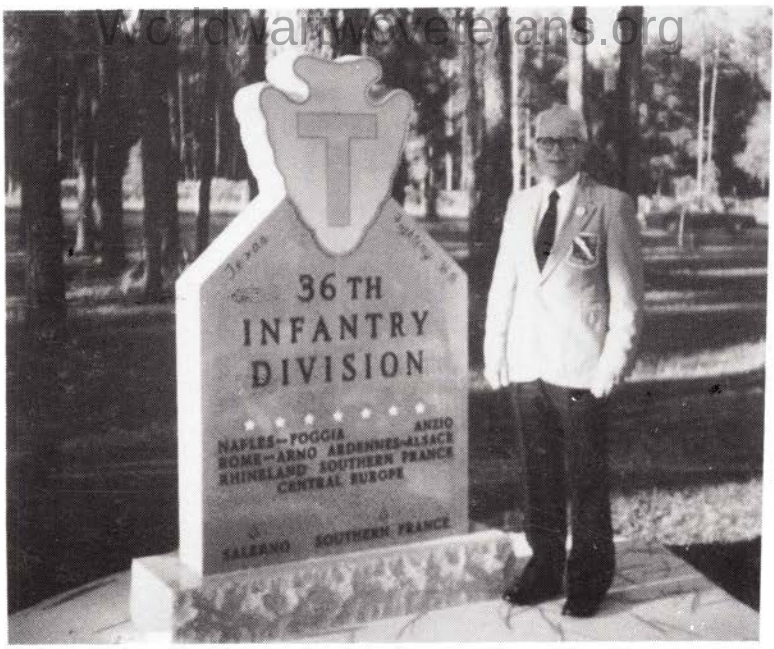
The Fighting 36th HISTORICAL Quarterly



Camp Blanding
honors World War II heroes

Vol. XI, No. 2 Summer 1991

Published by
36th DIVISION ASSOCIATION

Worldwartwoveterans.org

The Fighting 36th
HISTORICAL
Quarterly

'sand, sweat and bugs'

Camp Blanding sprang from the woods and swamps of North Florida during the Depression.

Associated Press

CAMP BLANDING — Six winners of the Medal of Honor, Army and National Guard veterans who trained at Camp Blanding, were among 3,000 people at the dedication of the base's World War II museum and memorial park.

The 13-acre Camp Blanding Museum and Memorial Park of the Second World War was dedicated Sunday to nine infantry divisions and Florida National Guard units that fought in the war.

Color guards from 60 military and veterans units flanked the memorial in Clay County in northeastern Florida.

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36th DIVISION ASSOCIATION

HISTORICAL QUARTERLY

VOLUME XI (1991)

Book 4 of Volume X (1990) was mailed within Nov. 24 & 25.

This finishes 10 years of publication and 3200 pages of history by the men who lived it now has been published where it otherwise would not exist. These ten Volumes help perpetuate the history of the 36th Infantry Division in WW II. If only we had started this project sooner.

If you have not already renewed for Volume XI (1991), now is the time to do so. The cost is $15.00 per year with a book to be mailed each 3 months. If you did not renew and receive Volume X (1990), the complete Volume (4 books) is still available. Until February, the cost will be $15.00 for the Volume. **On February 1st shipping and handling cost of $1.25 will be added for Volume X (1990).**

The Historical Quarterly makes an excellent gift for a buddy, family member, your library and school libraries. They will carry the stories of the 36th into the future.

There is still a great need for your personal stories so please write them now. The stories of our friends who make the TAPS Column without writing their story are forever lost to the world we live in. The number staggers the mind.

Write your stories now - just tell it as it happened - and forward it to: Hicks A. Turner, Editor, Rt. 2, Box 236, Clyde, TX 79510.

1991 ANNUAL DUES

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Vol. XI , No. 2 Summer 1991

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Fighting 36th Historical Quarterly

Camp Blanding Museum Dedication Nov. 25

This story from the ***Blanding Bugle.***

Ten Blanding Units Representing Thousands From All Over The Country To Be Memorialized at Museum

In the exhibits of the museum and the memorial park adjoining, we have chosen to emphasize the service and experiences of the nine infantry divisions and one airborne regimental combat team that were assigned to Camp Blanding for training prior to their commitment to combat. These units were the 1st, 29th, 30th, 31st, 36th, 43rd, 63rd, 66th and 79th Infantry Divisions and the 508th Airborne Regimental Combat Team.

The campaign service of these ten units spanned the globe from North Africa to the Solomon Islands, Italy to New Guinea, Western Europe to Mindanao and Central Europe to Luzon. Combined, they suffered nearly 24,000 combat dead and more than 80,000 wounded. The war service histories of these ten units illustrate the diversity of combat experience for the American infantryman in World War II. The summary history of each, with photographs, narrative summaries, and selected artifacts, will be displayed, and each will be memorialized in the gardens.

These ten "Blanding" units also earned forty-seven Congressional Medals of Honor. Each recipient will be memorialized in the gardens and their photographs and citations displayed in the museum.

Although many independent specialist units and hundreds of thousands of infantry replacements were also trained at Camp blanding during the war, it was not possible in include them for special emphasis. However, the Infantry Replacement Training Center at Blanding, 1943-1945, will be described in the museum and memorialized in the gardens.

When dedicated and opened in November 1990, the Camp Blanding Museum and Memorial Park of the Second World War will be a unique and interesting American institution. It won't be complete. We anticipate adding materials to both the interior and exterior displays as they become available. And further, we are establishing a major regional research library and archives devoted to the history of the Second World War in the upper half of our museum building. This year's accomplishments are only the beginning!

36th Infantry Division

1st Infantry Division

79th Infantry Division

30th Infantry Division

All Photographs of Blanding Dedication courtesy of Julian Quarles, 143rd Infantry.

ALBERT HAZEN BLANDING

He was born in 1876, the year Custer made his last stand against the Sioux Indians and died the year after Americans landed on the moon. He was a private of Florida State Troops, and a lieutenant general of the Florida National Guard. He served on the Mexican Border, in France, and in Belgium. He was a farmer and dealer in lumber products. He helped bring relief to Floridians suffering from the ravages of nature or of disorderly citizens. He served the Guard as its National Bureau Chief, and his state as a wartime coordinator of civil defense. He was Albert Hazen Blanding, Florida's most nationally prominent Guardsman.

As one of the true founders of the Florida National Guard, it is appropriate that the Guard's state training camp near Starke is named for Albert Hazen Blanding. After all, he remains Florida's most famous Guardsman.

63d Infantry Division

66th Infantry Division

29th Infantry Division

43d Infantry Division

Notes from Julian Quarles

CAMP BLANDING DEDICATION

The Camp Blanding Museum and Memorial Park dedication that was held on November 25, 1990, was attended by four to five thousand people which was not surprising when you realize that nine infantry divisions trained at Camp Blanding together with smaller units of many types. The building housing the museum is a World War Two barracks of the familiar two story type and adjacent to it is a large memorial park which will eventually have monuments for each of the divisions. There are other monuments for the Military Order of the Purple Heart, The Medal of Honor Monument with the names of every Medal of Honor recipient that served in the infantry divisions stationed at Blanding. Artillary pieces, a tank, a C-47 and various army vehicles are set up within the park and all in all a very interesting place to visit.

Every enlistee and draftee from the State of Florida that entered the army in World War Two went through Camp Blanding. They may have been there only two days or for weeks but the entry into army life began at this camp which was a National Guard camp for the State of Florida for many years and was actually used as a training area for the Home Guard beginning in 1895. Camp Blanding is located between the City of Gainesville, where the University of Florida is located, and Jacksonville. At its peak of training in World War Two more than 100,000 infantry troups were located there.

Until World War Two, the State of Florida boasted of only one National Guard Infantry Regiment, the 124th, which was a part of the 31st "Dixie Division". I trained at Camp Blanding in the summertime prior to World War Two with Company "B" of that regiment and joined the 36th Division at Camp Blanding shortly after it arrived from Texas. Upon my return to the States from my service with the 36th Division, I was again stationed at Camp Blanding with the Infantry Replacement Training Center. So it was like "Old Home Week" when I arrived at Camp Blanding for the dedication of the Camp Blanding Museum and Memorial Park on November 25, 1990.

Many replacements from Camp Blanding served with the 36th Division overseas. One of those replacements was Leon Price, Hq. Co. 143 from Monticello, Georgia, who learned of the dedication and has just become a new member of the association. Besides Leon, other T-Patcher present were, Hamlin Moore, Clifton Stokes, Austin Brooks, John Lannon, William Bylina and Jack Bridges. There may have been others. Eight Medal of Honor recipients who served in the nine infantry divisions that trained at Blanding were present. Two of them were from the 36th and they were, Stephan Gregg of the 143 and Charles Coolidge of the 141st. Those members of the 36th Division who served at Camp Blanding would not recognize the area now except for Kingsley Lake in which some of the members of the 36th Division learned how to swim and almost all of them learned how to clammer up and down cargo nets for their first training in how to debark a ship in a landing operatic The road network is still there but the area where the 36th Division was quartered has no buildings and is so grown up with trees and brush tht the area is unrecognizable.

When you consider that Camp Blanding in World War Two, when considered as a city would have been the fourth largest city in the State of Florida, you can understand how much of the impact that it had in that sparsely settled portion of the state. The museum and the memorial park is well worth visiting and on November 24th and 25th it brought back many memories. The Florida National Guard has promoted and created a very worthwhile project which anyone interested in the history of World War Two will be pleased to visit

Camp Blanding Museum and Memorial Park of the Second World War

The Camp Blanding Museum and Memorial Park of the Second World War consists of three major segments; the Florida Regimental Memorial, the museum and the memorial park and picnic area. During the next fiscal year, the research library and archives will be completed and a small theater added.

Visitors to the dedication ceremony can see the results of more than two years of work on all three parts by our small professional staff and hundreds of volunteers.

The museum building is a World War II Barracks immediately adjacent to the Main Entrance to the post. It has been extensively renovated and strenghtened to meet all current building code requirements.

The first floor of the museum building houses an interesting and colorful series of visual exhibits, artifacts and mannequin displays honoring and illustrating the history of Comp Blanding, the nine divisions which trained hers, the Infantry Replacement Training Center and the war era in general both at home and overseas.

The Florida Regimental Memorial is adjacent to the museum building. It presents a striking appearance with the statue of a infantry soldier before a walled memorial to the Florida National Guard units which served in World War II. A large marble edifice is inscribed with the names of all Florida Guardsmen who lost their lives in that war.

The Memorial Park is a large area set aside for dislays of weapons and vehicles surrounding a lagoon and landscaped gardens. A network of pathways leads to monuments for each of the nine Army divisions, the Medal of Honor recipients of these divisions, the Infantry Replacement Training center, the Military Order of the World Wars, the Purple Heart and former Prisoners of War. An area on the western edge of the site is reserved as a visitor picnic area.

Dedication of the Camp Blanding Museum and Memorial Park of World War II is a historic event. It will be recorded in local history for future generations.

Participants in these dedication events can find considerable nostalgia in the recorded history of Camp Blanding and the town of Starke. Old issues of the Bradford County Telegraph tell many stories of the early days.

The Starke post office was established in 1857, and the town was named for Miss Starke, daughter of a Georgia planter and fiancee of the first postmaster, one George Cole. The area was wilderness until a cross-state railroad began. Florida was a territory from 1822 to 1845 when it became a state.

Citizens of Starke considered themselves in grave danger in its earliest days when Indians vastly outnumbered whites. The 1860 Census counted 138 citizens of Starke, not counting slaves.

In March of 1858 the railroad reached Starke.

During the War Between the States, Union forces moved from Fernandina to Starke, tearing up the railroad tracks and destroying storehouses that supplied the Confederate Army. Most of the young men of Starke left to fight with the CSA.

The Reconstruction era lasted nearly ten years. Some tourism began in the 1870's. The climate was believed to be curative for lung and bronchial disorders. Citrus became a paying crop with more than 100,000 bearing trees, but freezes occurred randomly (as they do now) and by 1899 citrus farming moved further south.

Electricity came to Starke at the turn of the century. During World War I, Starke suffered the usual wartime loss of young men, along with rationing of food, gas and other things. After that war came the Florida land-boom of the 1920's, the stock market crash and the great depression of the 1930's.

The Camp Blanding area was first used to train a Home Guard about 1895. Later the Florida National Guard bought 28,200 acres in Bradford and Clay counties for $199,000, and Camp Blanding was named for Lt. Gen. Albert Blazon Blanding, a war hero who died in 1970 at the age of 94.

The major history of Camp Blanding revolves around World War II. Contractors began building housing for the camp in September 1940. It was ready to receive federal troops by the spring of 1941. At least 20,000 workers arrived to build the camp in 90 days, with three shifts working 24 hours per day. Some workers commuted from Ocala, 70 miles away.

At the time Starke had a population of 1.395. It was almost instant Boomtown. The roads around Blanding sprouted housing for workers, some of which were just tin shacks. Sinstrips sprang up, with almost anything for sale including tattoos, fortune-telling and booze. As far away as Jacksonville the "sporting houses" raised prices and expanded personnel.

Camp Blanding was said to be the fourth largest city in Florida during World War II. At its peak of training, more than 100,000 infantry troops were in camp. Nine Army divisions trained at Camp Blanding before

As a part of our dedication program for the Camp Blanding Museum and Memorial Park, we invited all fifteen surviving recipiants of the Medal of Honor who served with the nine Blanding divisions and the 508th Parachute Infantry. Due to illness or previous commitments, several of them were not able to accept our offer but nine are scheduled to attend the ceremonies as our guests.

In addition to their participation in the general dedication of the facilities, they will be the focus of the formal dedication of the new Medal of Honor monument in the memorial park at 1:30 P.M., Sunday the 25th of November.

(Note: A number of private individuals have contributed the funds necessary to finance the participation of the Medal of Honor recipiants.)

Left to Right: Stephen Gregg, C.M.H., Julian Quarles, and Charles Coolidge, C.M.H.

STEPHAN R. GREGG

Second Lieutenant
143rd Infantry, 36th Infantry Division
Near Montelimar, France, 27 August 1944

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at risk of life above and beyond the call of duty on 27 August 1944, in the vicinity of Montelimar, France. As his platoon advanced upon the enemy positions, the leading scout was fired upon and Second Lieutenant Gregg (then a Technical Sergeant) immediately put his machineguns into action to cover the advance of the riflemen. The Germans, who were at close range, threw hand grenades at the riflemen, killing some and wounding seven. Each time a medical aid man attempted to reach the wounded, the Germans fired at him. Realizing the seriousness of the situation, Lieutenant Gregg took one of the light .30 caliber machineguns, and, firing from the hip, started boldly up the hill with the medical aid man following him. Although the enemy was throwing hand grenades at him, Lieutenant Gregg remained and fired into the enemy postions while the medical aid man removed the seven wounded men to safety. When Lieutenant Gregg had expended all his ammunition, he was covered by four Germans who ordered him to surrender. Since the attention of most of the Germans had been diverted by watching this action, friendly riflemen were able to maneuver into firing positions. One, seeing Lieutenant Greggs situation, opened fire on his captors. The four Germans hit the ground and thereupon Lieutenant Gregg recovered a machine pistol from one of the Germans and managed to escape to his other machinegun postions. He manned a gun, firing at his captors, killed one of them and wounded the other. This action so discouraged the Germans that the platoon was able to continue its advance up the hill to achieve its objective. The following morning, just proir to daybreak, the Germans

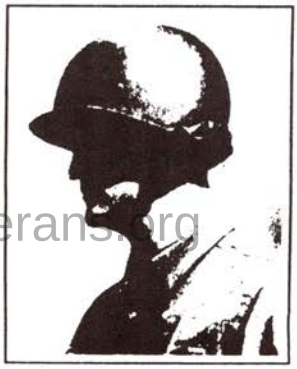
launched a strong attack, supported by tanks, in an attempt to drive Company L from the hill. As these tanks moved along the valley and their foot troops advanced up the hill, Lieutenant Gregg immediately ordered his mortars into action. During the day, by careful observation, he was able to direct effective fire on the enemy, inflicting heavy casualties. By late afternoon he had directed 600 rounds when his communication to the mortars was knocked out. Without hesitation he started checking his wires, although the area was under heavy enemy small-arms and artillery fire. When he was within 100 yards of his mortar position, one of his men informed him that the section had been captured and the Germans were using the mortars to fire on the company. Lieutenant Gregg with this man and another nearby rifleman started for the gun position where he could see five Germans firing his mortars. He ordered the two men to cover him, crawled up, threw a hand grenade into the position and then charged it. The hand grenade killed one, injured two; Lieutenant Gregg took the other two as prisoners, and put his mortars back into action.

(Born: New York, New York; entered service at Bayonne, New Jersey)

CHARLES H. COOLIDGE

Technical Sergeant, Company M, 141st Infantry, 36th Infantry Division

East of Belmont sur Buttant, France 24-27 October 1944



CHARLES H. COOLIDGE

Leading a section of heavy machine guns supported by one platoon of Company K, he took a position near Hill 623, east of Belmont sur Buttant, France, on 24 October 1944, with the mission of covering the right flank of the 3rd Battalion and supporting its action. Sergeant Coolidge went forward with a sergeant of Company K to reconnoited positions for coordinating the fires of the light and heavy machine guns. They ran into an enemy force in the woods estimated to be an infantry company. Sergeant Coolidge, attempting to bluff the Germans by a show of assurance and boldness called upon them to surrender, whereupon the enemy opened fire. With his carbine, Sergeant Coolidge wounded two of them. There being no officer present with the force, Sergeant Coolidge at once assumed command. Many of the men were replacements recently arrived; this was their first experience under fire. Sergeant Coolidge, unmindful of the enemy fire delivered at close range, walked along the position, calming and encouraging his men and directing their fire. The attack was thrown back. Through 25 and 26 October the enemy launched repeated attacks against the position of this combat group but each was repulsed due to Sergeant Coolidge's able leadership. On 27 October, German infantry, supported by two tanks, made a determined attack on the position. The area was swept by enemy small-arms, machine gun, and tank fire. Sergeant Coolidge armed himself with a bazooka and advanced to within 25 yards of the tanks. His bazooka failed to function and he threw it aside. Securing all the hand grenades he could carry, he crawled forward and inflicted heavy casualties on the advancing enemy. Finally it became apparent that the enemy, in greatly superior force, supported by tanks, would overrun the position. Sergeant Coolidge, displaying great coolness and courage, directed and conducted an orderly withdrawal, being himself the last to leave the position. As a result of Sergeant Coolidge's heroic and superior leadership, the mission of this combat troop was accomplished throughout 4 days of continuous fighting against numerically superior enemy troops in rain and cold and amid dense woods.

(Born and entered service at Signal Mountain, Tennessee)

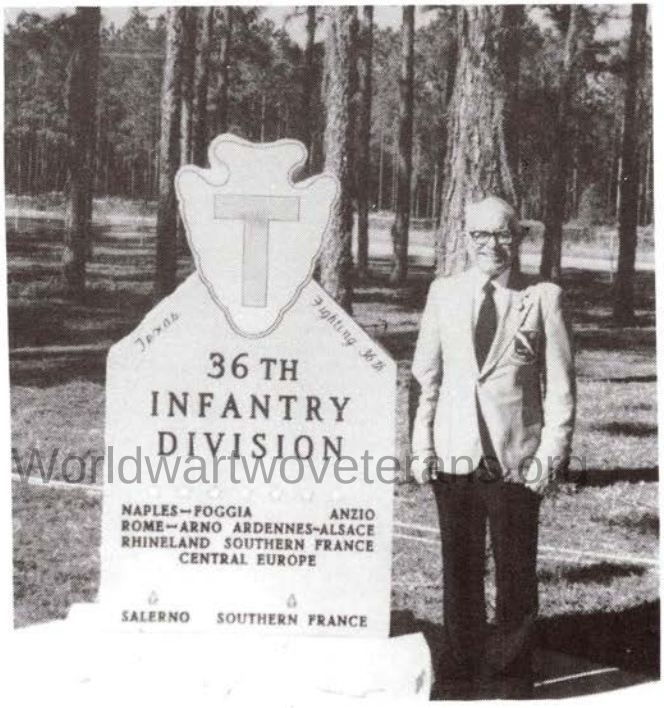
Blanding Plays Major Part in WW II

The Camp Blanding Military Reservation near Starke, Florida, was a major U.S. Army training center during the Second World War. It was originally established as a state military training reservation for units of the Florida National Guard. Following mobilization of the National Guard beginning in September of 1940 and especially following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Camp Blanding became a major multi-purpose training base for many units and individuals representing all branches of the Army.

Prior to its conversion to an Infantry Replacement Training Center in late 1943, dozens and dozens of complete army units and some several hundred thousand men trained at Camp Blanding. Included were a calvary regiment, tank destroyer, field artillery, engineer and medical battalions, many separate infantry regiments and nine complete infantry divisions; the 1st, 29th, 30th, 31st, 36th, 43rd, 63rd, 66th and 79th.

For most of 1944 and 1945, a very high percentage of the individuals sent to replenish the ranks of America's combat units trained at Camp Blanding's Infantry Replacement Training Center. Additionally, the camp was the site of a German prisoner of war compound, a large hospital, reception station and, at wars end, a separation center. Following the war, Camp Blanding reverted to state control and, by public law, is still operated as a training site for the National Guard and other reserve components of the nation's Armed Forces.

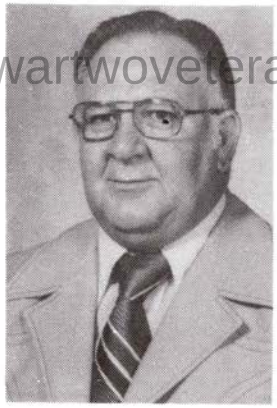
And now, the Florida National Guard is sponsoring the establishment of the CAMP BLANDING MUSEUM AND MEMORIAL PARK OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR to honor and remember the war-time history of the camp and all the men and units of the U.S. Army who trained here between 1940 and 1945. The facility will be formally opened and dedicated in special ceremonies on the 25th of November 1990, the fiftieth anniversary of the mobilization of the Florida National Guard.



Julian Quarles

My Tour of Duty 1939-1990

by Leonard Wilkerson
144th Infantry
Membership Secretary



Late in 1939, the war clouds were gathering in Europe. Hitler was on the move and the free world knew that soon it would be another World War.

Military posters were in front of the Post Office in downtown Dallas of the Army, Navy and Marine Corps asking for you - a picture of Uncle Sam pointing to you. In the news was the talk of the draft and soon you would be called to serve your country.

At the time I was attending old Technical High School and had a Dallas Dispatch paper route in the downtown office buildings. Being seventeen and a few months of age, I wanted to join the Regular Army or Marine Corps as a friend of mine had just joined the Regular Army and was stationed at Grand Prairie, Texas in a communication unit which is now part of the Signal Corps.

Walking home one day I noticed the recruiting sign in front of the Army National Guard Armory on Akard and Ross Streets. The sign stated "AVOID THE DRAFT, JOIN YOUR HOMETOWN UNIT AND SERVE ONE YEAR." My mother signed for me to enlist in the 144th Infantry, 36th Infantry Division. Since I had some ROTC training at Tech High School, the First Sergeant Fred "Pop" Gassaman assigned me as Assistant Squad Leader to help teach drill before we left for Camp Bowie, Texas.

After mobilization I was asked if I wanted to learn to be a cook; I was sent to Cooks and Bakers School, Fort Sam Houston, Texas for four months. After graduation I was promoted to Tech 5th Grade and assigned as 2nd Cook, Co. E. 144 Infantry.

On December 7, 1941 (Pearl Harbor) I was in the Camp Bowie hospital for a strained knee that was injured on a night exercise near San Saba, Texas.

Upon release from the hospital I was told the 144th Infantry had left for overseas and I was then assigned to Headquarters 141st Infantry. Word soon came that the 36th Division would be leaving Camp Bowie. I was called to the Regimental Personnel Office and asked if I wanted to stay in the 141st Infantry or return to the 144th Infantry, I elected to return to the 144th Infantry.

I was put on a train and headed for Portland, Oregon Headquarters of the 144th Infantry. After arriving in Portland, I was reassigned back to Co. E, 144th Infantry stationed at Salem, Oregon guarding the Air Field.

In 1942 our unit moved to Santa Rosa, California. There I met my wife (Frances Lee Wilkerson) who was in California visiting her brother and sister-in-law. On October 17, 1942 we were married. I was then a Tech 4 making $54.00 per month.

In early 1943 the 144th Infantry Regiment moved from the West Coast to the East Coast, Co. E. 144th Infantry was then stationed at Charleston, S.C. Later in the year I volunteered for Airborne training and was sent to Fort Benning, Ga. After three weeks, due to my injured knee I was released from Airborne training and sent to a Replacement Center at Fort Meade, Maryland. I was then put on overseas orders and assigned to Co. B, 377th Infantry, 95th Division.

Upon arriving in Sarrlaurten, Germany on the Sarr River, the Company was holding the only bridge in that area. The First Sergeant assigned me as an Assistant Squad Leader, Third Platoon. My first action was a German 88 shelling the bridge and several of them hitting the house we were holding up in.

In December the 95th Division moved to Belgium to take part in the Battle of the Budge. In early 1945 the 17th Airborne jumped across the Rhine River, the 95th Division crossed on Tanks of the 2nd Armor Division. On VE Day the Division was in the Rhur Valley and assigned as Army of Occupation Duty. The Division was then alerted to go on a 30 day leave and then be shipped to the Pacific Theater. During our leave at home we received word to report back to Camp Shelby, Miss. for discharge.

Upon discharge, I returned back to Fort Worth, Texas and joined the Army Air Corps at Carswell AFB. After only a year or so the Army Air Corps was to be a unit of its own called the U.S. Air Force. Since I had the Combat Infantry Badge I was asked if I wanted to stay in the Air Force or go back into the Regular Army. I chose the Army and was sent to Headquarters 11th Infantry, 5th Division, Fort Jackson, S.C. as an 014 maintenance section, since I had some OJT in the Air Force Transportation Section. I was assigned as Chief Dispatcher and promoted to Staff Sergeant. One year later I was pro-

moted to Tech Sergeant and on my way to Okinawa to the 808 AVN Eng. Bn. I was assigned as First Sergeant of Co. C, 808th EAB.

On June 25, 1950 (One week before I was due to come home) the Korean War broke out. The 808 EAB was sent to Korea to build a 6000 ft. air strip for the Air Force so fighters could move from Japan to Korea. After 15 months in Korea I was rotated back to the U.S.A. and then stationed as Sergeant Major of the Southwestern Signal Corps Basic Training Center at Camp San Louis Obispo, California. When Camp San Louis Obispo closed, I was assigned to the Army Reserve Advisor Group in Seattle, Washington; then after two years was assigned as First Sergeant, Co. K, 13th Infantry, 8th Division in Fort Carson, Colorado and Ulm, Germany. After three years in Germany I rotated back to the States and was assigned as Sergeant Advisor for the South Dakota National Guard and was stationed in Brookings, South Dakota.

After two years in South Dakota I re-enlisted for U.S. Army Recruiting Service and was stationed in Tyler, Texas. In 1964 I was then reassigned as the Career Counselor for I Corps Headquarters in Korea. After my tour in Korea I was assigned back on Army Recruiting as Supervisor of the Alburquerque, N.M. recruiting area.

After one year, in 1966 I was assigned to the 10th Transportation Battalion, Cam Ran Bay, Vietnam. The unit moved to Saigon, Vietnam and I was assigned Sergeant Major of the 48th Transportation Group. I returned home in 1967 and was stationed at Fort Bliss, Texas as Post Transportation Supervisor. In 1968, I applied for ROTC Duty in Texas and was assigned to Duncanville, Texas High School. While on duty as a ROTC Instructor and Supply Specialist I retired after 27 active years and 3 years as National Guard and Reserve time. Upon retirement from the U.S. Army I continued on as a ROTC instructor until 1980.

In 1974-75 I started helping Amil Kohutek with the membership of the 36th Division Association. In 1977 I was elected Executive Vice President and in 1978 was President of the Asociation with our Annual Reunion in San Antonio, Texas. The Executive Vice President Julian Quarles started revising the Constitution and By-Laws were completed by Julian Quarles the year he was President in 1979. In 1979 my friend Amil Kohutek resigned as the Membership Secretary, I was then asked if I would do the job.

In the past eleven years, I have met the best people in this great country of ours either in person or by mail. I have attended most Chapter meetings and reunions at one time or another and have enjoyed each and every one of them. I now consider all T-Patchers a dear friend.

So with 30 years service with the U.S. Army, 10 years ROTC duty and now 11 years as Membership Secretary of the "Fighting 36th Division" my TOUR OF DUTY is near completion. All I can say at this time I have loved it all - the good and the bad. I will continue to serve as Membership Secretary as long as I am needed. I'll do my best as I have done in the past.

My Last Patrol With Company C, 141st Inf. Reg.

by John W. Falk

Editors Note: This story was originally printed in the 36th T-PATCHER NEWSLETTER, February, 1990. Katie Sinclair, Quitman, Texas has requested it be run in the QUARTERLY. Excellent material for the QUARTERLY.

Citation—John W. Falk
Silver Star Citation
Presented to JOHN W. FALK, S. Sgt. Serial No. 38 050 465
At Cushing General Hospital, Framingham, Massachusetts
10 July 1944—Presentation to be made by:
Commanding Officer, Cushing General Hospital, Framingham, Massachusetts
By Order of the Secretary of War:
Signed Charles A. Fleming, Adjutant General
CITATION

SILVER STAR: For gallantry in action on 24 January 1944, in the vicinity of the Rapido River, Italy. Sgt. Falk was assigned as second in command of a daylight combat patrol to cross the Rapido River and determine enemy strength and positions. The patrol crossed the river and moved over open terrain under heavy enemy machine gun, artillery and mortar fire since wind conditions made it impossible to cover the patrol's movement with smoke. Sgt. Falk immediately placed fire back at the enemy and directed the fire power of other members of the patrol against enemy positions. When ordered to withdraw by infiltration, he moved his men back by bounds while keeping cover of fire for each man although the patrol was receiving enemy fire from the front and left flank. When reaching the river, he supervised the successful crossing of his patrol without the loss of a man. He was also instrumental in effecting the rescue of a wounded American soldier who had lain in enemy territory for three days. His outstanding calmness and cool courage under heavy enemy fire greatly inspired all who witnessed his deeds. His gallant actions reflect great credit upon himself and the Armed Forces of the United States.

After reading in the November 1989 issue of the T—PATCHER NEWSLETTER the account of the Truce negotiated in the vicinity of the Rapido River, Italy back in 1944, in which ARARAT D. TOSOIAN was instrumental in taking part, I vividly recalled my experience leading up to the Truce in that vicinity at about the same time and place, and thought I would write something about it.

Going back to 21 and 22 January 1944, after two unsuccessful attempts to take the west bank of the Rapido River, some lieutenant whose name I think was Thomas H. Netherton told me on the morning of 23 January 1944 that he had been ordered to form a daylight combat patrol to cross the Rapido River near Cassino, Italy and hold some high ground. He asked me to pick the men, saying I could select whomever I chose, and placed me second in command of the patrol. I assembled the men in Company C and asked for volunteers, explaining to them that in my opinion this would be a suicide patrol. I had no trouble getting all the men I needed, about six, and none withdrew.

When we got to the area of the River known as Horseshoe Bend, the current was so swift that it was impossible to paddle across, so I fastened a rope to each end of the raft and secured it on the east and west bank, leaving plenty of slack on each side so as to allow the raft to be pulled back and forth. After that had been accomplished I pulled the rest of the men across the river on the raft, getting ready to advance towards our objective. At that time we received heavy machine gun fire from the front and left flank, so I had my men withdraw back to the cover of the river bank. We then received mortar and artillery fire. I radioed back for artillery fire as we were pinned down and couldn't move. I was then forced to withdraw.

With my field glasses I had surveyed the ground in front of me and spied an American soldier lying there who had been wounded on the initial assault of the River, and later we were able to carry him back with us. In the meantime we had seen many dead and wounded soldiers strewn across the open ground in a very small area, from which was coming the most offensive odor.

After we all had returned safely the Lieutenant reported conditions to his Superior and thereupon plans for the Truce were negotiated. It was to last specifically not more than two hours, from 1 P.M. to 3 P.M. and be conducted in an area of 300 to 400 yards. This was 24 January 1944.

I supervised the rescue team across the river on the raft that I had put there the previous day and assisted in the removal of our dead, with the Germans also helping in some instances. After the raft was loaded to capacity I then crawled on, pulled it back across the river, being careful to keep the load from overturning.

If it hadn't been for the patrol there probably would have been no Truce. It is first-hand information that prompted the High Command to try to negotiate one, which was most successful. For my accomplishment of this mission I was awarded the Silver Star later on, namely 10 July 1944.

A few days after the Truce, about 5 or 6 February 1944, I was severely wounded by artillery fire in that same vicinity and brought back to the States,

landing in Charleston, South Carolina on "D-Day," June 6, 1944. From there I was flown to the Cushing General Hospital, Framingham, Massachusetts, as Boston was my home then. Incidentally, I had been inducted from Houston, Texas on 10 January 1942.

The Silver Star was awarded to me at the Cushing General Hospital, Framingham, Mass. on 10 July 1944 by the Commanding Officer of the Hospital, and I was discharged from there 15 January 1945.

John W. Falk
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My Platoon Leader Froze

by Elmer B. Roshto

143rd Infantry

We were on the attack, Company B, 143rd, RCT. We were in the Vosges Forest along close to the end of the 2nd World War when my platoon leader froze. He looked staringly ahead and tears began to flow. I spoke a few times to him that "let's move out." He continued to stare glare eyed. I slapped him on the right side, then the left. He shook his head a few times and gave his command to MOVE OUT. We took the hill.

I realize I could have been court martialed but I disregarded this possibility for the sake of about six more men who, if we hadn't kept driving forward, could have been counter-attacked. He was a very good sergeant. You know how they are taught in the Infantry that to run backwards was the best way to be killed--unless it was a full unit withdrawal.

We Can't All Be Heroes

by Melvin Curtis Walthall

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Born on July 30, 1920, in Mingo (Denton County), Texas, the author entered military service with the Thirty-sixth Infantry Division (Texas National Guard) on February 9, 1939, serving throughout World War II with the 144th Infantry Regiment, the separate regiment from this division. He was discharged from the army on December 5, 1945, and he reenlisted in July, 1948, during the Berline airlift.

He received a reserve commission in April, 1949, and was assigned to duty in Okinawa in January, 1950. He entered active duty as a lieutenant on September 9, 1950, serving with the Thirty-fifth (Cacti) Regiment of the Twenty-fifth Infantry Division until October, 1951. He was awarded the silver star for gallantry in action and retired with the rank of major on September 1, 1963.

We can't All Be Heroes *combines the formal history of the infantry regiments in World War II with the inside, first-person story of life in those regiments. It is told with a fine sense of humor by the author and some of his colleagues with felicitous results. The history of these regiments is informative and straight from the shoulder; the delightful reminiscences down to earth and quite witty. The dramatic contrast between the two provides the reader with a truly enjoyable picture of life in the army.*

The 144th Infantry Regiment

This information is from Curt Walthall's book, **We Can't All Be Heroes.** *Permission to print the material has been granted by the author.*

When you're number two, you try harder. But when you're fourth, you learn to live with the fact that *we can't all be heroes.*

Many of the separate infantry regiments were once assigned to divisions, but when the old "square" divisions went "triangular," a fourth regiment

became a separate unit and was relieved from assignment to the parent division.

Besides the triangular reorganization, another factor would decide the fate of the units which were destined to serve as separate infantry regiments. The War Department's "Rainbow Plans" for the defense of the Western Hemisphere had been formulating since the 1920s on the concept that in a future war the United States would defend only that hemisphere. Primary consideration was given toward forming an initial protective force of 400,000 men consisting of the regular army and the mobilized National Guard. A larger protective mobilization plan would increase the initial protective force to a strength of 1,000,000.

In the defense plans, the Alaska-Hawaii-Panama-Puerto Rico line constituted the army's outpost line for the defense of the main position, the Continental United States. The Philippines were on the outer perimeter, and the principal reliance was to be placed on air power not only to deter an attack on Luzon, but to defeat one if made. It was felt that the prospect of enlarged air-navy-ground forces defeating a first attack and thus allowing time for the U.S. Fleet to reach the vicinity "would be a serious deterrent to any overt act." In 1940 the War Plans Division, after conferring with air corps officers, reported that proper defense would require a composite air wing of 441 planes of all categories (there were 37 planes on the islands at that time) and 9,454 new air personnel. The ground forces (infantry, artillery, antiaircraft and harbor defense) would need an estimated 12,741 men. (There were 4,800 U.S. troops and 6,400 Philippine scouts there then.)

Infantry units positioned at the outpost line in early 1940 were the 31st Infantry Regiment, Philippines; the 19th, 21st, 27th and 35th Infantry Regiments, Hawaii; the 33rd Infantry Regiment, Canal Zone; the 65th Infantry Regiment, Puerto Rico; and less than a regiment in Alaska. In 1941 the outpost line was extended to include the new Atlantic bases procured from Britain and the additional task of relieving the British of responsibility for defense of Iceland.

In the early morning hours of September 1, 1939, the army flashed to its commanding generals at home and overseas that fighting had begun on the Polish border. Four days later, Gen. George C. Marshall, the new chief of staff, announced that the president had approved an immediate increase in the regular army to the "national defense" strength of 280,000-an announcement that proved premature, the president confined his approval to a more modest increase that authorized enlisted strength to 227,000. The president also authorized a National Guard increase to 235,000 men, and his proclamation of a limited emergency on September 8 allowed the War Department to step up both the armory and the field training of the guard.

The modest 17,000-man increase in the army was made chiefly to the infantry pool. This allocation made it possible to put into immediate effect a radical change that had been designed for the army's infantry organizations. The regular army's old-fashioned "square" division was abandoned in favor of the new "triangular" division. The new unit was comprised of a smaller number of men but was much more flexible, being subject to use alternative-

ly, en masse, or as three infantry-artillery combat teams possessing a high degree of mobility. Nine of the old divisions existed in the Continental United States (one for each of the country's nine corps areas, along with two National Guard divisions for each area). Of these nine only three could be regarded as genuinely operative, and those were less than half-strength. It was now possible with existent units to attain five effective divisions of the new type.

At the same time the regular army infantry divisions were being reshaped on a model that would soon become universal in the consolidated U.S. Army, the National Guard was being aided by the terms of the president's proclamation. Its numbers were increased by only 35,000, but its training opportunities were increased from 48 armory drills per year to 60, and from 15 days in the field to 21. In the summer of 1940 both the regular army and National Guard participated in the first genuine corps and army maneuvers in the history of the nation.

After extended debate, Congress, on August 27, 1940, authorized the induction of the National Guard and the calling up of the army's organized reserves. On September 14 it passed the Selective Service and Training Act. These measures, together with an additional authorized increase in regular army strength to 375,000, were designed to produce a 1,000,000-man army by the beginning of 1941 and a 1,400,000-man army by July 1, 1941.

In 1941, 2 cavalry, 6 armored, and 27 infantry divisions were in training, and the U.S. Army air force then being organized numbered 41 groups. By October the army was well along toward manning its far-flung outpost line.

The 144th Infantry Regiment (Fourth Texas)

The 144th learned that they were to be inducted into federal service during the first peacetime maneuver in Louisiana during August 1940. The unit was inducted November 25, 1940, and a unit of the 36th Infantry Division at Camp Bowie, Texas. The regiment participated with the division in the second big Louisiana maneuvers during August and September 1941 and returned to Camp Bowie. The 144th furnished a composite battalion to participate in a mock war in the Cotton Bowl during the Texas State Fair in October 1941.

The regiment was alerted for movement the day after Pearl Harbor and on December 9, 1941, departed Camp Bowie combat loaded. As the troops headed west, there was wild speculation about the unit's destination—the Philippines, Hawaii—no one came close to guessing the actual destination. As the troop trains chugged toward California, the men did notice soldiers guarding the railroad bridges, tunnels, ets., but still did not understand what their own fate was to be. In California the trains passed the California ports and continued north which led the speculation to point toward Alaska.

The 144th arrived at Fort Lewis, Washington, December 15, 1941. Several days later, the regiment took up positions extending from the northern part of Puget Sound to the California state line, primarily in bays, coves along the coast, and at inland strategic installations. This included bridges, tunnels, etc.

In February 1942 the regiment was relieved from assignment to the 36th Division and formally assigned as a separate regiment to General Headquarters Reserve, Army Ground Forces, Western Defense Command. Due to personnel losses to officers' candidate, aviation cadets and paratroop schools, a large shipment of inductees was received for basic training at Vancouver Barracks, Washington.

In March 1942 the 144th was relieved by elements of the 44th Infantry Division and transferred to California. There the regiment relieved elements of the 7th Infantry Division in the sector from San Francisco to the northern California border with the regimental headquarters located in Santa Rosa.

May 1, 1942, the newly organized Northern California sector and VII Army Corps consisted of the following: 53rd Infantry, 125th Infantry, 144th Infantry, 74th Field Artillery, 76th Field Artillery, 54th Coast Artillery, San Francisco Harbor Defenses, 66th Ordinance Company and 1st Medical Regiment. The 53rd and 144th formed the honor guard at the Presidio for President Quezon of the Philippines upon his arrival in the United States.

The 144th received 1,000 inductees from reception centers in the southeast part of the U.S. in November 1942. A special training battalion was organized to train these men near Santa Rosa. They were soon to return to their home areas as the 144th was transferred to the Eastern Defense Command in January 1943. From Wilmington, North Carolina, to Key West, Florida, the unit relieved the 104th Infantry, 26th Infantry Division. The boredom of plodding the lonely beaches was broken once when the regiment guarded the rail line from Florida to North Carolina during President Roosevelt's rail trip when he returned from an overseas conference.

March 18, 1944, the 144th moved to Camp Van Dorn, Mississippi, as a special training unit to conduct advanced infantry training for inactivated tank destroyer and antiaircraft battalions. In April 900 enlisted men were shipped to Fort Ord, California, and 800 to Fort Meade, Maryland, as overseas replacements. By May 1944 there remained 509 enlisted men who had departed from California with the regiment. These men, plus 166 officers, then became the training cadre to conduct intensive training for over 9,000 men during the remainder of 1944.

Movement was oredered and completed on January 1, 1945, to Camp Swift, Texas, with trainees who had not completed their training. Training of these and others received continued with weekly shipments to replacement depots.

On April 4, 1945, the 144th arrived at Camp Rucker, Alabama, to join seven other separate regiments in a large-scale IARTC: the 90th, 113th, 125th, 140th, 174th, 201st and 300th Infantry Regiments. Training continued until V-J Day. Then orders were received to activate the regiments. At this time there were 12 officers and 117 enlisted men in the 144th who had departed from California with the regiment.

On September 20, 1945, M. Sgt. William J. Hefner, regimental sergeant major, with some assistance by 2nd Lt. John W. Judkins, Post Headquarters, performed the final actions necessary for complete inactivation of the 144th Infantry Regiment.

Kreigsgefangener 3074

by Clarence Ferguson

Chapter XXVII

Special Permission granted by the Author to the Editor of the **36th Division Historical Quarterly** *to print this material in this issue.*

Judge Ferguson's book, **Kriegsgefangener**, *is available through order to Julian Phillips, 36th Infantry Association, 11017 Pandora Dr., Houston, Texas at 16.50 per copy.*

Chapter XXVII

It was January 9, 1944. Axis Sally had just completed her sign off when one of the fellows in the east end of the barracks began singing *God Bless America.* He was joined immediately by others, and before long the whole barracks had joined in. Not loud congregational singing but thoughtful quiet tuning of a prayer so appropriate at the time. As he finished, someone in another place started another song. Before long we were all engaged in a musical reminiscence common to our heritage. From spontaneity of selection, it grew into requests for selections.

Dick was in his bunk above me. He requested a song, and they sang it. Another selection by someone from another section of the darkness was done. Dick made another request. This time it was a religious number. I was mildly surprised. Not that he wanted this particular song, but that he was even requesting and participating in the singing. In all the time I had known him, I had never heard him so much as hum a tune. I had never seen him pay particular attention to any music on the radio nor had I ever heard him make any comment about music. He made another request later; and now there was no doubt that he was having pangs of loneliness. This disturbed me. Even after the singing was over, I lay awake for some time thinking about what I might do to lessen his pain. I went to sleep hoping he would hear from home tomorrow. That would do him more good than anything I could do.

Morning came too soon. Our singing had kept us awake until almost midnight, and I dreaded the cold of appell. Dick lay motionless in his bunk. That was not unusual. I always had to awaken him. It had become a regular routine. Before I got up, I would raise my foot and push the bottom of his bed. I would then get up; and while dressing would admonish him to get up. About the time I was ready to leave, he would bound out of bed, dress quickly and join me in the washroom on our way to formation.

This morning, though, he was not responsive. I had to shake him when I got up to get his attention, and then he looked at me in a half dazed expression. I was sure he understood what I had said. I attributed his languor to the night before and thought little of it as I dressed. After a second reminder, he responded casually, slightly irritated. As I left, he was slowly getting out of

bed. He did not catch up with me in the washroom, and I went on to formation. I kept watching down the path to see if he was coming. If necessary, I could make some minor distraction to give him time to get there. Relieved, I saw him coming in a slow trot. We had already formed, but the place to my left was open for him to slip into. No problem. He jogged up in front of me and abruptly stopped facing me. In a weak voice he said, "Captain Ferguson, I sure feel funny."

I saw his knees buckle, and I reached to keep him from falling. He fell at my feet. Crouching down on my knees, I held his head in my arm off the cold. He opened his eyes and exhibited puzzlement as he looked into my face. Before he could speak, I said, "You're all right; you just fainted. Take it easy."

The consciousness that had momentarily registered in his eyes quickly went out as if a switch had been turned off. He slumped back onto my arm. Dick was dead!

Men nearby broke ranks and crowded around. When he fell back one of them reached down at the same time saying, "Help me!"

Before I scarcely knew it, four of them had him in their arms and were rushing toward the hospital. The guards made no move to interfere, but immediately we were called to attention and the routine count was made.

Upon dismissal I raced to the hospital. I ran up the stairs and into the room where the doctors where working frantically over him. Dr. Burgess looked up. "Get out of here!"

I retreated to the door and purposed to stay there, but when Burgess saw me, he came over to where I was.

"How is he?" I asked.

"I don't know. Go on to your barracks, and I'll send word when I know."

But I knew how Dick was and had known since consciousness faded from his eyes; I desperately prayed that it was not true. I went to my barracks and sat on my bunk. Later someone came and sat beside me. It was true; Dick was dead.

The reaction to the death of a fellow soldier is entirely different to that of a civilian to friends and relatives. Death in warfare is as common place as many other functions he performs. Discipline and training emphasize its acceptance as inevitable, and self-control must be maintained. Command responsibility carries with it the expectation that a person functions with efficiency immediately after seeing the body of a best friend torn apart. It is not evidence of callous indifference; but the responsibility of command is expected to override emotion and competent decisions unaffected.

Every person in this camp had seen death on a rampage. Everyone had seen a close friend fall nearby when he could not take the time to even bid him goodby. Death is accompanied by as much grief here as anywhere else. The form of reaction to it is different.

Dick's passing was not unlike that administered by sniper's bullets, and although it was in a peaceful setting, it would be observed much like a casualty in the pitch of battle.

Upon the report of his death, the Germans became suspicious and immediately seized his body and removed it from the camp. It was generally accepted that it was being taken to a place where an autopsy could be performed, but for several days they were very secretive about the whole matter.

Once they had determined we had not killed him nor that he had not committed suicide, our doctors were called in to help determine the cause of death. All this was done outside the camp in Schubin. The original autopsy evidently had been done elsewhere.

At the time our doctors were consulted, although foul play had been definitely eliminated, there was still a mystery as to cause of death; and it was still several days before they would concur in a diagnosis.

Once all were in agreement, Dr. Burdick made the announcement that Dick's body would be returned to the camp, and we could prepare for his funeral.

All had agreed that his death was caused by a spasm of his thymus, a gland in his neck. Usually the thymus is absorbed in early childhood, but for some reason, had not done so in Dick's case. They had been unable to determine just why it had constricted, but when it did, it collapsed the jugular and the blood supply was cut off. His death was almost instantaneous.

The seizure of his body and the German's secretiveness caused us to become apprehensive about the possibility that his death could be a prelude to the extermination of all of us. We already knew they were performing weird experiments on humans, usually taken from POW installations. We further knew that the Weirmach, Germany's regular army, had prevented more severe atrosities, designed against us by Hitler and the Nazis. Even at this time, Hitler had not completely subjected the regular army to his control and was unable to perform some of the malevolences he would later order.

We were notified that his body was ready for release, and that he could be buried in the local cemetery. It would take the coffin makers at least a day to be ready. We were surprised that no ready-made caskets were available. Here all the coffins were made by hand as they were needed.

Colonel Drake designated that the funeral would be on January 21, and 2:00 p.m. The service would be in the little chapel adjacent to the parade ground, and Father Brach would be in charge. Anyone could attend, but the procession to the cemetery would be limited to fifty. Those wanting to go to the burial site would sign a list on the bulletin board.

On the day before the funeral there was a drastic change in weather. For about four hours the temperature rose to above freezing. All the snow became mushy. The ground was still frozen. At nightfall the temperature immediately dropped well below freezing, and the melted snow became a solid sheet of ice about four inches thick.

At mid-morning on the day of the funeral, Dick was brought to the chapel. Colonel Jones went there to view the body. I had presumed we would see a casket much like those provided at home, however, we knew it would be made of wood instead of metal. But it was unlike any coffin I had ever seen. It was a chest-type box slightly over six feet long. The bottom was somewhat smaller,

causing the sides and end to angle down in a V shape. It was mounted on six-inch carved legs, extending slightly outward to give it more stability. The top was slightly arched and overlapped the edges of the box. The lid was constructed of one piece of wood so that when it was opened, the entire body was exposed. It was beautifully engraved with swirls intermited with fleur de lis and scrolls. Even the legs were decorated with appropriate designs. The handles on the sides were so constructed that they formed a part of the designer's theme. It was stained a dull black, and no where was there even a hint of gloss.

I experienced grave apprehensiveness in the viewing of his body; and although he made no comment, I could see that Jones felt the same way. Dick had been dead for eleven days and numerous tests had been performed on his body. I suspected to see the mutilated remains of a human body almost unrecognizable. I was concerned about his clothing; I knew the only ones he had were those he was wearing at the time of capture. Colonel Jones was as uninformed as I was, and like me, he would have perferred to remember Dick as we had known him the days before his death. But the colonel had to officially certify that the occupant of that coffin was Captain Richard Torrence; and with trepidation we grasped the heavy lid and opened the coffin.

He lay dressed in the wool uniform of an enlisted man. It had been meticulously cleaned and pressed. To it had been added the emblems of his rank. On the lower collar was the highly polished brass U.S. and on each lapel was the cross-rifle designation of his infantry assignment. He wore a Purple Heart and an American Defense ribbon. His feet were clothed in olive drab issue socks; his hands were bare.

His face bore no expression of pain but radiated the manifestation of one resting peaceably in deep sleep. There was no indication of any surgery performed on any visible part of his body. Those who had prepared him had done superlative work.

The uniform had not been procured from an issue somewhere. Someone had had to make a sacrifice and deny himself of much needed clothing to provide any part of it. It had been cleaned and pressed by two men within the camp who lived in almost total anonymity above the old barn in a secluded area. The service ribbons had been constructed out of hard to acquire material.

We could not help from being pleased even in these sad circumstances. Colonel Jones reached down and gently patted Dick's upper arm much like a father would do. I carefully laid my hand along his jaw and cheek. His body was frozen, but that was of no significance. He had been cared for with love and respect befitting a man of his character.

We closed the casket and prepared to leave. Not a word had been said. Father Brach stood aside in silence and made no movement while we were there. As we started for the door, a German soldier appeared with a large wreath of artificial flowers tied with a white satin bow emblazoned with a Nazis insignia. He placed it near the casket. Colonel Drake would later be able to provide flowers, but those given by the Germans were by far the most conspicuous.

A guard of honor had been designated from our barracks, and they would be alternated in thirty minute tours until the funeral service.

Before 2:00 Jones and I again went to the chapel. There the colonel gently unbuttoned the first and second buttons of Dick's blouse. He then unbuttoned the shirt below. I was at a loss temporarily as to what he was going, but when I saw Dick's identification tags, dog tags, I knew. He carefully removed one of the tags and put it in his coat pocket. Carefully, he rebuttoned the clothing, making sure that no wrinkle appeared where he had disturbed the garments. By this time people had begun to arrive, and the colonel indicated that the casket would be left open so that those who desired could view the body before the service. A tear rolled down his cheek as he took his seat on the front pew. At 2:00 upon his signal, the casket was closed and sealed.

The chapel was very small with a seating capacity of not more than forty adults. It was now full. Men began filling the back of the church and down the isles. Soon it would accommodate no more and many stood outside in the cold.

In a deep resonant voice Father Brach began.

"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

Captain James Bond stepped forward with a short scripture. When he finished, he sat down and I read a short verse from the Bible. Father Brach then continued with a rather short portion of the formal ritual prescribed for burial of service man. He concluded with a prayer. No obituary, no eulogy was given. The service had lasted less than twenty minutes, but it was impressive and dignified. There was no fire in the chapel; it was very cold.

Hurriedly the chapel was vacated, and the pallbearers stepped forward. Aligning themselves on each side of the casket, they carried it out the front door. They proceeded the length of the parade grounds and went out the gates at the main entrance. As they approached the gate, the guards came to attention and presented arms.

On the street was a horse drawn hearse in which the casket was placed. The pallbearers formed a column of twos immediately behind the hearse, and the procession walked in column of fives ten paces behind the bearers. Colonel Jones marched three paces at the head of the column.

The ground was extremely slippery and the footing was difficult. Extra men walked near the pallbearers during the trip to prevent them from falling. It

was evident that the march to the cemetery would be hazardous.

The procession moved slowly eastward toward the little town of Schubin. As Father Bach and the pallbearers moved away, our column did a column left after clearing the gates. The guards spaced themselves on each side as we marched into position. Without prior notice, an abbreviated platoon of German soldiers marched down the street from the Kommanduture, did a column right and came into formation at our rear.

This assemblage was more like one described by Charles Dickens or Alexander Dumas than one of the twentieth century. At its head was a gleaming black, glass-enclosed funeral coach drawn by four midnight black horses, driven by a liveried coachman in stove-pipe silk hat sitting straight and rigid. The large, polished glass windows exposed the entire contents of the velveted interior and were complimented by drawn grey velvet curtains.

The black casket presented a somber dignity of poignant respect. The Poles are renown for veneration of the dead, and this coach together with its coachman and horses were the property of these villagers. Without a doubt it was one remaining remnant of a proud heritage in this oppressed land.

The old wizened coachman reined his charges with hardly an audible command in a dexterious fashion that could have been learned only by years of patient experience. He was oblivious to everything but the undisturbed delivery of his precious cargo. He moved slowly, quietly admonishing this team on the ice-glazed pavement; and the result was a flawless progression in keeping with the ceremony observed.

We followed in precise formation, although our dress was far less than uniform. Each of us had dressed as best he could sometimes borrowing from his neighbor and had groomed himself in deference to the occasion; but the final result presented a hodgepodge of clothing unrelated in any instance to a uniform of our armed services. The weather was bitterly cold, and although we knew it would be inadequate, we wore whatever we thought would minimize our discomfort. Th only identifiable characteristic of this provession was the preciseness of our formation and the uniformed German Honor Guard at the rear.

We could not march in cadence because of the ice. The contour of the street and the worn soles of our shoes made movement precarious. Colonel Jones had created a serious problem before we had gone very far. I knew from our training days on Cape Cod that he had extremely poor equilibrium. I had mentioned it to him just prior to the funeral and was told he would go to the cemetery in spite of any difficulty.

He fell once between the chapel and the main gate, and although there was solicitation by the younger officers who picked him up, he insisted he was not hurt and that he would be more careful. But carefulness would not help him. He simply could not walk on the ice, and before we had moved a half mile, he had fallen three times. These were hard falls that could have injured him, but he maintained a stoicism in keeping with his determination. Thoughtfully a husky German guard moved alongside him and caught hold

of his arm to stabilize him. This was a great help, but soon the guard found that his assistance on only one side was not enough. He motioned to another guard who moved his rifle to his left shoulder and came alongside the Colonel on the left. The two pinioned his arms in such a way that they could keep him upright. At times they literally carried him until he could get his feet on the ground. It was an ordeal for them, and both were very tired. But in no way were they unkind to him.

We laborously moved to the intersection of the main street of Schubin and there turned north. Our progress was painfully slow, but eventually we came to an old Greek Orthodox church and turned beside it into a large cemetery. We moved south and in a potterlike section in the southwest corner saw an opened grave. The hearse stopped nearby and when the formation arrived, the pallbearers removed the casket and placed it on timbers laid across the grave. Our formation broke ranks and assembled along the sides. Upon the signal of Father Brach, the pallbearers gently lowered the casket into the grave. Father Brach stepped up, raising his hand and bowing his head.

"Father, we commit to thy care and keeping they servant Richard, our brother...Amen."

Without our being conscious, the German Honor Guard had moved into position and before we suspected anything, their Captain was saying, "Attention...Ready, aim, fire." A volley of rifle fire rang out.

"Ready, aim, fire." Bang!

"Ready, aim, fire." The universal salute fo the death of a comrade had been given unsolicited by our enemy.

From the depths of the trees came a tremulous note from a bugle. As the bugler tongued the notes deliberately and expressively our emotional bugle call unfolded and for us he was sadly saying a final good-bye as he expertly trumpeted *Taps*.

Somewhere I had learned some words attibuted as its vocal counterpart, and I mentally verbalized as he winded the brass.

"Day is done,
Gone the sun,
From the lake,
From the hill,
From the sky.
All is well,
Safely well,
God is nigh."

The trees reverberated a faint echo as the last note trailed into oblivion. It was dark. The grey clouds were reaching toward the cold frozen ground.

As I turned away heartbroken, cold and weary, every sinew, muscle and thought in me turned to bitter hate. "Daman you, Hitler! Damn you and all you stand for--every rotten, stinking misery you have foisted on the peoples of the world. You despicable contemptuous egomaniac. You pusillanimous,

perfidious degenerate living in the pompous security of underground bunkers away from danger, ordering death and destruction in delirious sadism. We leave Dick here because of you. I pray the day will come when I can see you and your like brought to judgment for these atrocities. I would gladly give my life to blow you to smithereens.''

Without a word to one another we reformed, did a rightface and slowly moved toward camp. Every muscle ached from cold and exhaustion. Tears bathed my face and tasted salty when I moistened my lips.

Then it began to snow.

That night as I lay painfully conscious of the empty bunk above me, trying to generate enough heat to warm my bones, I could not escape thinking of the tragedy that had come to this fine young man. His mother had died when he was young, and much of his childhood was devoid of the tender love of a mother. His courtship and marriage briefly gave him the happiness and release from the lonelines he had experienced down through the years. His love for her approached idol worship; and when disaster struck, he was ill-equipped to cope with it. We buried him today not knowing whether he was married or single. It would be of little significance, but it might have helped if he had known on that fateful morning eleven days ago.

As I lay in total darkness, I could not help from pursuing meditations that have been cogitated by man since creation. Here a young man with a brilliant mind interested in the preservation of individual rights of people to decide the structure of the society in which they would live. He believed it strong enough to devote all his energies for a portion of his life even to personally attacking a beach occupied by the enemy. His chances of success in this operation were less than twenty to one; and yet, he never wavered during the ordeal. He could have escaped, but he never thought of it. His contribution to the human race could have been illimitable, but tonight before he had scarcely entered upon it, he lay in the unkept corner of a cemetery in a foreign land. In my thoughts I was confronted by an imaginary conversant who said, ''this is war and is what you can expect. There are thousands of young men this night who will experience the same fate as your friend.''

That apostrophe only confounded the issue. The exaggeration of the problem by the injection of numerous participants makes it less acceptable than if it were a lonely occurrence. I can only conclude that the issue of life and death is insolvable by man. This determination is not a hinderance to my religious conviction, but it necessitates a petition for additional faith to opiate my grief.

Sleep just would not come; my subliminal consciousness forced me to observe a reinactment of the events of the day; and as I again imaginarily participated in these events, I was confronted with the paradoxical conduct of the Germans in regarding the death of this one prisoner. Their immediate attention at Dick's sudden death was understandable, but once it had been determined that it was from natural causes, they became surprisingly cooperative in facilitating the preparation for the funeral and burial. I knew that the kind of

coffin provided exceeded that usually approved. The sending of flowers far more expensive than would have been given even to one of their own war dead was enigmatic. It was true that a Nazi emblem was emblazoned on it, and that sometimes the Nazis seized opportunities to demonstrate to the world that they were a cultured people, but I would not countenance this occasion to be one of enough notoriety to be used as propaganda. If it had been, the enemy participation would have been more ostentatious. Somehow I felt that his was a personal kindness shown by Overst Schneider, and that the symbol was a camouflage by him to prevent the camp from knowing his genuine feelings. It was well known to us that he was not in accord with the policies of Hitler.

The unscheduled provision of an honor guard was also unusual. The Germans seldom indulged in spontaneity. The firing of the salute over the grave is a universal tribute to a fallen warrior, but its impromptu inclusion in this service was puzzling. I did not know who made arrangements for the playing of *Taps* nor did I know the nationality of the trumpeter. At no time was Colonel Jones or any of our group made aware of it.

As I pondered these things I could not fathom their meaning in full, but I had come at least one irrefutable conclusion. There was a least one person with command status in the camp Kommandature, and it possibly could be a tenet of Germany's military coterie, who believed without reservation in the universality of the brotherhood of soldiers; that whether he be enemy or ally his passing should be observed with special recognition.

It was now morning, and with the coming of day, I would be able to divert my attention toward something else. A day at the greenhouse would help to return to reality.

AUSTIN **1963**

Nineteenth — Post-WWII Reunion **Aug. 30-1st**

COMMODORE PERRY HOTEL headquarters for our third visit to Austin. This was a very new hotel then, but slightly too small for our group (years later it was converted to an office building).

John N. 'Pete' Green ..... President
Robert 'Rusty' Murphy ..... Secty.-Treas.
Vice-Presidents:
Emil S. Schneider ..... 141st Inf.
Samuel S. Graham ..... 142nd Inf.
Zerk O. Robertson ..... 143rd Inf.
Gaston Howard ..... 144th Inf.
Alex L. Griffin ..... Spec./Troops
Amil F. Kohutek ..... Div. Artillery
Directors at large:
John J. Garner and William H. Martin

John N. Green

Reunion committees: Mickey Francis, general arrangements chmn. Entertainment — O. B. Jack Franks and Chas. W. Ray. Nominations — Henry W. Gomez, Tom C. Henson, O. L. Oakes, Robt. J. Ritchie and Oran Stovall. Resolutions — James L. Minor, James O. Quick, Marvin A. McCoy, Earl Higginbotham, Whitley L. Bragg and Robt. A. Bewley.

Memorial Service — Victor M. Byrd, Reunion Chaplain, Bernard F. Roemer. Arrangements for the Ladies Auxiliary, Lelia McDugal.

General Assembly guest speaker — Maj. Gen. Thomas S. Bishop, AG of State of Texas. Memorial Service was held at State Capitol grounds with Douglas N. Boyd presiding.

Fighting 36th Historical Quarterly

From Salerno to Anzio

PART 4

by Wm. D. Broderick
142nd Infantry

This is the final section of Mr. Broderick's story of the march from Salerno To Anzio.

XIII - BACK TO THE 36TH

From the hospital we were driven in an ambulance to a forward branch of a replacement center. Here we were given guns, packs, belts, and blankets, and were assigned to various pyramidal tents for the night. Next morning a truck took us as far forward as the 36th quartermaster ration dump, where we waited for transportation to our various outfits. Like the others, I had a barracks bag and overcoat, and was without combat clothes, so I wanted to stop off first at the kitchen where I could see Gamble and leave my surplus. When our transportation arrived, though, the driver wasn't sure where the kitchens were, and he took us all the way up to regimental supply dump, which was in the range of hills east of Cassino. During our winding ride we got a good glimpse of Cassino, and the Liri Valley with the well fortified Rapido river running through it. At one point we passed newsreel cameramen taking pictures of the scene.

When we reached the supply dump, I waited without avail; no transportation arrived. There were jeeps there from the other two battalions, but none from ours. Finally I went out and waited along the roadside, where I spotted our medical jeep coming, so I flagged it and got a ride. Schoffner, who was driving said he was going to the 3rd battalion aid station, but had to stop off first at regimental rear. While he was doing his business at regiment, I walked around, and suddenly ran into Bobby Cecil. He was looking pretty haggard and shaken, and he told me he felt more than a lttle shaken. From him I heard the disasters that had befallen the battalion since I had left. I'll put them there in coherent, chronological order, though it wasn't the way I heard them.

The outfit had been relieved a few days after I left for the hospital, and taken to the rear for river-crossing training. Rowell and Schubert both rejoined the company at this point. Altogether they were off the line for 9 days of intensive training, and were then taken forward, with the whole division, for the assault across the Rapido River. Our regiment was to be in reserve, while the other two made the initial crossing; then we were to exploit the bridgehead. That was the opposition. The whole landing area was infested with landmines

and anti-personnel mines which wouldn't kill you, but blow off your foot, thus also putting out of action more men who would have to care for you. The ground was subjected to terrific and withering crossfire from well-placed and dug-in German machine gun positions. Temporary bridges were quickly blown out and landing barges hit in mid-water. That crossing would have required at least two or three divisions to be successful. As it was, it failed. Only ten minutes before our regiment was scheduled to move up, the whole thing was called off, and the division withdrew, sadly decimated. The other two regiments lost 70 to 80% of their men, and we had to send non-coms and officers to each for reorganizing purposes. Our regiment was then attached to the 34th Division and we were moved far to the right and into the hills behind Cassino. We controlled most of these, but not Cassino itself.

On a night approach march, an enemy artillery barrage killed Maj. Wells, and wounded Capt. Brown. Later, with a newly arrived Lt. Colonel in charge of the battalion, the regiment moved on through the village of Cairo to Castellone ridge, which faced high Mt. Cairo, and from the top of which the abbey of Monte Casino could be seen. The weather at this time was very cold, and the mountains were snow-capped. One night on Mt. Castellone, the battalion was under a heavy artillery barrage, and during this Stratton "flipped his lid," that is, his nerves gave way under the strain, and he broke down. In this psychoneurotic condition he was useless and could get much worse, so he was sent to the hospital. An attack was scheduled for the following night. We were to move into an assembly area held now by the French and push off from there. L Company was to be the assault company. The colonel, who had never been in combat before, insisted that the bulky and noisy 284 be sent forward with L Company to maintain contact with him at battalion headquarters, where he would have a 536 walkie-talkie. It was a stupid and foolish policy, as Roswell tried to tell him and was absolutely unworkable. However, as colonels listen to logic only when it comes from superiors, reinforced with authority, the plan remained in effect.

The night they started the approach march in dark silence. Suddenly, as they neared the area, all hell broke loose. The Germans, and not the French were in the area. The mountainside was terraced, and most of the battalion was on one of these terraced levels. The air was filled with the flash of flares and the rapid chatter of machine guns and burp guns. Rowell, Steele, Cozby and Nick were with L Company, carrying the radio. In rapid succession Nick and Cozby both flipped their lids and took off. Rowell and Steele could hear the dull thud of German mortar shells as they dropped into the barrels, then whooshed quickly out. Flares were dropping near, and also potato mashers (Kraut grenades) as they hugged the ground. Both were able to keep their wits fairly collected. They grabbed all available radio parts; Rowell led off, and they started crawling back to battalion headquarters. When they made it, they were still in hot water, because bullets were still flying. One funny thing occurred when a ricochet threw some pebbles into 1st. Sgt. Williams' mouth as he hugged

the ground. He groaned, "I'm hit! My teeth are all knocked out."

However, it was mostly tragedy. L Company's 1st. Sgt. died while being carried on a litter to the aid station; his leg had been blown off at the hip. Casualties were numerous everywhere. Finally a withdrawal was effected. Somehow Rowell, Steele, Cecil, who was badly shaken, and on the verge of breaking down, and several others, were separated from the main body of the battalion. The others had gone back up, but Bobby was staying at regiment till he could collect himself. He refused to go to the hospital, but he was technically AWOL from the company. When I heard this story, I realized what shape he was in; then, too, I wasn't properly equipped to go onto the line, with my barracks bag and all; so we decided to catch a ride back to our kitchen, where I could get properly equipped, and Bobby could rest legally. It was too late to leave that day, so we slept in a crowded stone-floored room with the regimental runners.

Next day we got a ride with one of the drivers who was going by the combined motor pool and kitchen. For some reason, all the kitchens were kept about 15 miles to the rear; ours was just across from the division clearing hospital. I gave Gamble and Corey my surplus clothes, and got a combat suit. The kitchen itself had nothing but C rations, since they didn't draw B rations while the division was on the line at that time. The mountains made it impossible to bring up hot food. To get back up I had to wait till Lt. Johnson made a trip back from the forward motor pool to pick up mail. Then I would return with him. I wasn't in any hurry, and this suited me fine. Bobby and I located Static, the chaplain, his assistant, and some other drivers living in a pyramidal tent below the ktichen. Static had done some Arabing, and consequently had several cases of 10-in-1 rations, besides several loaves of bread. So when he invited us down to live with them, we didn't hesitate. All the following day Lt. Johnson didn't arrive, so Bobby and I both had another day's rest. One the second day the batalion kitchens got orders to move forward, so all of us were busy tearing down the kitchen tents and loading the supply and kitchen trucks. Static earlier had told me that Werner, our other radio driver had been hit in the shoulder with shrapnel, while up around regiment one day. He himself, he said, when he heard of all the radio section casualties (only Rowell and Steele were left up there) had volunteered to go up and help, but Lt. Johnson told him to wait until he was asked for. I took this story with a grain or two of salt.

The move began, and turned out to be more of a sideways than a forward move. We drove eastward, through battered San Pietro and on a road running behind Mt. Summucro till we came to the area that had been chosen. It was very muddy and trucks were getting stuck all over the place. Once we had to chop down a tree in order to free a six-by-six, which had skidded sideways off a slanting road into it, and couldn't get away.

After setting up the kitchen, we again put up the pyramidal tent, set up the GI stove which Static had secured, and laid out our beds. I slept with Robbins, a driver who had nearly as many blankets as Static, who had 19. Jeep drivers really had it soft there.

That night Bob suffered with a very severe case of diarrhea, so next morning Static drove him to the 111th clearing station. I and a few others from the line companies were collected and driven up to the front. Again we stopped at regimental rear to wait for another jeep. While here we got ammunition and K rations. It was now late afternoon, and there was a drizzling rain. When the jeep arrived, the drizzle had become a downpour. Fortunately I had my raincoat. Three us us sat shivering in the back seat of the jeep as we followed the round-about road taking us to Cairo. We pulled in after dark and turned loose to find our companies. There was lots of hustle and activity going on.

I ran into Lt. Donaho going someplace; he greeted me warmly and showed me where the communications section was staying. It was on the second floor of a two story stone building (there aren't any other kind in Southern Italy) which was reached by stairs from outside the building. I mounted them, and pushed open the door. The room was very full; the floor was covered with straw, damp in several spots where the rain leaked through the roof. Rowell and Steele were near the door, and both very happy to see me, though they told me I'd come back at a pretty rotten time. When I asked why they explained that they had just come off the mountain last night and were going back up tonight. I didn't look forward to that with any pleasure, but sat down to wait with the rest of them. There were now three of us to carry the radio plus all our own equipment, which would be no easy task. Part of the stuff we were able to consign to two runners, who weren't so heavily loaded. This still left plenty, though.

XIV - MOVING TOWARDS CASSINO

Shortly the signal came for us to move out onto the road. We filed out the door one at a time, Rowell waiting behind to see that everyone got out who belonged to our outfit (there were some others there). When Steele and I had reached the ground and were standing there, we heard a crash behind us, and Rowell suddenly appeared before us, flat on his face, with the spare parts bag flung over his head. He was quite muddy, and had hurt himself. When he rose, he could barely walk; his knee had been hurt. That left Steele and me to go on. The move had been delayed while waiting on Rowell, who now went to the aid station, so 1st/Sgt. Williams took the spare parts bag, and we took off. Steele had the radio, and a blanket roll. I had my roll and pack, his pack, both our rifles and the generator. For a while I labored along under the load, but after my spell of laying in bed, I wore out quickly.

During a break an officer who I learned was Lt. Puckett, our new communications officer, noticed me and had others relieve me of part of the load. So we went on. The rain continued. Gradually it grew colder as we climbed upward and the rain changed to snow. Captain Simpson was commanding the battalion; the colonel who had led us into the trap having been promptly relieved. After walking for several hours in the darkness, it became obvious to Capt. Simpson that we would not be able to reach our original objective that night.

Therefore, he picked out the least repellant looking spot he could find on the rocky, steep terrain, and deployed the battalion around that area for the rest of the night. Steele and I noticed some holes already dug, so we began to look for one for ourselves. I spotted a likely looking one in the dark about 20 yards below us. To establish our ownership, I tossed my roll into it. The roll landed, all right, with a resounding splash. The hole was full of water. But it wasn't full -- only the bottom was covered with about a two-inch layer of it. Since there was nothing else in sight, we took it.

Lt. Puckett had told us to establish contact with regiment as soon as possible. First we arranged a makeshift cover over our heads with our two shelterhalves. By now it was much colder and the snow was falling thickly. After the radio was set up, we were very cramped for space. I sat on the generator slat, while Steele made himself a seat out of his pack and the spare parts bag. In these miserable positions we tried to call regiment. However, after several calls which elicited no answer, we decided that they were all asleep. Since there was a telephone line being laid (regiment was laying it) we closed down, and tried to keep ourselves warm by wrapping up in a blanket. For a while sleep seemed impossible in this chilly and cramped position, but finally we dozed off for a short period. Waking early in the morning, we found the ground covered with a foot of snow. I was shivering, so I crawled outside in order to move around, restoring my circulation. Steele, however, couldn't move. He said his feet were frozen; he was afraid he couldn't go on. As I looked around I noticed that on the trail there were several who were reporting with frozen hands or feet. One line company reported nearly all with frozen feet. Capt. Simpson, though, told us that the aid station was already set up ahead of us where we were going, so that those with frozen feet would have to do their best to come along in order to reach the aid station for treatment. I told this to Steele while I had a can of peach jam which I had brought with me from Static's 10-in-1 ratons. I offered Steele the other one I had, but he refused it, being too miserable to eat it. So I ate it too. The cold made my appetite very sharp.

It was announded that we would move out soon, so Steele came out and after moving around a bit helping me pack the stuff up, some of the numbness left his feet. (Incidently, he'll be called Steele all through this narrative though he became my best friend, because his first name is Dean, and I hated and still hate to inflict that on him.) We started off again in the morning, well scattered out to prevent observation. All the way we maintained a ten yard interval. Once a sniper's bullet whined through the air between Brumly and me, but otherwise we had no trouble. When we reached our area, the battalion CP was set up in a crumbling stone house, while headquarters company moved past it a few hundred feet into a depression well surrounded by trees and shrubbery. The ground was still a little snow covered, though the sun had risen to melt most of it as Steele and I looked for place to dig in. Nothing looked very promising; wherever we started to dig we ran into huge tree roots. We finally chose a spot and went to work hacking away the rocks and dirt. Brumley

and Schubert dug their message center hold only a few yards away from us. We managed to scrape out a fairly habitable and slightly safe place by resorting to our custom of piling rocks up around us when we could dig no further. Then we set the radio up, called regiment, and for once they were awake down in Cairo and heard us. So we had radio communication in case the wire lines failed us. After heating our rations on Brumley's Coleman stove, Steele and I prepared for a cold night's sleep. Theoretically each of us was to take turns staying awake on the radio, but after it grew dark we both dozed off.

Very early in the morning, before dawn, we were wakened by the nearby exploding of shells. They seemed to be hitting all around us, some pretty close. This lasted about a half hour; then Lt. Donaho came up, pretty excited, and asked when I had last contacted regiment. I told him about midnight, which was a lie, and he had me call them right away and have them stand by for an urgent message, which Brumley and Schubert were already busy encoding. Steele cranked while I called (all this was in Morse) and breathed a sigh of relief when they answered promptly. The message I sent read something like this (in clear text): "Under constant enemy artillery barrage since 1430. Ammunition dump destroyed. Casualties unknown. Bn. prepared for any emergency." This began a long series of messages back and forth. Steele and I took turns cranking the generator, a back-breaking job.

Once I heard regiment call me and before I could answer, someone else did, using my call signs. I had no authentication chart with me, so I couldn't challenge this new station, but he had me plenty worried for fear it was Germans, intercepting our messages. When the wire lines were fixed, shortly afterwards, though, we discovered it was merely one of the regimental outposts, using the wrong call signs.

XV - HIGH ON A WINDY HILL

Things were quiet for the rest of the day; then that evening we received orders to pack up everything and get ready to move out. A little later we were told the move had been delayed a short while; we were to stand by. As it was now dark we all unrolled a blanket and stood by in comfort.

But then I discovered we needed some batteries, so I set off in the dark to find the supply dump, along with one of the runners, who had been there before. We stumbled and staggered for what seemed ages, going uphill, before we finally located the place. Coming back down with our arms full was no cinch either.

Early the next morning we awoke and learned that the move had been cancelled, which was all right with us. L company was pulled back through our position and held in reserve. The weather again warmed up, turning everything to mud, which we had now become accustomed to. One time I went back to get some water from a well behind the CP and noticed some 34th Division men in the area. It looked like we were to get some relief. In a sense we did.

The next day we packed up and left our positions, and went back along the same trail we had come up on for a time. Then we set out across country -- no easy task on a mountainside. Our new position turned out to be the same one the battalion had occupied just before going down to Cairo at night, at the time I had returned from the hospital.

Rowell hadn't come back to us yet, and neither had Fletcher, the communications sergeant, who had stayed behind with a bad stomach. That left Brumley in charge of the platoon, Schubert, a PFC, running message center, Beasley, a PFC, in charge of the wire section, and me, who had attained the rank of PFC while in the hospital, radio chief. The only advantage our titles had was that they kept us out of pulling guard duty. This satisfied us, however.

Steele, Brumley and I slept together in a fairly wide hole dug into the rocky side of the hill. We improved and widened it with our picks and shovels until it was possible for all three of us to sleep there, providing we all faced the same way and turned over in unison. Thus when one of us would wake up in a cramped position, he would nudge the other two, and turn over, whereupon they would automatically follow suit. Since there were three of us together, we had plenty of blankets. Pillows we made by folding our field jackets and laying them on top of our boots. Lt. Puckett, the communications officer who hadn't increased his reputation any by nearly losing his head when the battalion was trapped, slept just above us. Every morning he would rise, find a piece of shrapnel in or around his bed, and show it to everyone who would look. To me it seemed to have a suspiciously similar shape every day. Lt. Puckett was quite a character. He had been in the army for many years, and got his commission after the war broke out. He was a heavy drinker, when he could get it, and perpetually in trouble. The reason he came to us was that he had gotten in a fight with a captain, and been court-martialled and railroaded out of the 143rd. Several previous court martials he considered just, but concerning this one he had a complaint. ''If I was a captain,'' he said, ''and somebody hit me hard enough to put me in the hospital and keep me out of that Rapido River crossing, I think I'd pay his fine for him.''

At this time we started drawing 5-in-1 rations, which were a welcome relief and a variety from Cs and Ks. These rations contained articles like bacon, spaghetti, rice pudding, canned tomatoes, and other items which made existence a little more pleasant. As usual, we went down the hill every morning on a ration haul to bring these up, along with water, gasoline (for our Coleman stoves), batteries, and mail. It was a pretty steep hill, and anything that slipped and rolled down was usually a goner. Steele's helmet took off in this manner one day and was at the bottom in a matter of seconds. He recovered it next morning on the ration haul, though.

We also witnessed one of the best diving catches I've ever seen off a baseball diamond. The code converter was setting near the radio and was accidentally shoved, causing it to start rolling downhill hell-bent for election. We were afraid it was gone; then we saw Schubert about half-way down the hill. By shouting, we got his attention. Then he saw it coming. Running to his left,

he made a swift and sudden dive, rolled over once, and stood up, with the converter in his arms and a big smile on his face. George was the hero of the show. After that we were more careful how we laid things around. 5-in-1's required quite a bit of water for cooking purposes, and we seldom had enough, getting only four 5 gallon cans a day. One day, however, the powers that be decided our beards were too long and that we should all shave. So on the following day we received 10 cans of water instead of 4, just so we could scrape off our whiskers.

Around this time we began to hear rumors that we were to be relieved shortly by the 88th Division, which had recently arrived in Italy. In fact, some of their advanced parties had already been up looking over the terrain. While we were waiting, Steele and Brumley went to the rest camp at Caserta, and Rowell, his knee better, came up one night with the rations and rejoined us. For some reason, the 88th Division didn't relieve us. Our next move took us about a mile away to a position much the same as the one we had just left. The move naturally was at night. Rowell, overestimating his powers, was carrying a 7-blanket roll with him, and it wasn't long before he was complaining loudly of the inefficiency which was slowing up the move. The place we came to had been occupied before and there were several vacant holes. The first night George and I didn't fare so well, in a rocky shallow ditch, but the next day some artillery observers moved out, and we took over their palatial hole. They had left several blankets behind so that with these and George's seven, we slept in the lap of luxury. We had the radio set up and in contact with regiment; the idea being that we would call in every hour to check. This we did during the day, but when night came, we merely brought the earphones inside with us, and went to bed. Up until about nine o'clock they would get answers to their calls; after that we were asleep. Since we only had one complaint about it, I think they went to sleep at the same time.

The one time regiment did phone up to complain, we were both awake but it was raining pitchforks, and neither of us felt like crawling out of the tent. (The radio was outside, covered with a shelterhalf). We cursed them heartily at the time, because we knew they were living in a nice warm house in Cairo. Later we found out they had several gallons of vino with them, and seldom drew a sober breath.

We had a terrific snowstorm one evening; the weight of the snow almost collapsed the shelterhalf stretched over our hole. Many of our blankets got wet and so did our clothes. The warmth of our bodies dried the clothes, but didn't prevent us from being uncomfortable. As usual the Germans shelled the immediate area pretty often, mainly with his Nebelwefer, or "Screaming mimi." George Schubert was up visiting us in our spacious home one day when we received a particularly vicious and thorough shelling. Way off in the distance we could hear the rising, whimpering wail of the screaming mimi winding up. In a few seconds we would hear a woosh through the air, and in rapid succession, the burst of eight shells--thump! thump! thump! Following this, we listened to pieces of flying shrapnel whistle through the air near-

by. Some struck the clump of bushes above our head. At every explosion my stomach seemed to jump and then slowly turn a somersault, while I flinched at each tump, fearing the next would hit us. It was the first time I had dreaded shells so much, and from then on my fear grew.

Soon we could hear the familiar agonizing cry of "medic! medic!" and we knew someone had been hit. Several times this awful cry was re-echoed before the shells stopped coming. When fire had ceased we didn't dare stick out our heads for a time. Our company had been fortunate with only about three casualties, all wounded. K company had several killed, and L company also suffered a few casualties.

XVI - BLESSED RELIEF

It was the day after this that we finally were relieved -- not by the 88th division, but by the French, who were taking over the sector. They didn't begin to arrive till late in the evening. We had our radio all torn down, and wanted to leave before dark, because of our heavy load, but we were told to wait. Wait we did, till the French advance party arrived, then we took off into the night. It was very slow going, since we had Frenchmen coming from the other direction. Many were lost, and I tried to tell one in Spanish where to go, but my vocabulary was too limited. Next we ran into a mule train which had halted in the middle of the trail, effectively blocking all traffic. Captain Simpson got them moving, and from then on the only obstacles we met were natural ones, and the darkness. All night we walked, and as daybreak came, the wet ground began to freeze and ice up. It was tricky going down some of those narrow trails. Once I slipped and fell with the radio on my back, and landed on my hands and knees at the edge of a sheer cliff. After that I was infinitely more careful.

By the time we arrived at regimental headquarters in Cairo it was daylight. Before we could reach the trucks waiting to take us back, we had to cross five miles of open valley. It looked as though we were stuck here till night. But for once, luck was on our side. A heavy fog settled over the valley, low enough so that the Germans would have no observation of us from Mt. Cairo. Taking advantage of this, we started out walking at a very fast clip, tired though we were. This was our first real relief in 106 days, which set a new record for the length of time a division had been continually on the line. We crossed the valley, ragged and unshaven, and reached the trucks in very quick time. Happily we clambered aboard, about 50 on every truck, all standing, and headed for the rear -- that blessed place -- away from the line. The trip was a long and slow one, winding in and out of the hills, and soon it began to rain again. We were used to rain and cold by now though, and it dampened our spirits only a little.

At last we reached our bivouac area in the Piedmont-Alife section. The drivers and cooks had pitched the pyramidal tents, and Static, Brumley and Steele, who had come direct here from the rest camp, together with Bobby

Cecil, had one all ready for us, complete with straw and blankets. Though it was one of the muddiest areas in the world we considered it heaven. We finally had our long-delayed chance to get and open our Christmas packages, and a day later, to get a big load of PX rations. The following day also, we were taken to the QM delousing showers where we turned in all our old clothes, got a hot shower, and drew new ones, making us feel like human beings again.

We set up one of the radios in the tent to listen to BBC and Lt. Puckett took the other one up to the officers' quarters. He set it up, but it wouldn't play. So he called Static, who checked the switches, the antenna, the dials, then asked if the battery was ok. Pucket told him it should be good, because Broderick had put in a new one just before coming off the mountain. Static looked anyway, and found that I, being practical had put in place of the battery --- a can of green beans! No wonder he got no music.

Now that we were off the line, we privates went back to the old routine of KP and guard duty. Since Steele and I were the only radio operators left besides Rowell (he had now gone to the rest camp) we were both eligible for a rating. There was a new T.O. which called for Rowell being a S/Sgt., two T/4's and a T/5. Lt. Puckett told us we had both been put in for ratings. Then, too, we needed new operators. There was a corps radio school being set up to train men, and Puckett asked me to see if anyone in the company were interested. I tried to get Ivy Edgerton to go; he was a swell guy, quite intelligent, who had some code in basic training. But Capt. Lowry, who wanted to make Ivy battalion clerk, beat me to it. Red Tanenbaum, from mesage center who had come to the company with Steele, volunteered, and Lt. Puckett accepted him. So he was sent off to school.

XVII - GETTING TO KNOW THE NATIVES

I had a one day pass in Santa Maria during this time. While there I bought some cheaply made, but expensively priced souvenirs and sent them home. All the people in town seemed either to be barbers, souvenir sellers, shoe shine boys, pimps, or beggars. They had lots of gaudy merchandise, and none of it much good. The big attraction was bedspreads, which they offered you for 20 dollars. If you could speak a little Italian, you could argue them down to 8 or 9. Still they were making profit. In a few days we moved out of our muddy area into a much leveler and nicer one near Maddeloni. From here I went to the Caserta rest camp for five days, and spent most of my time just relaxing, going to movies, reading, walking around town.

One morning I got up and went to the trip to Pompei. We went by train, and had to change cars in Naples. An Italian Red Cross guide took us on a speedy trip through the ruins, which were a little disappointing to me. I was looking for sunlit marble pillars crumbling in the dust, and I saw mostly brick and stone buildings, half covered with dirt. On the way back, I conveniently missed connections and stayed in Naples. I had no idea what section of town the station was in, so I just started walking, hoping to hit the Via Roma. At

one point I walked up a narrow street lined on both sides with pushcarts, containing every conceivable commodity. At each cart there would be a woman shopper, holding an object in one hand, and gesturing violently with the other, while she screamed at the top of her voice, at the proprietor. The proprietor on his part, was not taking all this calmly. Having two free hands he waved both in the air and tried to outshout the woman. This was the Italian equivalent of price control.

After locating the Via Roma, I went down to St. Anthony's church to see my friend the priest. He was there, and greeted me warmly; he had no trouble remembering me. It was Saturday night, and he invited me to serve Mass for him the next day. I told him that I had no place to stay, but he fixed that. A friend of his took me about two blocks away, and up three flights of stairs. Here a middle aged couple greeted me and showed me the room; it was small, but heavenly to me. The white sheets looked so attractive. So I stayed there that night. They were on a four day leave from the 8th Army. Naples was supposed to be off limits to us due to the typhoid in Naples, but M.P.'s weren't too troublesome, (I hoped).

I went to the church and underwent the very unique experience of confessing my sins in Italian. Then I served Mass and received Communion.

I decided not to stay in town overly long, for fear of M.P.'s so I walked leisurely up the sunny Via Roma (it was Sunday morning and everyone was dressed up) to the road leading out to Caserta. It was easy to catch a ride, and I was soon back at the rest camp.

XVIII - ON TO ANZIO

On returning I found that a good old training schedule had been set up, to make sure we wouldn't get out of condition. Calisthenics, hikes, close order drill, problem, all were included. As usual, though, the radio section was able to while away a good bit of its time on the pretense of cleaning equipment, code practice, etc. Then one day we heard news that left us all feeling glum. Another big drive on Cassino was coming. The attack this time was to be made by New Zealanders, after a thousand plane raid on the city by the Mediterranean air force. The plan was this: in case the Anzacs advanced fast enough to leave one of their flanks exposed, our regiment was to be used to protect that flank. It would be a defensive position, but still it would mean we were back on the line. And as yet we had drawn no replacements. However, when we thought it over, we decided that no one was going to move very far or fast through Cassino; and it turned out that we were right. On the 22nd of March, the first clear day, the air force bombed the town. They succeeded in destroying some German positions, and also in creating new ones among the debris. The attack failed.

At this time Mt. Vesuvius, which was in plain sight of us, began to cut loose with one of her infrequent eruptions. We had a ringside seat for the proceedings, watching the ashes and lava belch forth. On the 15th of March, Rowell became a Staff Sgt., I a T-4 and Steele a T-5. We were given a new Bn commander

at this time, Col. Coyle, who had just come over from the States. Simpson was made a major and became executive officer. Lowry and Donaho both made captain. A new communications officer also arrived, Lt. John Gleason, an Irishman from Boston who had also just come over. Puckett was made anti-tank officer.

March, April and part of May were spent in training, breaking in new replacements, and getting ready to return to the front. We were more fortunate than our three fellow divisions, the 3rd, 34th, and 45th, who spent most of this time in grim fighting at Anzio. Our time was to come, though. In April we left Maddeloni, and moved south to Forino, inland from Salerno, for mountain training. Easter Sunday some of us went to Mass at the Cathedral in Caserta, where Solemn High Mass was celebrated by a Cardinal. While in the Maddeloni area, one of our tasks was to train radio operators in the rifle companies; we were able to make much more progress at this after we received the new SCR300 radios, which became a Godsend and indispensable, from then on. It was a voice radio, weighing 38 pounds, operated by one man as he carried it on his back; its effective range was from two to three miles. It was both delicate and endurable, with many little idiosyncracies, yet holding up far better than any predecessor. In my opinion, it was a chief factor in the success of any infantry attack.

About the middle of May we began to make preparations for moving from the area north of Naples. The whole affair was very hush-hush, with all civilians who worked in the kitchens or any place else where they might pick up information, being impounded. Also, one radio jeep with Steele operating was dispatched down to the Pozzuoli dock area for 2 days, and a series of coded messages were relayed back and forth between the 3 battalions and regiment at appointed intervals. We were all pretty certain that our destination was Anzio, though there were a few rumors about another beachhead. One sunny day we broke camp, rolled our packs, and all loaded on trucks. We were driven down to the docks, where we got off, and marched, in company formation, out onto the pier, passing through one of Pozzuoli's main streets, and attracting a lot of attention in doing so. Here we loaded on a L.ST and began scrambling to find a decent sleeping place for the night; there were no berths, and all of us were on deck which was also crowded with ammo trucks (loaded), tanks, jeeps -- almost every type of vehicle. About seven of us clambered to the top of an ammo-laden 6 by 6, whose only advantage was that the top was up. This proved quite an advantage when later that afternoon it began to rain, and continued to do so till morning. We squeezed in, and, having made ourselves uncomfortable, tried to go to sleep. Eventually we did sleep fitfully.

When we reached Anzio harbor next morning, the sun was shining. This was nice, but the perfect visibility made us sitting ducks for any Kraut airplanes. Fortunately, none appeared.

We unloaded and marched through the battered streets of the town of Anzio, where not a house remained intact. The streets were kept fairly clear of rubble by bulldozers, but the rest of the town was just a mess. There were

no civilians left, all having been evacuated. This had been done because there was no spot on the beachhead which was free from German observation and consequent artillery fire.

Casualties at Anzio were nearly as high among MPs and they were in the infantry, for the first and only time in the war.

(This account, which I wrote in the spring and summer of 1945, ends here. I was wounded in the leg on May 31, 1945 at Anzio during the drive to capture Rome, and rejoined the 36th in time to take part in the invasion of Southern France; I stayed with the Division as it moved north through the Rhone Valley into the Vosges Mountains until, in October, I again contracted hepatitis and returned to the hospital - this time for four months. I was evacuated to England and later reassigned to the Air Corps, and spent the final months of the war at an air field outside Paris. I have not attempted, 36 years later, to complete the memoir in any detail because, although I have vivid memories of much of it, the immediacy and freshness of a 20-year-old's account would be lacking.)

William D. Broderick
July, 1981

Texas Sergeant Repulses Tank Attack Five Times and Wins His Commission on the Spot

Reprint From:

The Dallas Morning News, Thursday, November 25, 1943

Temple, Texas, November 24 (AP).

Five times German tanks attacked the 36th Division command post two and a half miles from the Salerno coast the morning of the Allied invasion Sept.9.

And each time the tanks were repulsed by a Texas sergeant and a gun crew with a single cannon, said Lieutenant Col. Joseph B. McShane of San Antonio, G-3 of the 36th, now a patient at McCloskey General Hospital here.

All this happened between 9 and 11 a.m., after Major Gen. Fred L. Walker, "the best-loved commander in the African theater," had established his headquarters in an abandoned tobacco warehouse at the village of Paestrum, Colonel McShane said.

The sergeant was an old National Guardsman named Whitaker, who for the action was commissioned on the spot and decorated, the colonel said.

(An Italian dispatch told of a gun, manned by Lieut. John W. Whitaker of Fort Worth and his crew, engaging thirteen tanks by itself in the first stage of the battle.)

The division headquarters staff members were armed with pistols only and the cannon was all that stood between them and capture or annihilation, said McShane.

"The first attack came at 9 o'clock, a few minutes after we had set up headquarters. Five tanks attacked headquarters. Whitaker's gun destroyed three of the tanks. Four other times, they moved in, and each time this gun drove them off.

"We were well in advance of the division, on its left flank, and were wide open to attack. Lt. Col. Robert M. Ives of Houston, our G-1, was our lookout. Every few minutes he'd shout down to us, 'Here they come!"

General Walker decorated Sergeant Whitaker on the spot.

The division staff landed in front of the 36th and was on the ground when the fighting began, said Colonel McShane.

"General Walker walked out in front of the division and led it. He went forward with the company commanders, giving directions on the front line. He's a great leader!"

Win a Week's Rest.

The flag of Texas presented to the division by Gov. Coke Stevenson flew over General Walker's headquarters at Salerno.

"In the headquarters we said they'd have to get that, too, before they drove us off. It was still flying when I was evacuated from Italy," McShane said.

"The Germans knew we were a Texas outfit, allright," he added, as he told how the men of the 36th were given special permission to wear their division shoulder patches.

The 141st Infantry, said McShane, was the first organization of the First American Army to set foot on Continental Europe. It was commanded by Col. Richard Werner of San Antonio.

"We ran into two well-seasoned armored divisions; they were waiting for us. But in the battle of Salerno we established the bridgehead and held it in the face of terrific opposition. After it had been secured, our division was given a week's rest. It had been that tough," said Colonel McShane.

"The Germans captured a great many men, including wounded, but a lot of them escaped and got back to our lines. Three privates, whose names were in the papers I left behind, got back to headquarters dressed as Italian civilians. They even had discarded their American underwear.

"They had been missing four days. They had a little trouble proving their identity, but when they said, 'Boy, are we glad to get back,' we knew they were allright.

"It got pretty dark for awhile. One night the General called in the commanders and established a final defense line. But through the work of the divisional artillery, which laid down an all-night barrage September 12 and 13, we held out. The next day reinforcements arrived.

"The afternoon of the 13th, an advance party of the British Eighth Army arrived to report the British were but six miles away. Their 'Heigh ho, everybody, we'll be there!' encouraged us a lot.

Get Mail on the Run

"One day the Mayor of Agripoli sent a message to headquarters asking us to send someone to take charge of the town because it was getting out of hand. We sent along a platoon to take charge.

"Our big battle was at Altevilla the night of the 11th and 12th. The town changed hands several times, but the third time we went in we kept it. Altevilla was one of those towns like you see in pictures of fairy castles, situated high on a mountain. It was overlooking a steep precipice.

"We were able to hold the town with the help of the Navy, which laid down a heavy barrage.

"The unsung heroes of the invasion were in the regiment of shore engineers attached to our division. I take my hat off to them. They stayed on the beach day and night, unloading supplies."

The night of the crossing over for the invasion Colonel McShane, Lieutenant Col. A.B. Crowther, G-2, and Lieutenant Col. Harry Steel, all of San Antonio, staged a chess tournament in the hold of their ship.

McShane said the division's mail delivery was the best in the Army and that letters were delivered promptly, even during combat.

"One letter was handed to me while the firing was going on and I was running for shelter," he said.

How a Pup Probably Saved My Life

by Willie T. Walker

36th Recon Unit

After the 36th Division landed in Oran in North Africa the 36th Recon Unit had a brief stay, then boarded a train for a grand tour. The train was made up of 40 and 8 boxcars and the troops were loaded and moved to the cork forest near the Rabat airfield. It was hot-hot weather and the only time I ever saw the army stopping all activities at 10:00 a.m. and having retreat formation at 5:00 P.M.

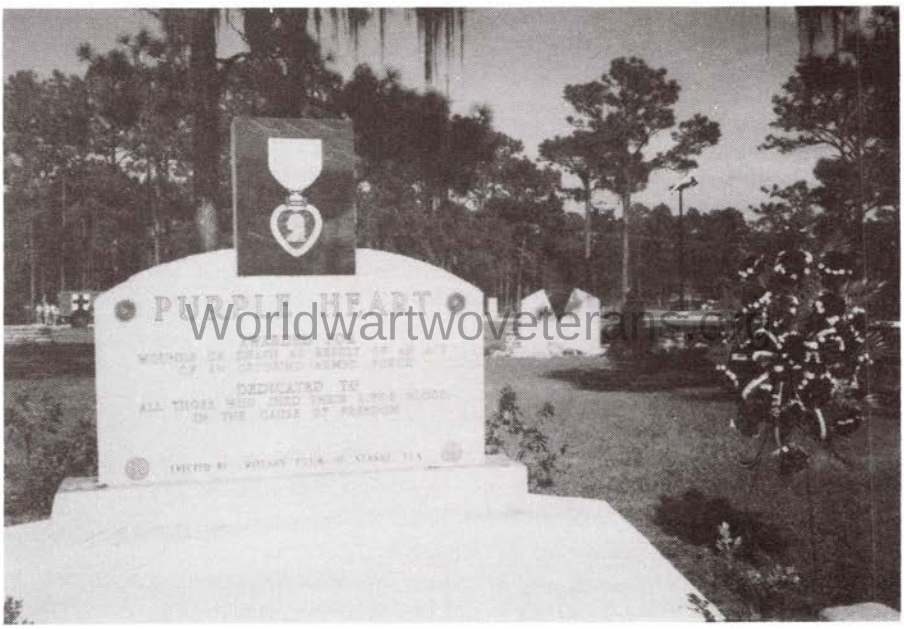
One of the troopers, Clint Sedberry, picked up a small dog and brought it into the area. Clint and the pup had some rough play and it bit Clint on the hands several times. It came by my tent and wanted to play. I grabbed the dog and was holding him and he bit me through the ear. A couple of days later the pup died. The medics had rabies tests made of the dog and found it to have rabies. Sedberry and I were ordered to take rabies shots. Meantime, the troop began moving to Arzew, preparing for the Salerno invasion. Sedberry and I were sent over to a special company to complete our shots.

When we moved out we thought we were going to join the troop but instead we were driven to an airfield outside of Algiers. Here we were used to direct the division convoys to the waterproofing area on the edge of Algiers. We were then loaded onto a British ship and we landed at Salerno 10 days after D-Day. We experienced some bombing from the Germans who were attempting to sink the ships in the harbor.

We joined the troop and after Naples fell we ran patrols outside the city and always came back to the area of the railway station and selpt outside in front of the building. On the sixth day we pulled back to the station and a paratrooper came running up to the halftrack and said there was a sniper inside the building.

I saw that he had no rifle and asked him where his was and he told me it was inside the building along with his helmet. I asked him to get an M1 and a helmet off the halftrack and that I would like to have his folding stock carbine. He said I'd better not go for it, for the sniper had a burp gun and had cut the plaster on the wall right above his head.

I crawled up to the front door and threw pieces of concrete down the hall until I got him to shoot. I saw where he was and turned the sub-machine gun on him and emptied the clip. I waited a few minutes and slipped into the building and got the carbine which I kept until I was sent to the hospital. Upon returning to the troop I was informed that the Supply Sgt. had sent the weapon to the States, piece by piece.



Two POW Colonels

By R.K. Doughty

The 141st CP in mid-November 1944 was located in a country school house high in the Vosges Mountains, France. It had been bombed the evening before by two German low-flying planes but the damage had been slight as the bombs had fallen in a field just south of the school building. During the evening of the bombing, headquarters personnel had discussed moving to another site because of the possibility of receiving closer attention the next morning from the German Luftwaffe. However, the consensus had been that the two planes had found a target of opportunity and would, in all likelihood, not return. The CP stayed where it was.

That night, among other prisoners of war taken by the troops of the 141st Infantry, there appeared a German military doctor with the rank of full colonel. He was a splendid looking individual, standing some six feet tall, with the Aryan features so admired by Hitler and with an outstanding medical background. His uniform was immaculate, his boots polished, his leather gleaming. We had a fairly complete record of his educational background in the papers he carried by way of identification.

Because fighting had been sporadic in the recent past the interrogating officer and I decided to spend some time talking to this highly trained and obviously intelligent German non-combatant, to learn what we could, but also to do a little brain-washing of our own since he, doubtless, would return to Germany after the war. It soon became evident that no interpreter was needed as the doctor spoke English with a British accent, having spent some time in England studying medicine.

We took him to a French farmhouse, where several of us were billeted, across the road from the school house. In the kitchen, we sat at a table while someone prepared coffee for us. It was past midnight when we started our talk. At first the doctor stood on his dignity, so to speak, and refused to be drawn into any conversation other than to say something to the effect that since he was a non-combatant, we had no right to take him prisoner.

Half the battle of getting information from prisoners of war was to get them to talk, in the first place. even if they lied or exaggerated, the mere act of leading them to speak was the goal of an interrogator. I addressed him as "Herr Doktor" which grated on my nerves somewhat, but which at least got his attention.

"Herr Doktor" I said, "it seems to me that rather than for us to have taken you prisoner you appear to have been ready to surrender. Your clothing is clean and freshly pressed; all your leather is polished and you don't look as though you had tried to escape or to have hidden from your captors."

There was an answering gleam, for a fraction of a second, in his eyes and he swallowed hard but kept silent. I kept pushing.

"You German doctors are all alike," I went on. "You claim to be non-combatants but most of you carry weapons. Furthermore, we have certified instances where you employ your ambulances, bearing the International Red Cross, to transport ammunition to your forward troops when other vehicles can't make it through artillery fires."

He glared at me, his fists clenched on the table top and it was apparent that he was about ready to lose his temper.

"You claim to be good doctors, too," I said, "and yet you spout the same trash about the German 'Super-race' that Hitler has dug up from the gutter and that has no basis in fact, whatsoever. Tell me, Herr Doktor, when you strip a German soldier to the buff, what has he got that makes him so super?"

The German's control broke at that moment. He jumped to his feet, cracked his fist on the table and said, "You Americans are a mongrel nation, just as Hitler said!" His eyes were bulging and he seemed to have trouble breathing. There was white spittle at the corners of his mouth.

"I will tell you something," he shouted, his face close to mine. "Father Rhine will protect Germany! Your troops will never set foot on our sacred soil!" He seemed, suddenly, to realize where he was and the circumstances of his imprisonment. His shoulders sagged and he sat down.

The reference to "Father Rhine" from such a well-educated officer had a peculiar effect upon me and on the interrogator, who looked at me with his eyebrows arched up into his hairline. Shades of Gotterdammerung! Or—Something else struck me. I thought...This is really overdoing it. The guy is acting out his idea of how he thinks we think he ought to behave as a prisoner!

Having gotten him to speak, I followed with another statement, less inflammatory but intended to keep things moving, even though I had begun to suspect his motivation.

"Herr Doktor," I said, "try to be reasonable. The Rhine is only a river. The American army has already put patrols across it and we shall cross it wherever and whenever we please. Can't you understand that the war is over for Germany!"

The German raised his head to look straight into my eyes and said, "The war is *not* over. Not now! Not ever! Hitler has a secret weapon that is almost ready. Reichsfuhrer Himmler, in Colmar this week, promised its delivery in time to stop you at the Rhine!"

Pay dirt! Everything else that had been said meant nothing. Himmler, himself, in Colmar. That was the pay-off! Although we spent much more time with the doctor who didn't seem to realize, or pretended not to, the value of his information, the big news was that Himmler was in charge of the defenses of the Colmar Pocket!

This was fully established in the later conversation with the doctor who, while he did not confess to surrendering, nevertheless grudgingly made it clear that he had felt demeaned to be made part of a medical team posted from Berlin to Colmar to keep the Reichsfuhrer healthy.

We talked until dawn and in a later conversation with the interrogating officer I gave him my impression that the whole interview had been a farce, that the seemingly wild reaction to my accusations had been faked and that the doctor knew exactly what he was doing when he told us about Himmler.

"But why would he give us that dope?" my friend, the interrogator, asked.

"Maybe even German doctors had a humanitarian side to their training," I responded. "He couldn't quite say what he said without pretending to be driven to it by my nasty questions. But, think about it! Here's a doctor with technical training of the highest order from both German and British institutions. He's shipped to the front which now is located on the German border. He sees preparations being made for a last-ditch fight and he also sees Germany already in ruins. He knows that the Nazis are a bunch of bums and that Himmler's one of the worst of them. Rather than go on with the war in the manner then being planned, he manages to be taken prisoner without even getting his hair mussed.

"He threw in the 'Father Rhine' bit because he felt no one would believe it of such a brainy man, if the story got back to Germany of his suspected defection and divulging the secrets. I tell you, the guy's a genius!"

In all subsequent operations, the value of the Colmar Pocket to the German leadership, i.e. Hitler and his gang rather than the German general staff, was uppermost in my mind. When others insisted that the Germans were about to withdraw to positions behind the Rhine, I remembered a German doctor who, so far as I was concerned, had no faith that a secret weapon existed, or, if it did, that it would be ready in time to continue the myth of a super race. He also knew, I felt, that a major fight would take place west of the Rhine and he opted out of it. In doing so he took a shot at an important Nazi, in passing. The fight he feared struck the 36th Division at Riquewihr, Alsace, where we were ready for it.

Another time and place, a few weeks later. Our Regiment, by that time, was in and around Herrlesheim near the Rhine, just before being relieved by the 3rd French Algerian Division. Here, again, business was slow. On one occasion, our own forces livened things up by trying to short-cut a mine-laying job. Using British anti-tank mines, which were notoriously tempermental, the decision was made to arm the mines during daylight in advance of laying them, in order to save time and effort at night. The armed mines were then placed, by the thousands, within the walls of a cemetery near the front for easy access by mine-laying crews. Suddenly, while working at a field desk in Herrlesheim, I was buffeted by a heavy explosion that sounded like an enormous shell striking just outside the CP. I ran to the door of the house we were occupying as did a number of others, but could see no signs of anything out of the ordinary.

Telephones began to ring and men from all units reported a heavy explosion as though it had occurred near them. It was a complete mystery until an engineer called to say that some thousands of mines, in a rippling explosion, had detonated in the cemetery west of town. Whether one had self-detonated to set off the whole shebang, or whether a German shell had landed in the cemetery to give rise to a rumor that a German secret weapon had been brought to bear on it, I never learned. The only damage done, beyond the loss of a few thousand mines, was to disturb the dead, some of whose bones were exposed and had to be reburied.

Mining was a big part of the work being done by both sides at that time. A day or so after the British mines dug up the cemetery, our PW Interrogator called me from his quarters in a railroad station in Herrlesheim.

"I've got a German prisoner here who gave himself up last night," he said. "He's a buck private. Been serving as an ammo carrier for a German 88. You want to get in on this?"

I said I did and walked over to the station where I found the prisoner very much at ease, smoking a cigarette he'd been given and lolling back in a chair. I'd found from long experience that it paid for more than one man to interrogate prisoners. A fresh viewpoint helped and the double impact on a prisoner, normally ill-at-ease and worried, served to increase his anxiety and to help break his resistance if he proved balky.

My first impression of the prisoner, however, was sharp and distinct. This was no German private! He was too sure of himself, too old, for one thing, too strongly projecting an aura of leadership even though offering minor signs of diffidence and humility.

I had brought with me some new aerial photographs of the German positions to our front, to include part of Rohrwiller where the prisoner had said he had serviced an 88 gun. I asked him to show me on the photographs the gun position, the ammo dump from which he'd obtained shells and the route he'd taken between them.

He looked at the photos and started to trace on one of them the route between his gun site and the ammo dump, using a thumb nail as a

pointer. For a split second his thumb hesitated at a bridge site and then went on to the ammo position. I looked at him and said to the interpreter, "Now ask him what is real rank is!"

The interrogator did so and the prisoner replied. "Colonel...I'm a colonel of engineers." He knew that he had given himslef away by the momentary pause at the bridge site. No private, or let's say, maybe one private in a thousand, would have recognized by a quick look at the aerial photo that the bridge had been blown out the day before by one of our air strikes against it. The German colonel had been surprised to find it gone and his slight hesitation at the bridge site showed far greater familiarity with aerial photograph reading than might be expected of a buck private.

This was just the beginning of a real coup for this officer had been in charge of emplacing a new kind of mine all along our regimental front. It was during the time that a special organization had been operating in our sector to undermine German morale. Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., reportedly, had been working in England with the special unit developing scripts to be read over loudspeakers to the German troops at night. At 11 pm a crew, having assembled a broadcasting machine on our front lines, would boom out in German something like this that could be heard for miles: "This is the ELEVENTH HOUR! The Eleventh Hour for Germany! The war for you has been lost. You, Hans Wagner, in Bunker Number 3: Your home city of Hamburg was bombed last night by two hundred planes. It will be bombed again soon. If you want to see your family again, surrender now before it is too late. You and your comrades can help stop the fighting now. Surrender to the Allies and you will be fairly treated. Remember! This is the ELEVENTH HOUR FOR GERMANY!"

The information about those Germans who might hear the broadcast, of course, had been obtained earlier from prisoners and surrenderees. After the initial transmission of this type of propaganda, German commanders would fire artillery to drown out the morale-busting message. Even so, many German soldiers surrendered. The engineer colonel, although trying to disguise his rank by wearing a private's uniform, also succumbed to the propaganda.

He was influenced to describe the new mine as one the outer shell of which was constructed of heavy glass. The only metal in it was the detonator whose small size would scarcely register on a mine-detector and would very likely be dismissed by the operator as part of the clutter of a battlefield. He gave us chapter and verse of the layout of the minefields, their locations and the methods normally used to vary pathways through them for use by German patrols at night. A series of patrols from our side proved the veracity of the prisoner's story, although none of the glass mines were removed in order to preserve the secrecy of our discovery.

As a result, when the French Army took over that sector, it was supplied with a complete description of the minefields, of the mines, themselves, plus a plan for their removal in advance of an Allied attack through that area. Another German secret weapon had been rendered harmless for, if any vehicle was lost to a glass mine when the Spring offensive was launched later, it was only through carelessness and not through the surprise the Germans had planned.

America Is Great Because—

I sought for the greatness
and genius of America
in her commodious harbors
and her ample rivers,
and it was not there;

in the fertile fields
and boundless prairies,
and it was not there;

in her rich mines
and her vast world commerce,
and it was not there.

Not until I went
into the churches of America
and heard her pulpits
aflame with righteousness,
did I understand the secret
of her genius and power.

America is great
because she is good,
and if America ever ceases to be good,
America will cease to be great.

—Attributed to de Tocqueville
but not found in his works.

Fighting 36th Historical Quarterly

See Naples and Die

by Richard M. Burrage

Editor's Note: This is the final section of Col. Burrage's excellent story. The first part was printed in Vol. IX, No. 4, Winter 1989 and the second part in Vol. X, No. 3, Fall 1990. The **Quarterly** *wishes to thank Col. Burrage for rendering this fine work for all to enjoy.*

PART VI - SEE NAPLES AND DIE

When we entered St. Egido, the church bells were ringing and people on the street were throwing flowers at the troops. No resistance was encountered in the town. On orders from the 46th Recon Co. (Br.) our Company B was sent to take the next village of St. Lorenzo. Captain Waskow reported that Company B had occupied St. Lorenzo at 1200 hours and had positioned his troops to meet an expected counterattack. In the afternoon we received word that we had been attached to the 325th Glider Infantry Regiment, an element of the 82nd Airborne Division. Before we could make contact with that unit, we were told early on 30 September that we had been released by the 325th Glider Infantry Regiment and we had been re-attached to the 23rd Armored Brigade. We linked up with the 23rd Armored Brigade that morning and were told that we were to accompany the 23rd Armored Brigade into Naples. We started out and about 0900 hours we passed through Pompeii. About the same time, our Company A was further attached to the Royal Scott Greys. We were still in trucks. The destruction of the towns was almost complete. The Air Force really did a job on them when cutting the lines of communications. We detrucked at Torre del Greco. There, the balance of the 1/143 Infantry was attached to the Royal Scott Greys. The Battalion was given orders to attack and seize a castle on a tall hill north of the city. It was to be used as an artillery observation post. The castle was on an immense hill, with about 300 Germans dug in around its perimeter. The castle was located about three miles from our Line of Departure. The terrain along our axis of attack was wooded and had many tall concrete walls about eight to ten feet high, criss-crossing the area. This was to be a cat and mouse game. Company B was the assault company, with Company C to follow in close support. Company A was not available since they were out on a different mission with the Royal Scott Greys.

The attack started at 1030 hours and immediately ran into trouble. The area was full of snipers in and on the walls and the wooded areas were honeycombed with machine gun nests. Company B continued to advance but was held up about 2,000 yards from the objective. We had to literally "hand grenade" the machine gun positions to make any progress. Meanwhile, we had to deal

with the snipers bobbing up and down among and on the concrete walls, trying to stop us. We had excellent fire support from the Royal Artillery but it was evident that we could not take the castle by 1700 hours. About 1325 hours, Major General Ridgway, Commander of the 82nd Airborne Division, joined us at our command post. He said that we were coming back to him; that a task force composed of the 23rd Armored Brigade (Br) and the 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment with a 1/143 Infantry attached would be going into Naples to clear the area. In the meanwhile, Brigadier Arkwright, commander of the 23rd Armored Brigade, ordered Lt. Col. Walker to withdraw 1/143 Infantry to our original positions, form a firm base and try to take the castle tomorrow. This order was welcomed.

The 1st of October dawned and it brought a flurry of actions, few of which advanced our efforts to capture Naples. Major General Fred Walker, having no word from the 1/143 Infantry since they left RED beach for Maiori, set out with BG Mike O'Daniel, and Walker's two Aides to find the Battalion. Upon arriving at the outskirts of Naples, he encountered a column of British tanks. The column was exercising good traffic control so the group was able to continue at a slow pace towards the head of the column. In that group of 23rd Armored Brigade tanks, Major General Walker found the command group of the 1/143 Infantry. Earlier that morning, the 1/143 Infantry was detached from the 23rd Armored Brigade and attached to the 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment, commanded by Colonel James M. Gavin, later a distinguished General. As Colonel Gavin was giving orders to LTC Walker for the deployment of the 1/143 Infantry, word came down that the 1/143 Infantry had been re-attached to the 23rd Armored Brigade. This was quite a blow to Major General Walker and LTC Walker. As Major General Walker wrote later in his journal, "I hate to see American troops attached to British Troops. American troops expect quick and strong support from armor and artillery troops." Later in the day, Major General Walker met General Clark on the road and asked that 1/143 Infantry be returned to the 36th Infantry Division. General Clark replied that it was not possible. He said that our Battalion would remain with the 23rd Armored Brigade and would be released in about a week.

The occupation of Naples was marked by a mildly comic episode showing some characteristics of General Clark. On the morning of 1 October, after we had been re-attached to the 23rd Armored Brigade, a Task Force composed of the 23rd Armored Brigade, with 1/143 Infantry attached, and the 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment was formed to clear Naples. As Colonel Gavin was forming up his troops to enter Naples, a jeep roared up from behind and stopped Colonel Gavin. The officer in the jeep, a staff officer from Headquarters Fifth Army, said that he had a message for Colonel Gavin which was too critical to be sent through normal channels. The message was from General Clark. The message ordered Colonel Gavin to halt his column in place until Clark arrived and he could make a triumphant entry into Naples. Although a thoroughly experienced officer, Colonel Gavin was not familiar with a "triumphant entry" ceremony. Besides, Colonel Gavin did not want to be responsbile

if some German sniper or trigger-happy Neapolitan took it upon himself to eliminate General Clark. But orders were orders and parachutists were expected to be able to cope with any situation. Colonel Gavin gave the go-ahead order to the 23rd Armored Brigade with 1/143 Infantry attached to take the coastal road into Naples. Colonel Gavin then formed a column with General Clark in an armor-clad half-track, followed by a battalion of his troops following in trucks, placed himself at the head of his troops behind General Clark and set off to find the Piazza Garibaldi, where the Fifth Army Staff was confident a crowd would be found, all crazy with a desire to see their liberator.

Disappointingly, the convoy of General Clark drove through deserted streets to the square where no persons were visible. The prudent citizens had decided to stay indoors with their window shutters closed until the firing had stopped. Gavin heard later that a crowd in fact had gathered, but in the Piazza del Plebiscito where, as he put it with pleasant irony, "Conquerers were traditionally received."

Ordered by the 23rd Armored Brigade to proceed to Ponticelli, LTC Walker and the command group started in that direction. Major Land was to march the troops along the same road to Ponticelli and Cercola. The troops were receiving occasional artillery fire but most of the fire was from stay-behind Germans using machine pistols, a couple of bandoliers crossed over their chest and a stick grenade stuck in each jack-boot. They harassed the incoming British and American troops but quickly left the scene before their targets could return the fire.

Meanwhile, the attaching and re-attaching of the 1/143 Infantry continued. After the "triumphant entry" formation was disbanded, 1/143 Infantry was taken away from the 23rd Armored Brigade (now inside Naples) and attached to the 505th Parachute Regiment. LTC Walker reported to Colonel Gavin for others. About 30 minutes later, before Colonel Gavin could give orders to LTC Walker, orders came down from Fifth Army that 1/143 Infantry was to be re-attached to the 23rd Armored Brigade, including Company A who had been previously attached to the Royal Scot Greys.

Right after noon, still on 1 October, General Clark visited the 1/143 Infantry and assured Major Land that elements of 1/143 Infantry would be the first American troops in Naples. This statement was confusing when it was learned that Genreal Clark and the 505th Parachute Regiment had already returned after failing to find a crowd of Neopolitans to accept their surrender. As you will recall, earlier in the day, Colonel Gavin had attached Company A to the 23rd Armored Brigade and sent them speeding into the heart of Naples. As best this puzzle can be sorted out, Company A was the first American troops going into the heart of Naples, on the south side.

Meanwhile, 1/143 Infantry (-) was marching to Ponticelli as ordered by the 23rd Armored Brigade. We arrived at Ponticelli and outposted the river on the north side of Naples. We were still there the next day, 2 October. Our biggest problem at Ponticelli was trying to keep the Italian civilians from killing the German troops who had stayed behind and some Italians who had joined the German cause.

On October 3, at 0900 hours, the Battalion entered the village of Mugano. We were still receiving sniper fire and occasional rounds of artillery and mortar fire. At 1100 hours, Captain Waskow was ordered to take his Company B and occupy the near-by town of Morano. In this operation, Company B passed through the outskirts of Castelvellano before the British had arrived. The 23rd Armored Brigade was supposed to have occupied or passed through the town two hours earlier. Company B was faced with two problems: One was the number of hasty mine fields laid by the Germans as they departed. The other problem, equally as deadly, was the mass lynching actions of some of the local citizens against local Fascist leaders. Company B broke up the lynching parties and searched the main buildings in the town. Much German equipment was found in a warehouse. The information about the German supplies was given to the British troops when they arrived later.

Here again, Captain Waskow of Company B had an interesting encounter in Morano. As Captain Waskow explained later, "We were moving down the main street in Morano and I noticed a well-dressed man running towards us with a cigar in one hand and a walking cane in the other. On nearing us, he exclaimed, "Hey, Bud, what's doing in the United States?" He turned out to be a American citizen who was detained after Pearl Harbor. He took Captain Waskow to his garden and unearthed, besides his passport, a full bottle of Scotch whiskey. He told Captain Waskow that he had been saving it for a presentation to the first Amercican officer who entered Morano.

At 1230 hours on 3 October, LTC Walker issued an attack order for the battalion (Co. B which was still in Morano) to attack Guigliano, crossing the line of departure at 1400 hours. Company A was designated as the assault company and Company C was to follow in close support. The attack progressed according to expectations, with our troops having to "hand grenade" the Germans out of the machine gun nests and shooting snipers out of the walnut trees. Company A was within 300 yards of the town when their progress was stopped by enemy fire. LTC Walker ordered Company C to make a flanking attack around our right flank and they advanced to the Melito-Guigliano highway. LTC Walker reported the Battalion's position at 1750 hours to Brigadier Arkwright, the Commander of the 23rd Armored Brigade (Br), to which we were still attached. The Brigadier told LTC Walker to "hold our positions at all costs" and resume the attack at 0700 hours the next day. The battalion consolidated the positions and spent the night outside Guigliano. We had been suffering casualties all the time during the last few days. Just that afternoon, 1LT Klinger of Company A was severely wounded.

At 0700 on 4 October, the next morning, the Battalion (Co B) continued its advance into Guigliano. Only scattered resistance was met as we entered the town. As the head of the column reached the far side of the local town piazza (which was on our right), we were subjected to an intense barrage of enemy artillery fire. This barrage killed twelve officers and enlisted men. Fourteen officers and enlisted men were severely wounded.

Among the killed was Major Land, our Executive Officer (**See Naples and**

Die), Captain Raymond P. Pederson, Headquarters Company Commander, and Captain Joseph M. Peterman, Commander of Company A. Others killed was one enlisted man from Headquarters Company First Battalion, seven enlisted men from Company A, and one enlisted man from Company D. Severely wounded was our Battalion Communications Officer, 1LT Carlos B. Evans, three enlisted men from Headquarters Company First Battalion, and five enlisted men from Company A.

Our Battalion Surgeon, 1LT James F. Graham, and his medical detachment gave all possible medical aid to the wounded and surely saved several lives by their quick action.

The Battalion was released by the 23rd Armored Brigade that day at 1300 hours and attached to the 82nd Airborne Division. Later in the day the Battalion received orders from Major General Ridgway, Commander of the 82nd Airborne Division, to locate and move to a bivouac area northwest of Naples. Also we were advised by Major General Ridgway that the battalion had been released to the 36th Infantry Division. The Battalion moved to some deserted barracks we found on the north side of Naples and bivouacked for the night.

The next day, 5 October, Captain Newell and I, the only two remaining unit staff officers, were to assist LTC Walker in preparing a report on the enemy shelling of the previous day. Early in the day, Major General Walker and his two aides arrived in a command car and a jeep. After a few words with LTC Walker, Major General Walker moved over to where Captain Newell and I were standing. He told Captain Newell that he was taking LTC Walker back to the Division Headquarters because LTC Walker was to be the new Operations Officer (G3) for the Division. It seems that we had several of his general staff evacuated because of medical and other reasons. The gear of LTC Walker was loaded in the jeep and Major General Walker, LTC Walker and the two aides departed.

This was quite an unexpected turn of events. We regretted the loss of LTC as our Battalion Commander. He taught me more than he will ever know.

The 36th Division trucks arrived a few hours later. We loaded the battalion on the trucks and went into the Division area, having been away from the Division since 12 September, 1943.

The surviving members of 1/143 Infantry had many war stories to tell their buddies in the Division, who had been taken out of the lines much earlier on 29 September 1943.

EPILOGUE

Several events happened during the next three months after Naples was captured which had a bearing on the Ranger Force and some individuals assigned to the Division.

In the attempt to break through the German's Winter Line, the 143rd Infantry as part of a coordinated Division attack, attacked San Pietro and the high ground to the east. On the regimental right flank, at 0500 hours on 7 December 1943, the 1/143 Infantry moved from the town of Cappangna towards the 4,000

foot high Mount Sammucro (Hill 1205). Led by Company A and elements of the Battalion Pioneer and Ammunition Platoon, the battalion started climbing in the darkness and fog, the leading elements of the battalion reached the summit, sometimes not knowing where they were in that rocky climb. However, the 1/143 Infantry achieved complete surprise. The 71st Panzer Grenadier Regiment was driven off the mountain. On 9th and 10th of December the Germans launched eight counter-attacks against Mount Summucro, only to be beaten back each time with terrific losses. This battle is cogent to the preceeding main story because on the right of the 1/143 Infantry was the American 3rd Ranger Battalion. The 3rd Ranger Battalion was to take Hill 950 northeast of Hill 1205. In the confused fighting in the Ranger area before they captured Hill 950 on 10 December, the right flank of the 1/143 Infantry became exposed because of the gap created by the rapid advance of the 1/143 Infantry and the trouble the 3rd Ranger Battalion had taking Hill 950. In spite of the serious counter-attacks of the Germans, 1/143 Infantry held their ground. This was largely due to the excellent fire support laid down by the 133rd Field Artillery Battalion under Major Roscoe D. Gaylor of Pittsburgh, PA, that these troop concentrations were broken up. Later PWs reported that 1/143 Infantry had routed the 71st Panzer Grenadier Regiment from Hill 1205. This was the last time that 1/143 Infantry was engaged in operations which included the Ranger Force, except for a short time at Anzio. This is not the story of Hill 1205, but is mentioned because of the connection our attack had with the Rangers.

According to Major General Walker's Journal as published, Clark telephoned Walker on January 29th and told Walker to meet him at the town of Mignano, north of Naples. Upon Clark's arrival, a spirited conversation ensued about the causes for the recent reverses (Rapido River) in the 36th Division. They did not agree on any point. Clark gave Walker a list of officers he wanted relieved of duty immediately. This list included BG William H. Wilbur, the Division Assistant Division Commander, Colonel Richard J. Werner, the Commander of the 141st Infantry, Colonel William H. Martin, Commander of the 143rd Infantry, LTC Fred L. Walker, Division Operations Officer, (G3) and the General's elder son, and Walker's junior aide, and younger son, Charles. Clark would not give Walker at that time the future assignments of any of the officers to be relieved.

Again, Major General Walker's Journal shows that on 31 January 1944, he went to General Clark's Headquarters. He told Clark that Wilbur and Werner were in the hospital. He also asked that General Clark return Fred, Jr. back to the States in view of the situation, Fred Jr. felt that he would be handicapped if he remained in the Italian Theater. Clark agreed to do so.

The Ranger Force, still commanded by Colonel William O. Darby, was the assault force in the landing at Anzio, Italy, on 22 January 1944, in Operation SHINGLE. Leaving out much of the details for another story, the Rangers had instant success on their landing, possibly because not a shot was fired at them. The operation later bogged down. The beachhead was shallow. It was diffficult to push inland because of a shortage of troops and the arriving Ger-

man reinforcements. For every mile Clark pushed the invading force inland, his perimeter would have been increased seven miles. After a stalemate for some time, plans were made and the "breakout" started on 30 January 1944. Darby's 1st and 3rd Ranger Battalions were to move out that day at 0130 hours and push inland and occupy Cisterna. They were to set up defenses until the 3rd U.S. Infantry Division could relieve them. The 3rd Infantry Division was to follow in trace of the Rangers, with a jump-off time of one hour after the Rangers crossed the line of departure. Although the Rangers were late starting off, the operation went as planned at first. But after crossing several wide and deep canals (some 20 feet wide and 10 feet deep), the Rangers found that the German defense line was in front of Cisterna instead of the rear (east) as intelligence had reported. While fighting the Germans to their front, they found that the German tanks had enveloped their flanks and were coming up on their rear. The Rangers had no anti-tank defenses except the "sticky" grenades. Although the 4th Ranger Battalion, along with a battalion of the 15th Infantry tried to relieve the two surrounded Battalions, they met the same fate - pinned down in the open by German tanks, artillery and mortar fire. It was over in the matter of hours. Try as he might, Colonel Darby could not get forces through the obstacles to rescue his Rangers. Of the 767 Rangers that attacked on 30 January, there were only 6 left at the end of the next day. All others had been killed, serously wounded or captured by the Germans. It was a disaster that Colonel Darby never overcame. In about a week, the surviving Rangers were sent back to the United States and their units disbanded. On 23 May, in the breakthrough by our troops, the 3rd Infantry Division had Cisterna as their initial objective. As they swarmed towards Cisterna, they were assaulted by the flesh rotting in the poppy fields - the remains of Colonel Darby's Rangers who had fallen almost to the last man in another bygone battle.

On 19 February, at the low point of the Allied forces attempting breakthrough, the 157th Infantry of the 45th Infantry Division, was fighting to hold their positions. Only the 1st Battalion was capable of organized resistance. All communications from Regimental Headquarters to the Battalions and to Corps Headquarters were out. The Regimental commander was completely exhausted and on the verge of collapse due to overwork and lack of sleep. In this situation the Corps Commander sent Colonel Darby, former Commander of the virtually extinct Ranger Force, to assume command of the Regiment on the final beachhead line. Darby arrived at the headquarters of the 157th Infantry Regiment at 1400 hours that afternoon to take over.

The 3rd Battalion Commander of th 157 Infantry Regiment, after gathering up the few troops he had left, had come to the headquarters for instructions. He was there when Darby came in. "Sir," he said in a resigned voice, "I guess you will relieve me for my losing my battalion." Colonel Darby gave him a friendly pat on the back. "Cheer up, son," he said. "I just lost three of them but the war must go on."

To Colonel Darby's credit and leadership, the 157 Infantry Regiment was reorganized with what few infantrymen they had left. The Division Commander

told Darby that the position must be held at all costs, since that was one of the anchors of the beachhead perimeter. Luckily, most of the German's efforts were shifted next door to the 180th Infantry Regiment. However, both regiments slugged it out with the Germans for over four hours. Much of the fighting was reduced to hand-to-hand combat. The 157th Held! Again it showed that Darby was a magnificent leader of combat troops who, by his actions and personal leadership and cheerfulness, left the troops invigorated, believing they could overcome any odds. Colonel Darby was killed in action in April 1945.

Colonel William Orlando Darby, now assistant division commander of the 10th Mountain Division, was killed leading an assault team in the Po Valley when a shell fragment penetrated his heart. He was not yet thirty-five. Forty-eight hours later, all German forces in Italy surrendered.

Fighting 36th Historical Quarterly

Personal Glimpses

by Ike Franklin

"C", 111th Med.

(Reproduced from the Cowtown Chapter Newsletter of April 1987)

I enlisted in the Texas National Guard on April fool's day in 1931. How Prophetic! I enlisted in headquarters and service co. of the 111th medical regiment, a unit of the 36th infantry division. The shoulder patch was even then the famous T-patch, or T-arrow, or arrowhead-T. Good old T-Patch! The 36th was mobilized on 25 November, 1940, and I believe the 45th (thunderbird) division was the only guard unit to mobilize ahead of us. The 28th division (Pennsylvania National Guard), whose shoulder patch was a red keystone (of the bloody bucket) and the 34th division (Iowa National Guard) were not far behind us. On Nov. 25, 1940 the 36th infantry division of the Texas National Guard became "The" 36th infantry division of the army of the United States. The fighting 36th was back!! It had been a very effective unit in WWI in France and had a name to live up to. It did not fail to do so. The headquarters and service company and ambulance company 131 were mobilized at the regimental armory at 209 Page Street in Ft. Worth, Texas and stayed there until we moved by motor convoy to Camp Bowie in Brownwood, Texas on Saturday, 13 December, 1940.

We left Camp Bowie in February of 1942 and were about a week getting to our new home at Camp Balding, near Starke, Florida. After Florida, we went on maneuvers in the Carolinas and about all I remember is that we all pitched in and dug 6x6's to bury the goat and mutton that was issued to us. Hardly any of the Texans would eat it and we traded what we could to the local farmers for fresh fruits, vegetables, chickens and eggs. You may remember that I said about my enlistment in the Guard as being prophetic. Well, on April 1, 1943, exactly 12 years since my original enlistment, we sailed from Staten Island NY. I can truthfully say I was seasick only once on the trip across. That was from the time we sailed until we landed 13 days later at Oran in Algeria, French North Africa.

We had been issued full artic uniforms, evidently to fool the Germans as to our destination. Well, we were confused too. Rumors had us going to Greenland, Iceland, Aleutian Islands or Vladivostok...who knew? We disembarked at Oran in Algeria on, of all days, Friday the 13th. That should have warned us. Early in September we sailed toward our Baptism of fire. The Salerno landing was a surprise operation, to everyone but the Jerries. They had dug their self-propelled 88-MM guns into the side of Mont Soprano and were zeroed in on the beaches. Casualties were high on both sides. I was captured by the Germans on 14 September while serving as a liaison agent for my col-

lecting company with the third battalion aid station of the 143rd RCT. About midnight a German patrol overran and captured us. For the next twenty months I was held prisoner of war. But that is another story, and I will not trouble you with it now..I signed waivers and was discharged on December 18, 1945. Thus ended 14 years, 8 months and 18 days of service to my Country.

Tree Roots and Teacups

by Richard M. Manton

Company F, 141st Infantry

TREE ROOTS AND TEACUPS

"K" Company was advancing along a ridge in the vicinity of Grenoble when we came to a small town and stopped for further orders. The C.O. asked me to call third battallion headquarters and get orders to move; the line was dead. I ran the line and could find no breaks.

As I was returning to my company I ran into a major and an artillery liaison officer. They were on their way to third batallion headquarters. I picked up the phone wire and found I had an open line.

Upon letting the major know something was wrong, we drew fire. The Germans pinned us down on a wagon trail. They were firing and tossing grenades from a position behind a log. As one German moved to get a clear shot I fired the clip from my carbine at him.

Someone called out, "all right, all right." The major and the captain got up and started running down the trail. The major tripped over a tree root and fell head over heels. His legs were still in a running position when he stopped.

The captain and I both tripped over the same roots and in falling I could see wood chips from the trees where the bullets were striking. Fortunately, no one was seriously hurt, just scared.

Fighting 36th Historical Quarterly

The 141st Infantry Regimental Band & the P.F.C.

by Ramon Narvaez, Jr.

141st Infantry

This is the second part of Ramon's story of the 141st band. Part I was printed in Vol. X, No. 4, Winter 1990. The final part will be printed in a near issue.

Oct. 11: The band had to go to the Rifle Range and fire the 03, M1, and the sub-gun. We no longer have the Bazookas. Still on guard duty.

Oct. 13: Yesterday we left the area near Altavilla and moved to the north of Naples into an Apple Orchard. During the trip to Naples we saw quite a bit of destruction, buildings half torn and others almost on the ground due to bombing and shelling. Some sight. Heard that the Naples Harbor is being repaired so that our ships can dock and unload supplies. We are now taking it easy and may get passes to Naples.

Oct. 16: Three years ago I enlisted in the Texas National Guard for one year and you know what? Now we are in Italy and to top it all in an Apple Orchard, lots of apples.

Oct. 17-24: Cooper, one of our bandsmen left for the hospital and may not come back. Still on guard duty for the CP and resting.

Oct. 25: Finally the band got their instruments back. The band and dance band started to rehearse again. The next few days we played for 1st, 3rd, Battalions, the Anti Tank Co. and the Service Co. building morals again. We also got passes to Naples. On one of the trips to Naples I had my army shoes made into combat shoes by adding a four inch leather piece to the shoe and buckels to lace the shoes. Most of the band and other troops did the same with their shoes. Just like the paratroopers had except ours were hand made. On the 31st Mc. (McAllister) and I went to Pompeii, saw the ruins and Mt. Vesuvius in the distance. Got paid around 8 P.M.

Nov. 1: Several bandsmen were told to go with the Regiment for another Amphibious landing. Me and several other bandsmen were left out. On the 2nd the bandsmen came back. The rest of the Regiment left. By the 4th, the Regiment came back, the landing had been called off. On the 5th, the band turned in their gas masks, barracks bags and instruments but kept the weapons

and ammo, field pack and trench tool. Rumors going to the front. Moved out on the 6th and stopped near Santa Maria, by the 8th moved out again, passed by Capua; then had an air raid, jumped out of the truck, ran for cover, then it was over; stopped near a crossroad. One road lead to a village called Presenzano. The 9th and 10th was spent resting and guard duty. At night you can hear the heavy guns going off with loud booms.

Nov. 11: Last night had a heavy rain and the wind almost blew our tent away. All night we heard the guns going off. They were very loud. Ironic but today is Armistice Day in the USA while here the Americans are fighting the Germans several miles up north from here.

Nov. 12: Still in the same area. While we were exercising and leap frogging, a couple of the boys jumped on my back and I sprained my right foot. As I was limping to my tent, Major Coopwood, the Medical Officer for the 141st Regiment saw me and asked what happened. I told him. He sent me to the 1st Aid tent. There another Medical Officer saw my foot and said it was a sprain and to go back to my unit. So I went back to my tent. Again Major Coopwood saw me and said, "Didn't I tell you to go to the 1st Aid tent?" I said I did and told him what the Medical Officer had said. Major Coopwood said, "I don't want you to jeopardize other lives, go back to the 1st Aid tent and I'll call the officer. When I got to the 1st Aid tent the Medical Officer said, "sit there." A few hours later I was put on an ambulance and I ended up at an army hospital near Naples. (During that period it never dawned on me that I would ever see Major Coopwood alive again.) Once at the hospital the officer asked what happened. So I told him. He said, "sit there." I told him I wanted to get to my outfit. He looked at me as if I was nuts. Again he said, "sit there and wait." I said, "Yes, Sir." A couple hours later another Medical Officer came and looked at my foot, asked the orderly for a bandage and to give me a hospital gown, said I had to stay in the hospital for several days. Mc. (McAllister) another bandsman came by to see me. It seems that he may be on his way home. (Mc. and I, we were buddies and during field exercises we would pitch tents together. So I lost a buddy.) On the 16th I was sent to the 29th Replacement center that was near the hospital. It seemed that the hospital and replacement center were on or near a race track in Naples. At the center I drew some clothing (wools), zeroed a rifle sight. That's when I heard that the 141st Regiment had gone into combat. During the 17th, 18th and 19th I was given a pass to Naples. Saw some troops from the 34th, 3rd and 36th Division at the Replacement center. On the 20th I couldn't get a pass. Around 1:30 P.M. I saw a line of trucks and I asked one of the truck drivers where the 141st was. He said, "That's where I am going." I got my rifle and other belongings and got on the truck. It wasn't long thereafter that we took off. Boy was I glad to leave. (I guess I wasn't missed because I never heard from the center.) That night I spent the night with a kitchen crew. On the 21st after several hours of riding, around 11 A.M., the driver turned east on Hiway 6, over a railroad and stopped; told me, "See those terraces on that hill, that's where the 141st is," so I walked up the slope and found the

Band sited on the 1st terrace. I was glad to see them and so were they. I asked where the Germans were and was told, over this mountain and that one to the Northwest, Mt. Camino. Then I heard some shell explode west of us, saw some puffs, seems like a small village down below. I asked the fellows, "Do the Germans ever shell up here?" They said No not to worry. I started to eat "C" ration and one of the fellows said. "You can get a hot meal if you just follow the terrace, go to the CP and you will see a pinkish house, that is where the CP is, nearby you will see some pots." I took it as a joke and said, sure, and are my "C" rations. Around 1:30 P.M. I started to dig a fox hole; suddenly I heard a loud bang, looking up I saw a big puff of smoke going up into the air, two terraces above; then hell broke loose. I heard some screaming shells coming. I jumped into a fox hole where three other bandsmen were. Each screaming shell that came down seemed as if it was coming down into my neck. The shelling seemed to last a long time then it stopped. After awhile we got out. Nearby was an Anti-tank gun that got a direct hit, all busted up. The bandsmen experienced its first Baptismal of fire. At Salerno all the shelling was at a distance from us but this one took the cake, right on top of us including the CP area. Later we heard that Major Coopwood, the 141st Medical Officer had been killed, one GI frozen in his fox hole and some wounded.

We moved to a nearby small ravine and dug another fox hole, From the 22-24 the Germans would shell the highway and the village below; at night you could hear women wailing and children crying and see the flashes and hear the loud bangs of the artillery firing.

Nov. 25: Although there was a turkey dinner near the CP some of us couldn't see walking along the terrace to the CP, feeling that the Germans were looking down on us and would start shelling again so we decided to postpone our turkey meal, maybe next year, and we ate our field rations instead.

Nov. 26-27: Still on guard duty, it sure is getting colder.

Nov. 28: Moved to the other side of the hill near the CP, dug a cave into the terrace side.

Nov. 29: Last night we had a side show put on by the field artillery. I guess every artillery was involved because they shelled Mt. Camino all night. You could see tracers after tracers speeding over the valley into Mt. Camino. Later we heard it was called the million dollar mountain. Later we also heard that the Germans were so well dug into the mountain that the shelling didn't bother them. Sometimes we wonder who ordered such heavy barrage.

Dec. 1-9: Heard that on the other side of the mountain the 141st is in heavy combat. Orders came from up above, we have to shave, no beards allowed. We don't have anything but cold water and no fires allowed. Guarding S-3. Heard that Col. Werner, 141st. Co. had been wounded.

Dec. 10-20: Still guarding S-3. Some Germans planes came over and bombed an area nearby. Later I was placed at a machine gun position with three other bandsmen; in the daytime we are to look for enemy planes and guard duty at night. Some of the other bandsmen had to lay communication lines during

the night or do other missions that the CP wanted them to do. It seems that every other day or night it rains and the weather keeps getting colder. Our overcoats are getting heavier as we wear it. Early one night the bandsmen were asked to go to the nearby field hospital and donate blood. When we got there, the hospital personnel were taking in the incoming wounded. Looked like they were running over each other. Finally a nurse came in and told me to roll up my sleeve, after several tries in my arm she couldn't draw blood so she tried the other arm; again after several punches she still couldn't draw blood, she got so nervous she gave up and took off. A 1st Aid medic came and on the first try he got my blood. Boy, were my arms sore and aching from the poking of the needle. While there, we heard that several German airmen had rebuilt some American aircraft and had flown in and bombed an area near Venafro. One thing I will never forget-that poor nurse that poked my arms with the needle trying to get blood. Oh well, we got a shot of whiskey. Later one of the bandsmen went to the field hospital several times and gave blood just to get a whiskey shot. Heard that San Pietro had been taken and the Germans are moving north.

Dec. 21-30: Moved again-we went over a hill thru an area where the trees had been stripped of its leaves and bark caused by shelling explosions; some trees had some German potato mashers still hanging on the limbs. The area looked spooky, ghost like. On the 23rd, Sgt. Kraft and Woodard, both bandsmen, were sent to the hospital. Finished the cave and slept in it.

Dec. 24: Rain last night, still on guard duty, the cave is dripping, got wet, it's Christmas Eve.

Dec. 25: It's Christmas Day but just another day to us. Last night was raining and real cold. At night it sure looks spooky with all the bare trees around, all you can see is dark forms.

Dec. 26: May move to the front.

Dec. 27-28: Rumors may be relived, saw snow up on the nearby mountain. Learned that the town nearby is San Pietro.

Dec. 29 Finally we are going back, about 30 miles to the rear. Moved out around 3 P.M.

Dec. 30: We are now near Piemonte di leif resting. Some of us got some hay for our ground beds.

Dec. 31: Orders came down that the 141st Band will be transfered to the II Corp. We are between two huge mountains, sited on either a dry river bed or a road that runs into a large ravine between the mountains.

Jan. 1, 1944: Last night the new year came in with a bang. Around 11 P.M. we had to get up and tie down our tent. It seemed like a blizzard was hitting us, the wind was blowing real hard, the snow or ice hit our faces with a sting, yet we didn't realize that the old year was going out and the new year coming in. To us it was just another night. In the morning we got up, walked out of the tent; we saw some fryers stuck on the ground covered with ice. We helped the chicken crew pick up the chickens. Later that morning our Band Director told us that Headquarters was going to bid us farewell at dinner time and so

it was. What happened to the chickens we don't know but at dinner we had turkey, which would be our last dinner and get together with the 141st Headquarters, a group of troops that we had been attached to for the past 3 years (since Jan., 1940). At Camp Bowie, Blanding and Edward we woke them up playing revielle, went on exercises, rifle range and manuvers with them, entertained them with concerts and dance music to both the enlisted men and officers. In Africa we entertained them, went on amphibious and other training exercises, ate in the cork forest with them, played the role of the enemy during mountain training and on Sept. 9 (1943) the bandsmen invaded Italy right along with them. Sort of funny but while we were in the States some guys used to call us "Boiler Makers and Gold Bricks." The bandsmen made lots of friends with the Headquarters troops. Although there had been several rumors that the band would be split and sent to the different Battalion within the Regiment none came true and now the Band was being removed from the 141st Regiment and the 36th Division and reassigned to the II Corp, a rear echelon higher Headquarters to continue its mission as entertainers for the troops. It was kind of sad to leave the 141st after three long years as a group but our higher bosses made the decision and so we were on our way to the II Corp, the name 141st Infantry Regiment Band remained the same-for how long, we didn't know. On the second of January we moved by truck to the II Corp. area. The weather was cold, rainy and windy. That evening we had cold spam. Lucas and Talgren were given passes to Naples. On the sixth we got our instruments, on the eight saw some 143rd Bandsmen including Newton (formerly 141st Bandsman). They told us they were in burial detail. From the tenth day thereafter the band or dance band would rehearse in the morning and in the afternoon would go and entertain the troops in the rear or near the front. Some mornings it was so cold that we didn't rehearse, yet in the afternoon we went and played music for the troops. From the tenth to the end of the month, the 31st, we played music for the 523rd Cas. Co. (twice), 48th Engineers, the 6th FA, 91st Recon Armored near Piemonte, 202 MP Co., Special Troops near Santa Maria (General Keys happened to be there), 53rd Signal Co., II Corp. (Forward Echelone), 6617 MMC, 3488 Ordinance, 93rd Armored FA, and on the 31st of the month we ended the month by playing for the 19th FA. We also heard that the 141st, after twelve days of rest, had gone back into combat. Most of the time the dance would be played for the troops. By the end of the month the dance would put on a show along with the music. The month of January was very cold with some rains. Since the 3rd. of January, we had been living in six man tents; one of the Ordinance men nearby showed us how to rig a copper tube leading from a gas cannister placed outside of the tent, into the tent, and into the pot belly stove and so our tent was warm at night. During the month of January I saw Father Chataignon, the 36th Division Chaplain, since we were both from Galveston, Texas we had a little chat.

Feb. 1: The dance band rehearsed a new show and played for the 128th Signal Co. near San Pietro. On the 2nd we played for the 47th Quarter Master. On the 3rd we played for the 1st Armor 13 AR, CCB. That night we had rain.

The 4th we played for the 3404 Quarter Master and on the 5th we played for the 2nd Italian Mule Pack. On the 6th we took down our tents and moved near San Pietro. San Pietro was really torn down. All the buildings we saw had been shelled, the trees on the surrrounding areas were nothing but skeletons. On the way to our area I saw some mattress sacks along the road. I thought that bread was in them. Later I learned that the mattress sacks contained dead bodies (American GIs). The grave detail would pick them up for burial. (Ironically, back in the States the mattress sacks were used to haul bread to the mess halls; here they were being used for the American dead). On the 7th, I was given a 5-day pass to Caserta near Naples. At Caserta I stayed at a rest center. On the second day I wanted to go to Naples, talking to a group of truck drivers I was asked if I had khakis. I said no, only the wools I had on. One guy said in Naples you must wear khakis, no wools allowed, so I didn't go to Naples. On the 11th I came back to the band. Moose had to go to the hospital, Wilson came back-both bandsmen. On the 14th, ratings were given and pay raises to three of the bandsmen. I was passed over (ever since I got busted back in June, 41 I have been passed over). I guess I am still on the shit list. Oh well, time passes.

Feb. 15: Last night we had some British soldiers as guests. They told us about their homes, one was from Welsh and we told them about Texas. They wanted to know if we had Indians and Cowboys. We told them, yes. This morning around 10 A.M. we saw the first wave of American bombers coming from the southeast, flying east of us then turning west heading for the mountain where the monastery was. They dropped their bombs. The bombs exploded just below the top of the mountain. The aircraft made a turn and headed south. The next wave dropped their bombs but because of the heavy smoke of the first bomps we couldn't see where they hit. Several other waves went by then it was over, the aircraft heading south. Later we heard that very few bombs hit the monastery. The dance band's playing had slowed down because of the rains and cold weather. The USO show that I saw in Casert came to our area and the dance band furnished the music. I met Louise Albritten and another girl named June, both claimed to be movie stars. On the 24th one of the bandsmen found a piano in one of the apartment buildings that had been heavily bombed and shelled. The piano was on the second floor and about to fall. There were no stairs to the second floor but some of the guys with some rope got the piano down with a few scratches. The band now had a piano. We moved back to II Corp. One afternoon we we (the dance band) were playing for a unit near the front; we had just started on the song "The Little Brown Jug" when a shell hit behind us. We heard the explosion. Boy, did we scatter, we were going one way, the instruments another way. I guess the Germans heard us and didn't like the music or they saw us then it was over. Some of the troops were wounded. We, the bandsmen, only got scratched from stumbling over some rocks. We got orders the band will transfer to MBS (Mediterranean Base Sector), and so we ended the month of February by playing music at the 141st area.

How Could That Paper-Hanging Maniac Possibly Top This

by Clayton A. Grinnage, Sr.
Company A, 111th Engineers

I was watching a whale blow a beautiful waterspout, and remarked to the "escort", who was returning to the ETO, after a brief respite in a stateside hospital, less than a full month from D-Day, about D+23! I had remarked that I had thought it to be a submarine at first glance, and he replied, "Herr Hitler has more surprises than you'll ever see, unless you are one of those fortunate enough to see him executed!" He was in the first wave, an Engineer, and landed before any of the other members of his outfit; being a pathfinder, or UDT, and I had known him stateside since he shipped out from a different Battalion in Replacement Training Center, in Missouri. In any event he was lightly wounded and was sent stateside for a first-hand report as well as recovery, being at the right place to board a transport MATS at the moment he was landed in England, having been picked up in the water by a Limey boat. After getting settled in the routine of Repple-Depots, I had been to London, where we were greeted by our first experience with the Buzz-Bomb, taking out several stores in the city, some around the far side of blocks which seemed to richochet the blast, along with the flying glass, etc.; in all a very terrible weapon, until the first time we were witness to one of the V-2's that we never heard coming. The blast seemed to make a mockery of the first Buzz-Bombs, as there was no way for us "non-combatants" to be alerted to its incoming devastation. I was really glad to see my name on the board that bore the shipping-out lists, thinking Hitler surely couldn't top the awesome and bloody carnage he had wrought on innocents, and I was no longer going to be just a clay pigeon. As all of you know, the battlefield was no picnic grounds, nor was it very long before I realized I had not seen anything yet. There first came the dreaded duty of "mine-detail", which turned out to be not the way I was going to "go," nor would I be "MIA," left to be picked up after a "schu-mine" had done its job; mortars were also terrifying after the 2nd or 3rd time when I realized they were shooting at me, since I was not instantly diving for cover. Artillery, it took some more "education," as did the "burp" of the Schmeisser, or larger heavy MG that fired so damned fast you were often dead before the last round had left the barrel. Indeed, this MUST be all Herr Adolf had to offer. Not by a damned sight, as you all know by now, it was only a preview for the Panzerfaust, Teller Mine, various grenades, all looking like the same potato-masher I had learned about at my Uncle's knee,

when I was treated by one of his rare tales of Meuse-Argonne from WWI. After these sorry gems of a twisted mind had been revealed to be beatable, there came the Nebelwerfer, dubbed in all candor, "Screemin Meemie," and launched from variously-barrelled weapons (5, 6, or even 7) electrically, rocket-powered, and of awesome size; I judge from the dud we recovered to be they were about 4-6" in diameter and quite heavy, though they had not the effect physically that they did emotionally, containing a perforated ring that emitted this "Pyschological" deterrent to sanity, as well as sanitation. I am sure the laundry section would have been more welcome than the Medics who performed so gallantly everywhere we went. It was a rare event that we didn't have them with us! (The medics, not the Nebelwerfers) OR the laundry unit, which I was glad to see ONCE, in all the time overseas. We were not really disappointed as Der Fuhrer finally fizzled, but I was hoping to be nomimated to be on his firing squad, and the damned WIMP hadn't the balls to see it through, which was actually no surprise, after the Holocaust had been revealed to us first hand just before we reached Munich, at Landsberg, where the very thing we all had fought against so long originated. The cell Hitler wrote his Mein Kampff was in this very prison and the millions he exterminated were not even the beginning of what he had dreamed up for the Non-Aryan races of the world! It is now generally conceded that he would have eventually gassed and incinerated another 30-40 million or **more**, who were actually on lists in various units and areas. Thank God, we never knew what he had in mind to "Top This!" I have only recently become acquainted with these "new" figures, but they have been authenticated by the source I saw on recent TV expose', and the source is quite indisputable, certainly not believable as many are led to believe these days; even the Holocaust is denied by many more than I care to admit. I, being the first man through the gate at Landsberg from my engineering platoon that day, can testify to the terrible fact that it was not as bad as he had wished to make it. Only 25% success in this case was more than the world will ever get over!!!

Along the way, as addenda were, the fabulous shellings we survived from Anzio Annie's big sister-a 550mm behemoth mounted on rails back in the mountains above the Saverne, Brumath, Hagenau area that was finally destroyed by our aircraft, and recently downgraded to 280 size, which I am doubtful is correct caliber, as we have remnants recorded at former size, and were the recipients of same in Hagenau, on a sentry post as well as in the town of Brumath several nights before. In the course of getting the job done, it fired alternate nights on each of the three towns; its rate of fire being 10 minutes between shots. There were also 600mm rail guns that never got in action on our front, the honors being absorbed at Sevastopol by our then Allies, the Russians. Truly, there was every reason why the comment, "Could He Top This," seemed appropriate, but only to one who had not finished until it was finished!

Ready on the Right, Ready on the Left, Ready on the Firing Line

by A.F. (Amil) Kohutek

Battery C 132nd Artillery

The Rifle Range of Camp Bowie in the year 1941, was about a couple of miles from the south gate. A few miles farther for Units on the west side of the Camp. Every Unit in the 36th Division had a chance to fire rifles at this range. All Infantry Units walked to this Range. When it was time for Battery C to go, they too walked. Even the Major in charge of this detail walked. As Battery C arrived, the Major was already on top of the Tower, just behind the rifle position. There was a good bit of enthusiasm among a great number of men marching off to the rifle range that began well before daylight.

About halfway there, when the sun peeped over a gray dawn, every man loaded with full field pack 30 caliber shells carefully counted and issued. Also, a dry cheese and bread sandwich and canteen of water suggested we would likely be there all day. After a route march down a well used road leading south toward the north bank of the Colorado River, we turned off on a seldom used road. This road was for foot traffic only. The road was very muddy due to heavy rain the night before. Not even an ambulance traversed this. After sliding, falling with full field packs a few times, we arrived at the rifle range. Lined up in front of the tower, the Major, with a couple of second looies, commanded that one man assume the prone position and another would be on his knees directing the man in the prone position. Afterward, the man firing his issued ammo, would swap places with the man that first helped. In this manner, both had a chance to fire. A problem arose soon after the first man assumed the prone position. All of the positions were wallowed out, thus some water remained. Raincoats helped for a while and then only to get

soaked again. Men lying in this position were soon soaked wet and were cold before the firing started. The Major made an announcement...first he said he was in charge and "you damn well better know it," followed by what he personally would do if anyone screwed up. The Major was what was then called retreads. His correct name is not important. He was, however, nicknamed "Winkum, Blinkum, and Nod." His facial expression expressed that. The question among the new men was how did he get drafted. He was a National Guardsman and after the Unit mobilized he followed it to Camp Bowie. It is not known where this Major came from, believed to be from Corsicana. He might have been a school principal (on guard nights he kept records in a stuffy office). Or he might have been a straw boss on some WPA shovel gang. The 132nd F A was a Regt. It is not known what his position or assignment was. He was everywhere. He showed up in the most unexpected places. He was 6 foot 2 inches, weighed well under one hundred fifty pounds, wore glasses that might have lost their frames—always on the far end of his nose, looking down on his subjects. He frightened many a young recruit. Some even wrote to their mothers about him. We later found that his bite was mild to his bark. Some said he arrived in Camp Bowie with wrap leggins. He often wore his C S Cap backwards with the insignia on the back of his head. His WWI steel helmet was at an angle and about to fall off. His campaign hat was a disgrace to the Army, and only he was allowed to wear it. A helmet like his was overage with too many summers, followed by equal winters, kicked around and possibly set on a few times.

That morning, on the Tower, gray blue eyes under a slouch hat, hook nose, rimless glasses was about to put the men through a series of firing lessons. Half the men in prone position, other half kneeling. Seeing the rifle was pointing at the target, first a breathing test was performed. Inhale, exhale, hold your breath, steady finger on the trigger. After this the real shooting. Then the order came down to load rifles, aim, inhale, exhale, hold breath steady.

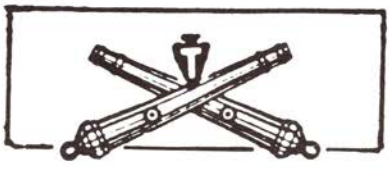
This was too much for Private Chester Doyle who only thirteen weeks before joined the swelling ranks of Battery C. Chester hailed from Cambridge, Ohio. Pvt. Doyle accidentally pulled the trigger, the shot sounded like a battle ship firing eighteen inch shells. The NCOs on the ground started running over each other to find who pulled that trigger. The Major was yelling likewise. Someone on the ground looked up at the Tower. The Major looked like a deposed South American field marshall. Pvt. Doyle dropped his rifle and started rolling in the mud, holding both hands to his eyes. Some NCO tried to get Doyle to stand up. He couldn't do that because he could not see. The NCO very unpolitely kicked Doyle when someone informed him he'd had an accident. The only medics were at the target pits some distance away. In time, an ambulance was seen turning off the main road and promptly slid into the ditch. The assistant driver was out trying to push. Soon a volunteer arrived and pushed the vehicle out of the ditch, only to slide into another ditch across the road.

Other volunteers helped Pvt. Doyle toward the ambulance. The Major appeared somewhat shook up. He marched the Battery back to Camp. Rumors soon circulated that the Major was on his way out. Another rumor gained some credibility. One of the Lt. Orderlies, more often called dog robber, circulated that the Major was so absentminded that he somehow forgot where he was. While the men in the prone position, holding their breath awaiting the next command, the Major was rolling a Bull Durham cigarette.

Pvt. Doyle was hospitalized about three weeks. No one knew of his condition or if he would return to the C Battery. He received no mail.

One day Pvt. Doyle was standing once more in C Battery ranks. The well wishers surrounded him and someone asked what happened. He never said why he pulled the trigger too soon. But he did tell us he was blinded when the Cosmoline got into both eyes. Doyle wore thick lens glasses. He soon became the Captain's orderly. He shined boots, medals and insignias for four Captains.

He was standing both tall and proud at wars end within site of Kitsbul.



For its size and length of service, no other American unit was more decorated than the 100/442nd Regimental Combat Team.

I AM AN AMERICAN

Ted I. Miyata (above),

Welcome to the 36th Infantry Division

The following article was discovered in my files and was one that had been given replacements coming into the Division at the end of the War. It reflects the pride held by all men of the 36th as they became aware of the traditions of the 36th.

—The Editor

You have just joined us as reinforcements should know what kind of outfit this is, and the best introduction is a glance at it's history. Here it is!

The 36th is one of the great divisions in the history of the United States Army. It's baptism by fire on 9 September 1943 made world history. That day, on the beaches of Salerno, Italy, the 36th Division spearheaded the first invasion of Europe. Jerry planned Salerno as a gigantic ambush. The aggressive determination and resourcefulness of the line soldiers of the 36th turned this operation into a smashing Allied victory.

One private, after dropping three Jerries with three rifle shots in succession, rushed the stone wall which they had been using for cover, vaulted it, killed two machine gunners, seized their machine gun and took the whole enemy line along the stone wall in enfilade fire. Up in a warehouse being used as an ammo dump, a Pfc. wore out two BARs and then help up an enemy counterattack by priming 60mm mortar shells and tossing them out the window to explode among the enemy below. These are only fragments of the widespread gallantry displayed by the men of the 36th, which made possible the military miracle of Salerno, and which is further attested by 4 Medals of Honor and 16 Distinguished Service Crosses for deeds performed during the establishment and consolidation of the beachhead.

If an amphibious operation is the riskiest, mountain fighting is the most gruelling, the most heartbreaking kind of warfare. European nations have trained special units for this alone. The 36th Infantry Division learned the hard way, during the cold, wet weather of November and December 1943 by, fighting a brilliant campaign over the bare crags of the Italian Appennines. MT. MAGGIORE, MT. SAMMUCRO, MT. LUNGO, MT. CASTELLONE are bywords among the old-timers in this outfit. The know-how gained here was put to masterly use in the sneak-play at VELLETRI. The mountain-wise veterans infiltrated thru the enemy flank at night and scaled MT. ARTEMISIO behind VELLETRI, the key position in the German ROME line. It was taken within twenty-four hours and the race was on through Rome and up Italy to the mountains overlooking Pisa, after a beaten and broken enemy. 4,910 prisoners were taken by the 36th Division alone during this phase of the campaign.

The Division was out of the line by the beginning of July and rolled south to the hauntingly familiar beaches of Salerno, there to practice for another invasion. The veterans review and a preview. The big job was to pass on their knowledge and their confidence to those who had just joined the division. The right men were in the right places for this job. The promptness with which this Division rewards proven courage and skill is indicated by the 91 battlefield commissions given to enlisted men during the Italian campaign.

D-day in Southern France was 15 August 1944 and H-hour was 0800. The 36th Division beaches lay immediately around SAN RAPHAEL on the Riviera. Reconnaissance and planning had been exhaustive. Under cover of heavy Navy and Air Bombardment, the 36th Division burst across the beaches, taking all objectives ahead of schedule, and began to drive up through Eastern France with a speed and a decisiveness that caused their Commander to shake his head with wonder and remark that there had not been anything like it since the civil war. The Division succeeded in getting to the north and east of the retreating German 19th Army, including the 11th Panzer Division, in the region of MONTELIMAR, and there, as the enemy ran the gauntlet of the 36th Division, a terrific toll of men and material was exacted from him. Enemy losses at MONTELIMAR are placed at the equivalent of a full division of infantry, guns sufficient for a corps of artillery and, over 2,000 vehicles. After MONTELIMAR, the pursuit was resumed and the enemy was chased through VALENCE, BOURG, BESANCON, OISILLEY, FRETIGNEY to VESOUL, where he attempted to make a stand. On 16 September, 32 days after the landing, and more than 300 miles north of SAN RAPHAEL, the 36th Division captured LUXEUIL where the Lafayette Escadrille was activated during the first World War.

In retrospect this appears to have been a turning point in the campaign. Fair weather marked by occasional showers changed to a steady

cold drizzle varied only by intermittent downpours. The slight woodlands of Burgundy gave way to the extensive timber forests of Lorraine. Combing recalcitrant Germans from these forests was a slow difficult business. German resistance increased as we pushed into the foothills of the Vosges and prepared to lunge across the Moselle.

The Moselle was reputed to be the perimeter of the enemy's Vosges defenses. For the first time since the beaches of the Riviera he faced us from behind a fixed line of defense based on this water barrier. The attack was launched in less than fourteen hours after leaving LUXEUIL 20 miles away and an almost complete surprise was achieved.

The 142nd Infantry pinned down heavy enemy forces by a direct attack against REMIREMONT which lies on the west bank of the Moselle. Six miles further north the 2nd Battalion of the 141st Infantry executed a similar feint on a smaller scale, by a direct attack on that part of Eloyes which lies west of the river. The 1st and 3rd Battalions of the 141st guided by the 70 year old mayor of RAON AUX BOIS, moved stealthily, preserving radio silence, to a little-known ford midway along the river between REMIREMONT and ELOYES. The leading elements of the 1st Battlion were across the river in the darkness of the early hours of 21 September before the enemy discovered the thrust. Hell broke loose. Undaunted, the men of the 141st Infantry, chest-deep in water, kept wading across in the face of heavy macine gun and mortar fire. They had no vehicles, they had only a limited number of weapons and their route of supply was an open river, but they kept expanding the bridgehead. Immediately behind them came the 143rd Infantry which captured ELOYES the 22nd of September. REMIREMONT was captured on September 23rd. This was the brilliant beginning of the bitterest phase of the campaign.

Men were wet, cold, and, above all, fatigued as the number of consecutive days in continuous combat mounted. The enemy, driven back on his bases of supply, had the increased resistance of compressed spring. The month of October was spent in unseating the spring coiled in the massive forests that cover the slopes of the Vosges east of the Moselle. BRUYERES was captured by a slashing attack made by the 442nd Combat team made up of Japanese Americans at that time a part of the Division. The dark dripping forest north of LA HOUSSIERE became a slow nightmare of tree-brusts mines, lurking snipers and savage counterattacks. Yet, in spite of fatigue and the enemy's resistance, there was an underlying moral strength in the men of the Division. They knew the enemy was more hard put than themselves. They found their second wind with the rescue of the 1st Battalion, 141st Infantry Regiment, which was cut off by the enemy the last week of October. After pushing down the valley of LES ROUGES EAUX, they were temporarily out of the woods.

On 20 November, the Division crossed the MEURTHE RIVER and after two days of bitter fighting broke the organized enemy defense. This permitted the 142nd Infantry to move out to seize the STE MARIE PASS. The drive gained momentum as it rolled (and marched) from CORCIEUX on the MEURTHE RIVER where the fighting was sharp; turned right to WISEMBACH, jumped the STE MARIE-AUX-MINES pass by a beautiful flanking maneuver, and fanned out over the crests of the Vosges into the Alsatian plain. Considering the extent of the front covered by the Division during November, precisely when it was penetrating the hitherto impassable fastness of the Vosges mountains, the achievement was in the highest tradition of the 36th Division.

Battle weary and torn, the 36th Division still gave the enemy no rest and drove his fanatically defending forces from village after village on the road to COLMAR. In one clever maneuver, under divisional control clipped out with two pincers and lopped off a sizeable force, smashed them from the front and, in addition to a heavy toll in killed, captured more than 500 in one day's operation. The total number of prisoners of war captured by the Division during the French Campaign, as of the close of the Vosges operations, was 19,762.

The Division left this area and took up defensive positions for a brief time along the RHINE River. It's relief there came after the Fighting 36th had been in 132 days of continuous combat, a modern American Army Record.

As of the close of the year, members of the 36th Division had been awarded 5 Medals of Honor, 62 Distinguished Service Crosses, 1371 Silver Stars and 2253 Bronze Star Medals for deeds performed since it first saw action in this war on 9 September 1943.

During all of it's combat service, the Division has constantly searched its own ranks for men with leadership ability. This search has been richly rewarded and by the end of 1944, 156 enlisted men have been commissioned because of proved courage and skillful leadership on the many fields of battle. These battle tired officers have proved themselves further and given additional lustre to the shining record of the Division.

This brief history is given you so you may quickly become acquainted with the traditions of your new organization and so that you may point with pride to your T-Patch.

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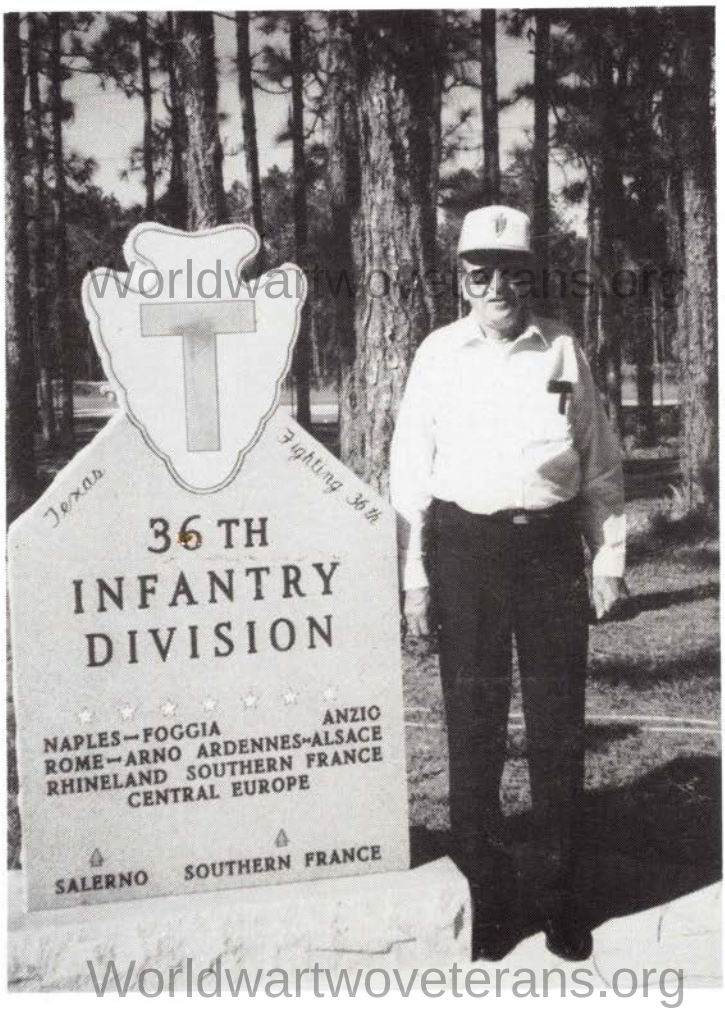

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