chaplain and heard nothing else from it.

I believe Capt. Clare N. Lyke from Milwaukee, Wis., established some kind of record when he was up with the 142nd Inf. He received five Purple Hearts for being wounded in action. All were flesh wounds and were dressed in the first aid station and he returned to duty. Other than showing how lucky he was, he got a bunch of points, added to his name for each Purple Heart, making him among the first men to come home after the war was ended.

In some of the French towns we moved into, the first action the citizens took was to shave the heads of the girls who fraternized with Germans. They then paraded them through the town. The French underground were very active, killing and destroying German equipment and personnel. Local citizens were quick to fly French or white flags as soon as the Germans left their town.

Jan.-May 1945. Pursuit of the German Army continued until Germany's surrender at noon, May 5th, 1945. During this time we breached the Ziegfried Line, crossed Germany through Munich and on into Austria. As we entered Austria, German soldiers who were still armed directed traffic. They saw that the civilians and defeated German Army personnel cleared the road for us. They also disarmed German soldiers as they came out of Italy or down out of the mountains.

The last place we set up our HQ's was in Mulbock, Austria. The home was a large Swiss type construction that was owned by a Miss Zepplin, a relative of Count Zepplin, designer of the Graf Zepplin.

While crossing Germany we picked out several houses we wanted to use for our C.P., FDC, billets, etc. When the unit arrived, as scheduled, 5 hours later the Germans had moved everything out of the houses. In Germany when we decided we wanted a house, we just went in, told the Germans we were taking over and to move out. If we gave them too much time though, they moved everything out so we finally decided 30 minutes was enough time and put a guard on the front door. That way we had some furniture to use. Lt. Findley could talk German so we kept him quite busy. Some German farmers came in complaining about the Russian slave laborers, who were now out of work, eating their vegetables. Lt. Findley told them "You brought them here, now you feed them and get the hell out of here." We had no more complaints from them.

One of the homes we stayed in had several cases of Red Cross boxes, both opened and unopened. The home owner had worked at a PW camp. When we left the area I looked back and somehow or other the house had caught on fire. We just let it burn.

One home where we stayed we let the widow woman keep a bedroom. She said her husband was killed during the war. Later she was talking to

me in German, which I couldn't understand, but thought I would be nice and answered best I could, "Yaw, doss iss goot." When she left, one of my men who understood German, asked me if I understood what she said and I said no. He went on to say that her husband was hauling hay in a wagon and an American airplane came down straffing, killing him, his horse and his dog, then the gasoline he was hauling for the Germans exploded. Well I guess it was good. We saw evidence of the effectiveness of our planes throughout France & Germany. they straffed anything that moved during daytime, cars, trains, horses, even individual soldiers.

Col. Green decided it would be nice if we had some wine for our dinner so he told Capt. James Darden from Clear Lake, TX to go out and see if he could buy some. He took his driver and jeep and left fairly early one morning. He was gone all day and sometime after dark came in, without any wine. We asked him where in the world he had been and he said "We were driving along this road when we were stopped by 2 guards and they said "You are now in Switzerland, which is a neutral country, and you and your driver will have to be interned until an official peace agreement has been signed." Darden said they did a lot of talking and finally said they could leave the way they came in.

A lot of German troop were now coming out of Italy and surrendering to the American troops and we thought the 132nd might get credit for capturing the whole German Army in Italy but most of them went over the mountains on into Germany so we missed them.

One of my men came up and said, "Boy when I get home I'm not going to join anything. Not even the Salvation Army, they might mobilize."

Lt. Col. (Ret.) Remus L. Jones

Enlisted in Battery "D", 132nd F. A. Bn, 36th Div. Feb. 1931
Mobilized with the 36th Div. in 1940.
Commissioned in Mar. 1941. Served with 36th Div. until end WW II.
Departed 36th Div. June 1945, Separated Nov. 1945.
Joined HQ's 36th Div. Arty. San Antonio, TX.
Recalled to active duty Oct. 1948.
Served in AAA units at Ft. Bliss, TX; Tokyo, Japan; Okinawa; and New Mexico National Guard Advisor.

Served at Ft. Carson, Colorado and Ft. Holabird, MD.
Commanded a 105mm Gun Bn. in Korea and in the G3 Section, HQ's III Corps, Ft. Hood, TX when retired in July 1963.

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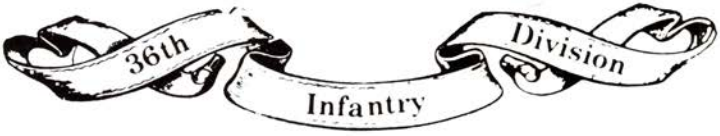

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