

The Fighting 36th
HISTORICAL
Quarterly 1981 1994



Wick Fowler and General Finney

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FINAL

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FINAL ISSUE CLOSES 13 YEARS OF FIGHTING 36TH QUARTERLY

In doing a bit of research on the beginnings of the Fighting 36th Division Quarterly, this editor was profoundly impressed as to the importance of a military unit to preserve its legacy.

In only a few pages of the four volumes of 1981, the first year, was the solution to the mystery surrounding the first museum effort in Temple, Texas; the grandiose ceremonies relating to the retiring of the division's colors; the presentation of the Croix-de-Guerre by a French general who kissed our colors as they were lowered; and never-before seen grisly photos by a T-Patcher of stacks of dead holocaust victims among the 80-plus stories.

The Q was the outgrowth of the 36th Division Association's Board of Director's decision in 1979 to create the Historical and Records committee as a standing committee charged with the responsibility of collecting artifacts and literature on the 36th Division. Bill Jary headed up the effort and came up with the idea when "troopers sent in great stories of their personal experiences which unfortunately were too long for the "T-Patcher."

The Quarterly became the project of the Historical and Records Committee. Recorded in earlier issues were contributions of artifacts, photographs, and literature which if recovered, would be important additions to our growing 36th Division museum. Chairman Rucker would welcome a call from anyone who knows the whereabouts of these great treasurers.

"The Quarterly seemed to be the only way to pass on to our membership and war historians the real "way it was, eyewitness account of the good, bad and ugly part of war," wrote Jary.

The 1992-93 Board authorized the merging of the Quarterly with the T-Patcher; thus this will be the final issue of the 13-year period, 1981-94.

Payne Rucker, a member of Bill Jary's early Q advisory committee, recalls trying to sell the 6x9-in. booklet to help pay for publication costs. Rucker, currently Executive Vice President of the Association is now chairman of the Historical and Records Committee which is busy planning on efforts to collect memorabilia and literature to be displayed in our 36th Division Museum Gallery at Camp Mabry, Austin.

- Editor

The Fighting 36th
HISTORICAL
Quarterly



Worldwartwoveterans.org



*36th Division
Association*

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

FIGHTING 36th HISTORICAL QUARTERLY

Vol. XIII, No. 4 – Winter 1993

Contents

I Bring a Message	5
Wick Fowler	
Company I, 143 Caught Hell Near Altavilla	6
Sgt. Jack White	
131st Hospital 111-Medic Served in Boisterous East Texas Oilfield	9
Gordon A. Rose, K-143	
From the Riveria to the Rhine	10
Edited by Pfc. John A. Hyman	
The Rabbit Twister	29
Mac Acosta	
Back in Action on Alsace Front He Carries Volume of Verse with Him	32
1st Lt. Christopher Kilmer	
"My Story; Thank You From a World War II Kid"	35
John Coyne	
"I Would Have Kicked Them in the Shins"	36
Michael Stubinski, K-141	
German Propoganda Calling G.I's 'Brutes' Disbelieved by Italians	37
Sgt. James E. Farmer	
Green and Untried One Moment, They Emerge Fast as Veterans on Italian Front	39
Sgt. James E. Farmer	
Infantrymen – The Fighters of War	40
Brigadier General W.H. Wilbur	
Highest French Honor Paid 36th Division	46
T-Patcher's Sister Hopes to Preserve German Cannon	47
From Cassino Battle	
Cassino General Says German Guns in Monastery Forced Retaliation after Five Days ..50	
Sidney Shallett	
Gen. Fred Walker Praised 36th on "The Army Hour"	53
Maj. Gen. Fred Walker	
36th Signal Sgt. Recalls Cease Fire	65
S. Sgt. F.J. Gehrlick	
36th "Texas" Infantry Division	68
Bob Bunker, Company M, 143rd Inf.	
An American First	71
From the Detroit Free Press	
WWII Veterans Gather for 50th Anniversary	73
Otis Francis	
A Letter From Salerno	75
Pfc. Glenn C. Clift	
Funeral Unites Buddies After 50 Years Living in Missouri Just 17 Miles Apart	79
Billie G. Butler	
Short-Changed Quarterly	80
Gordon A. Rose, K-143	

PHOTOS

Altavilla Castle	7
French Remember the 36th	38
Salerno Bay Beach, 1993	43
First Post War Gathering	45
Fighting Cobras Come Home	46
Tarentum Cannon	47
It's 11-25-1941 and Here We Are	49

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I BRING A MESSAGE . . .

By **WICK FOWLER**, War Correspondent of The News
(*Dallas Morning News - 1944*)

I have just left the misery, the maiming and the death that goes with the western front in Germany.

I have been at home only a few hours now. I feel very safe.

Not many days ago, in the slush, the snow and the shellfire near Strasbourg and the Rhine River I had my last glimpse of an ugly, yet magnificent, sight.

I saw your American men – sons of Texas and Oklahoma and every state – fighting your war.

If I have a message, it is this:

It is hell – multiplied hell – over there that you can't picture. Get that clearly in your minds. Your sons are thankful you are not experiencing it – not a witness to the thirst of a German 88 for blood, the Godless fanaticism of a Nazi soldier.

They pray to God they soon will be out of it. But they know there are many, many gray uniformed men to rise before them, bitterly fighting Germans, who must be cut down before their prayers are answered.

Little Faith in miracles

They would want you to believe, as they believe, that this war on the western front is in its bitterest phase. Unconditional surrender is as far away from them as the farthest German. There will be no early collapse of the Wehrmacht – unless a miracle occurs.

The boys on the front have little faith in miracles.

It is the weary, glazy-eyed doughboy, the mortar men, the bazooka men, the tank, the tank destroyer crews, the artillery batteries, the monstrous chains of service troops feeding supplies toward the front, the engineers and the airmen I speak for.

For more than a year I followed the gallant Texas 36th Division, the 45th Division from Oklahoma, the 3rd Division, the Air Force and many other units through the shambles of Cassino, Anzio, Velletri, Pisa, Southern France and to the Rhine River.

So few of those original men are still fighting. Casualties have been tragically heavy.

When you watch them your heart goes out for the foot soldiers, the front line medical men for whom recognition has been so slow in coming. Medical men whose morale would be boosted sharply by a distinctive badge pinned on their chests – something like the combat infantryman's badge with a red cross substituted for the rifle insignia.

Home Optimism Vs. Front Realism

When I reached the United States a couple of days ago I was confused by the optimism – talk that the German army would collapse in a few short weeks or months. It was in sharp contrast to the realism I just left.

A big offensive such as the ones now boiling on the western and entire eastern fronts calls for more belt tightening and determination than light optimism. Now, if ever, is the time for these States to reconvert to total war.

Generals like the beloved Ike Eisenhower can send men into the bloody rivers, deploy them across bullet-raked plains. But the push must begin on this side of the Atlantic and gather momentum as it nears the front.

Believe this – when the war news looks better, the effort must be strengthened all along the line.

I find the United States in the midst of a campaign that would have soared over its goal in twenty-four hours if every American could see with his own eyes just what the Red Cross means to a man overseas.

I know what the Red Cross means to the soldier, sailor and Marine stationed over there.

The American Red Cross is the morale supply line that reaches from your front parlor, dining room and heart to the men over there. It provides that simple communication line.

For the sake of those men, don't let hesitancy infiltrate to cut those lines.

That's the message I brought home from some great men.

Company I, 143 Caught Hell Near Altavilla

by SGT. JACK WHITE

(Sgt. Jack White, I-143, made this talk over KTEM, Temple, Tx, Radio Station, while recuperating from wounds suffered on Hill 424 above Altavilla, Italy. He was among those brought to McCloskey Hospital in Temple which Walter Humphrey talked about in his speech printed in the last Historical Quarterly).

JANUARY 14, 1944

KTEM RADIO STATION

I was born and raised in Belton, graduated from Belton High in 1939, and worked in my dad's photographic studio until I was inducted into active service, November 25, 1940. I had joined the National Guard on April 1, 1939.

I was first sent to Camp Bowie at Brownwood for 14 months where I had field training and later went on maneuvers in Louisiana in the summer of '41. Then we went to Camp Blanding, Fla., for swamp and jungle training for about two months. While there, I went to an intelligence school for about two months. From Blanding, we went to the Carolina maneuvers for the hardest training of all, blitzkrieg warfare.

In August we went to Camp Edwards, Massachusetts, for amphibious training and during that winter, we learned how to carry on operations in extremely cold weather. In April '43 we boarded the boat for overseas.

Landing in Oran, we moved further in for mountain training; lots of mountain climbing, endurance marches and night operations by compass. In most of these maneuvers we used real ammunition.

Not being needed on the African front, we were sent to train to Casablanca where our company was assigned to the transporting of prisoners of war to camps in the states. In May, we spent seven days in the states before being returned to Casablanca and assigned to a prisoner of war camp as guards for two weeks. We then rejoined the 36th Division at Arzew, took a lot of amphibious training there, and prepared for the invasion of Italy.

About the first of September, we loaded for the invasion and, in a huge convoy, headed for our destination. The night of the 8th, we slept on the decks, ready to load on our boats at any time. At 2:30 a.m. we had a breakfast of navy beans and

then loaded on the assault boats. My boat got lost and never did get with the right wave, so we landed with the fourth wave at daylight. We waded ashore with shells landing all around us in the water, and on the beach. We ran through barbed wire entanglements and assembled on the other side of the beach among high sand dunes about eight miles south of Salerno at the little town of Paestum.

As communications sergeant, my first message received was that our third platoon had encountered artillery and scattered. By noon, we finally got the company back together and reorganized. Until that time, I hadn't realized we were in the real fight. It seemed like it was just another maneuver, although there were dead and wounded lying all around.

Reorganized, we moved up a mountain and our battalion took the little town of Cappaccio. We settled in the town and set up defensive positions for the night, digging fox holes and had D and K rations, a combination of food packages.

At daybreak the next morning we received a message that enemy tanks were headed toward Cappaccio. We moved east of the town to prepare to meet them, but they turned out to be seven armored cars that moved right in the trap we had prepared. Three of the cars were knocked out and the other four surrendered. It was here that the bazooka proved its usefulness; with one shot an armored car was completely blown to pieces.

We moved up on Monte Soprano and Monte Santano to set up defensive positions which we held for three days without any opposition. Early on the morning of the 12th, we got the message to prepare to move. We walked all day long not knowing where we were going. We found out later that we here headed for Altavilla. At 3 a.m. the next morning, we prepared to move up on the mountain behind the town, Hill 424, since by taking this high ground above the town, we automatically took possession of it. There was very little opposition until we got almost to Altavilla.



ALTAVILLA CASTLE – “Among these men were Capt. Alfred L. Laughlin, now in a North Africa hospital (shot by a machine gun along with Richard Reno, K-143), in the castle atop Altavilla.” – Sgt. Jack White, I-143. Photo taken on the 50th Anniversary Tour. Visiting T-Patchers are in foreground. – Photo by Gordon Rose, K-143.

Then German 88 barrages began coming in thick; they shelled the town for two hours with aerial bursts then moved their fire over on the hill where we were. After enduring about an hour of shelling, one of the last blasts hit ME! A piece of shrapnel fractured my ankle. This was about 11 o'clock in the morning. Five other soldiers were hit at the same time.

Since there were no medics there, I crawled down the hill to Altavilla where I finally found an aid man. At that time the roads were cut off and no ambulances could get in to evacuate the wounded; therefore, we were left in a ravine to wait until ambulances could get to us. The afternoon of the 14th, the German troops moved in and captured the aid station where I was. They marched off all that could walk and left those of us who couldn't.

After they had gone we lay in the open all afternoon with German 88s bursting over us. After dark, enemy patrols came through and looked us over. They went on and didn't bother us when they saw we were wounded - with the exception of the fourth patrol. The Germans took my watch and several things off the other boys.

After about 3 o'clock in the morning, they came for us and carried us to an old church where there were around 200 other captured Americans. Among these men were Capt. Alfred J. Laughlin, L-143, of Moody, now in a North African hospital (shot by machine gun, along with Richard Reno, K-143 in the castle atop Altavilla-I was there. - Editor.) Others were Capt. Bill Yates of Temple, who is still a German prisoner; 1st Sgt. August Waskow of Belton, now in a New Jersey hospital; Sgt. Randle Wade of Belton; PFC McQueen of Rockdale; Pvt. O.T. Morgan of Belton, now a POW, and many others I know.

The next day (15th) the Germans loaded those of who couldn't walk on a truck which evacuated us to an old rock house 20 miles behind their lines. The Americans who were able had to walk. On the way we were strafed by American planes which wounded two of our own men.

At the old house, a German clearing station, our wounds were treated with dry bandages only since the German medics had nothing else. We were treated as well as possible. We were fed three times a day on German black bread, limburger cheese, liverwurst spread, and soup. From all of this, the only thing we could eat was soup.

After six days the Germans had orders to evacuate us; we were to be ready to move that afternoon by ambulance to a larger hospital further back from their battle lines.

During the afternoon they admitted so many wounded Germans that they could not evacuate us . . . too busy taking care of their own wounded soldiers. They moved out, leaving us there. For two days Italian civilians took care of us. Through Italians, we sent messages back to our American troops. After two days Americans came for us. We were taken to the American hospitals where I was operated on. From there, I was sent to North Africa to a larger hospital.

I left for the United States on a hospital ship December 23rd. We arrived at Charlestown, SC, January 5th. After five days there, I was sent to McCloskey General Hospital at Temple, TX, on a hospital plane, which was the first massive evacuation by plane of patients to inland hospitals in the United States. I was very happy to have been sent so close to home.

In closing, I want to say that I hope the people here at home will support the Fourth War Loan drive as enthusiastically as they did the others.

131st Hospital 111-Medic Served In Boisterous East Texas Oil Field

by

Gordon A. Rose, K-143

(Information sought about unit that patched up oil wildcatters.)

"Let it be known throughout the Republic that there really was a 131st Hospital Company, 111th Medical Regiment, 36th Division," says John Kenneth Linbarger, former member.

(John approached the 36th about two years ago and was told there were no records of his outfit belonging to the 36th. I agreed to help. This is a brief story, but could be longer if members of the 131st Hospital Co., would drop us a note.)

The 131st Hosp. Co., which was to be "mobilized for martial law duty" later on, was organized in 1930 in Texarkana, TX. with Captain William Gardner as Company Commander, Raymond Shedderi, 1st Sgt., and Roy Darin, Sgt. Other officers, as recalled by Dr. Walter Wyrick of Texarkana, were: Capt. Allan Column, M.D.; Capt. William Hutchison, M.D.; Capt. Ruel Robbins, M.D.; Capt. J.T. Robinson, M.D.; and Dr. Wyrick.,

The 131st encamped the third week every August at either Camp Hulen at Palacios, Fort Bullis at San Antonio, and Fort Bliss in El Paso with the regular army and other national guard units.

In October, 1930, the East Texas Oil Field, the biggest of them all, was discovered in Rusk County near the towns of Turnertown and Joinerville, by wildcatter C.M. (Dad) Joiner. The success of Joiner's well, drilled on and condemned many times by geologists of major oil companies, was followed by the biggest leasing campaign in history. The field was soon extended to Kilgore and Longview and northward.

Those were wild times in Texas, as indiscriminate drilling caused tremendous overproduction and thus dramatic lowering of the prices of oil. Riots, shooting, and stealing prevailed throughout the "oil patch." Private attempts were made to prorate production but without success.

On August 17, 1931, Governor Ross S. Sterling called out the Texas National Guard to maintain law and order while the Texas Railroad Commission (which was the state agency with authority to regulate oil production) and the Texas Legislature enacted legal proration. The governor shut down the oil field temporarily.

On that day in Texarkana, reserve officers, doctors and other medical specialists assembled in a building at 14th and Texas streets to mobilize the 131st Hospital Company of about 60 men to handle cuts, bruises, burns and bullet wounds of the fighting oilmen.

Linbarger and Dr. Wyrick recall that a tent hospital was set up in Kilgore to take care of minor or major medical emergencies.

"The hospital was a large wooden platform with a tent for cover," recalls Linbarger. The 131st Hospital remained in Kilgore for five weeks until no longer needed.

Linbarger is attempting to get more information about the 131st, so former members should put recollections on paper and send them to him at 2955 Bergen Lane, Dallas, TX 75234, or to the editor: 124 Oldtowne, Seguin, Tx 78155.

FROM THE RIVIERA TO THE RHINE

A T-Patch Anniversary Supplement, Excerpts from a book in preparation by the Public Relations Section, with the cooperation of official sources.

Edited by Pfc. John A. Hyman

The troops that had fought for Naples, had spent their rest periods and pay there, were leaving Italy through the same city. Naples had been taken ten months before by the Allied Fifth Army. Now its liberators were going, as they had come, by sea, to strike a second blow across the water bulwark of the continent. It is not recorded with what emotions the men left Italy: Very few had ever liked the place particularly, for their primary associations had not been with the pseudo-prosperous Naples, but with the numbered hills and the blood-soaked valleys and shell-raped fields and the stinking rubble towns.

The night preceding the departure had been spent north of the city, in a fertile, dust-surfaced area near Gualiano, the same place which they had left to sail for the Anzio beachhead. The atmosphere had been unwar-like; the men had sat around and joked and played cards. Some had written letters, but very few, because that had been done before. Most of them had tried to act very normal, but even veteran troops are nervous before attempting the unknown. They had sat around by their packs and rifles and gas masks and done the same routine things they had done twenty times before and would do twenty times again.

But, despite the unspoken excitement, the majority of the men had slept. The day had been long and there had been a lot accomplished. They had slept and got up to early whistles, eaten hurriedly, mounted the trucks and waited as the tree-high dust clouds settled and the sun got hot.

As always, there was waiting. The long convoys jerked and rolled down to the docks, and the troops got out and lined up on the docks, trying to act casual, and waited some more.

The columns were checked, as they had been double-checked before. Then the men arranged themselves and their loads, climbed the gangways of the LST's and LCI's and troop carriers, and went into the holds.

If there were any regrets for the departure, the troops felt them as they lined the rails of their vessels and watched the coral-green-grey shore, or the slowly assembling fleet, each ship taking its place and signaling its final message. Venturing out into the uncertain is always a chore after any sort of familiarity, and Italy, foreign, disliked Italy, the home of eleven months of discomfort, could not have appeared as lovely before as it did to those men gathered on the decks.

“The 36th Division was afloat the eleventh of August. The men learned of their destination on the thirteenth.”

The 36th Division was afloat the eleventh of August. The men learned of their destination on the thirteenth. For the first days, as the ordered assembly of

Riviera to Rhine

vessels moved out across the sea, the tension subsided. Navy men and soldiers met and compared rumors. GI's stunned themselves and read or performed their shipboard duties, slept in the shadows of small landing craft, between the complicated gear, and in the stacked, cramped beds that filled the hot holds. The ships passed between Corsica and Sardinia to enter the last leg of the invasion journey. The tension slipped in again. Maps and charts and aerial photos were studied; scale models of the approaches and beaches were examined. The complicated briefings were begun, platoon by platoon. The months of planning and the weeks of filling in every detail were brought down to the final phase, with every squad learning its mission, every man discovering the smallest part of his participation in the most precise of all military operations.

Even the greatest of intangibles had not been overlooked, for the selected divisions were not of any uncertain quality, but composed of men who, during campaigns which have since been described as the most terrible through which American soldiers have ever fought, had been tested, who knew their power, whose groups were unified; these were the finest veteran troops.

ON AUGUST 13, the following message was flashed to Major General John Ernest Dahlquist in his war room aboard the command ship:

"D-day, 15 August 1944; H-hour, 0800 hours."

D-day, 15 August 1944; H-hour, 0800 hours saw the 141st Infantry Regiment land on the extreme right flank of the Seventh Army, spearheading the 36th Division.

There were three Division beaches, identified only as Red, Green, and Blue. Reconnaissance had shown the presence of many formidable underwater obstacles, a shoreline encrusted with casements, in ingenious defense mesh calculated to intercept a landing at its most vulnerable point – when supporting fire had lifted and before the infantry could bring its weapons into play.

Red Beach, sandy and admirably situated in the San Raphael bay, was the finest landing site.

Farther east, Green Beach was a potential trap, flanked by an abrupt cliff and stone retaining wall on the left, a jutting barren rock formation on the right. There was only a single narrow dirt road leading to the main coastal road, which ran under a railroad bridge; blowing the bridge would jam all vehicular traffic. Behind the beach rose an irregular slope, broken by an easily-defended granite quarry.

Blue Beach was little more than a deeply-indented cove, behind which rose the Rastel D'Agay, razor-edged and formidable, a precipitous formation which commanded the entire Division landing area.

The 141st landed on beaches Blue and Green. The Germans, good troops with a leavening of second-rate forces, possessed excellent defensive positions. Not all of them had been knocked out by the preliminary naval and air bombardments, and those that were left fought tenaciously, making full use of their advantageous positions. There was bitter fighting through the streets of the small towns and up the exposed slopes to root out the well-entrenched enemy.

Riviera to Rhine

The 143rd Infantry Regiment followed the first assault waves onto the Green Beach as soon as its immediate defense positions had been cleared. Disregarding the battle raging not five hundred yards away, it swung off the beach to the west and the pastel-colored summer resort towns on the road to San Raphael. It's mission to pinch off the defenders there as the 142nd Infantry Regiment sailed in to Red Beach.

“The 142nd never landed on Red Beach. – The formations of landing craft were forced to put about and make for Green Beach.”

The 142nd never landed on Red Beach. The demolition boats were unable to force a passage through the underwater obstacles that lined the bay. The formations of landing craft were forced to put about and make for Green Beach.

Green Beach became the only Division landing site. In less than ten hours, twenty thousand troops were finally put ashore there, over a boulder-strewn area less than eight hundred yards long and fifty yards deep; the entire strength of an infantry division, reinforced by heavy artillery and combat engineers, tank and tank destroyer battalions, signal and quartermaster attachments, was landed on Green Beach.

It was a magnificent accomplishment, for the landing strip and its approaches were too small and too shallow to afford adequate space for other than the assault echelons and their immediate reserves. Shuttle convoys of small vessels and dukws raced in and out, bringing in material, while the larger ships edged in one and two at a time to land their heavier cargos. On this one beach rested the success of the Division's invasion, and across it were put every vehicle, every gun, every piece of necessary equipment, all the tons of supplies.

There were casualties. With the landings so confined, the Germans were able to mass their forces, but the Riviera invasion was not the debacle of Salerno, where the 36th received its baptism under fire. The regiments cleared their first objectives by 1600. Nine hours after the initial landings, the beaches were secure.

The strongest opposition came at the flanks of the beachhead. The 143rd had driven to the left, towards San Raphael. Easy and Love Companies ran into trouble.

Easy Company found the Germans barricaded in a large courtyard. They had machine gun nests all over. Behind these were heavy concertinas of barbed wire fronting a house which sheltered mortar positions. It was impossible to get at them without presenting a silhouetted target. Pfc. Lewis H. Rose, Conneault, Ohio, climbed the high stone wall in front of the court and fired twelve boxes of ammunition at the enemy, thirty yards away. Cradling his machine gun in his arms, he fired until his gun barrel burned out and his heavy leather gloves caught fire.

Riviera to Rhine

“Pfc. John Neves, Fairhaven, Mass., led a tank up to the wall. When it was halted, he blew out the obstacle with twelve pounds of dynamite.”

Pfc. John Neves, Fairhaven, Mass., led a tank up to the wall. When it was halted by a trap, he blew out the obstacle with twelve pounds of dynamite. For six hours, the mortar and tank support and the riflemen fired away, literally blasting the Germans from behind the wall. The courtyard fell and the company stormed into San Raphael.

Love Company edged into position near German barracks on the outskirts of the town. Capt. Zerk Robertson, Merkel, Tex., worked his platoons forward until they had surrounded the encampment. The next morning, after a short fire fight, a German battalion commander surrendered with one hundred of his men. But a large group had slipped out of the trap and set up positions several hundred yards away. There was constant activity and firing. Tech. Sgt. Thomas Wooldridge, Royse City, Tex., squeezed the enemy out, with one squad to supply a solid base of fire while the others worked their way in from the flanks. For three hours they fought. Then the Germans surrendered. Love Company had killed a dozen of the enemy, knocked out two machine gun nests, taken 244 prisoners.

Meanwhile, on Green Beach, heavy artillery, ammunition, special units were unloaded as rapidly as the ships could be brought into the limited landing space. At dusk, the Germans staged their only successful air raid on the fleet standing offshore. A glider bomb from a low-flying plane caught an ammunition-loaded LST. The ship blazed up rapidly. Shouting to his engineers to stay away, Capt. Thomas B. Gautier, Charlestown, S.C., raced into the water to give aid, braving exploding ammunition and fire and flying hot steel. His men followed and from sundown to midnight they worked, swimming, using makeshift rafts to get to the ship and back with over one hundred injured men.

Campaigns may move by weeks or months, but invasions move by hours and days. No matter how successful may be the outcome, the first few days of a landing are like the first seconds of aerial flight: they determine the success of the operation. There is no comparative success in an invasion. It is, tactically speaking, either a success or a failure. So, on August 16, although the beaches had been secured and the inland positions consolidated, the battle for the primary objective, the establishment of a firm beachhead, was still on.

“Red Beach was reported open for clearing parties; Frejus was taken; the 143rd Infantry Regiment cleared a roadblock at Bourlouis after a stiff fight with infantry and tanks.”

Red Beach was reported open for clearing parties; Frejus was taken; the 43rd Infantry Regiment cleared a roadblock at Bourlouis after a stiff fight with

Riviera to Rhine

infantry and tanks. Contact was made with the 45th Infantry Division beachhead, on the left flank. On the right flank, the 141st Infantry Regiment continued to press eastward to make contact with the force of French commandos operating in the Cannes area.

Nineteen hundred prisoners had been taken by noon, August 17, and, as the line extended, growing numbers were brought into the Division cages. They were taken under many varied circumstances.

A large number were taken at Callian, at the eastern tip of the beachhead. Item and Baker Companies of the 141st were in the town, straddling the only major route along which the Germans could bring reinforcements from their reserves near Cannes. They had a fight on their hands protecting the flanks. Supported by tanks on the line, by tank destroyers, by naval artillery and heavy land guns, they had fought house-to-house through part of Callian, been forced to withdraw, then fought their way back. Only after two days of bloody close combat was Callian secured. Its garrison, except for six officers and two hundred men who chose the PW cages, was wiped out.

Many prisoners were taken more easily, however.

Company A of the 143rd Infantry Regiment, led by Lt. Henry Kahn, Allentown, Pa., attacked German positions in a valley. Concentrated fire greeted the T-Patchers as they jockeyed into commanding positions. Then every gun on the hills – machine guns, mortars, rifles, tommy guns – opened up simultaneously on the enemy. Pvt. Heinrich J. Strohaecker, New York City, called to the Germans to surrender. There was no reply. The barrage continued for another quarter-hour. Even the ammunition carriers popped away with captured pistols. That was too much for the Germans, and their commander sent word that he was willing to surrender provided that the Americans treated him with the respect due his rank.

“What the hell,” said Lt. Kahn. “We’ve got nothing to lose being nice to a first lieutenant. Tell him to come up.”

He came up.

“Holy cow,” gasped Lt. Kahn. Able Company had bagged a full colonel. The colonel was followed by a major, who was followed by three captains, who were followed by a string of lieutenants and one hundred and fifty men.

The Seventh Army Beachhead, firmly consolidated along its entire span, sprang into violent life when Task Force Butler pounded north towards Lyons. Hastily organized on D-plus-three, Task Force Butler was made up largely of 36th Division components: the Second Battalion, 143rd Infantry Regiment; Baker and Charlie Companies, 753rd Tank Battalion; Charlie Company, 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion; and one collecting platoon and clearing platoon of the 111th Medical Battalion, plus reconnaissance, armored artillery, and ordnance units.

Riviera to Rhine

“The 36th Division charged after it, carrying the right flank of the army around like a hinge to block the only German escape to the northeast.”

The 36th Division charged after it, carrying the right flank of the army around like a hinge to block the only German escape routes to the northeast. Under the command of Brigadier General Robert I. Stack, two battalions of infantry and a battalion of artillery – the advance guard for the Division as it drove parallel to the Rhone River Valley – cleared Digne, pressed through the mountains, and arrived at Sisteron, reeling off ninety miles in fourteen hours. With the 142nd protecting the long, lengthening flank of the army, the 143rd Regimental Combat Team lanced deeper into enemy territory.

This was a dangerous, gambling attack. In one day the Division had increased its lines of supply and communication by one hundred miles, and it continued to press its advantage by slashing at the German rear areas with speed and vigor. CP's moved hour by hour. Every column was mechanized and reinforced by armor, high-power and anti-aircraft weapons, and mobile artillery. Every unit gave trucks for a Provisional Trucking Company to augment the overworked Quartermaster Company. Jeeps and trucks and prime movers were pressed into extra service; drivers worked twenty and twenty-four hours a day, leaden-headed, numb-bodied from the fast, hard runs to the beaches; mechanics performed miracles to patch the wearing vehicles.

“22 August 1944,” reports the official journal, “elements of RCT 143 had occupied Grenoble without resistance.”

At first no one dared to believe it. The Americans? They are here? Already? They are here? At last, astride their funny little jeeps, perched high on their heels, reminding one of the far west, piloting their General Sherman tanks, henceforth so well-known along the Route Napoleon.

The crowd massed all along this fine avenue, just as it used to do in the good old days of the Tour de France. What a glorious Tour de France is this . . . the wildly enthusiastic crowd, which had shouted its welcome to the liberating troops of the FFI, triumphant with its tricolors waving in all the streets of the town, found fresh vibrant voices to shout an enthusiastic welcome to the big attractive giants.

Welcome to you all! You who have come from the distant provinces of Illinois, Ohio, Alabama, or Texas . . . Welcome to the citizens of New York and San Francisco, you all who have come after a stage in our North Africa to help France get rid of a nightmare which has lasted four interminable years, and to aid her to rediscover her true soul.

Welcome to Grenoble, our town. Welcome to the Dauphine, our province:

But the 36th Division left Grenoble as rapidly as it had come. A build-up of enemy forces was reported in the vicinity of Montelimar. Artillery ammunition was low, infantry was needed. The 36th Division was assigned the mission of dealing with the enemy threat and made for a time responsible for virtually the entire sector from the Rhone to the Swiss and Italian borders.

Riviera to Rhine

The Division was already in contact with the enemy at three widely separated points, near Grenoble, near the Rhone, and at Gap. Its troops were scattered from Grenoble to Digne. It had less than sixty per cent of its organic transport, and neither army nor corps had supply or transportation elements available. The first decisive battle of the campaign was beginning.

On the 23rd of August, the Division began to move its forces to meet the enemy.

“One Division served as the blocking force against an entire German army at Montelimar, an army thrashing about to escape the jaws of an immense trap. – To make the kill required eight days of fighting.”

MONTELMIMAR

Two hundred and fifty miles from the Riviera beaches, eight days after the first assault waves had charged ashore, the German Nineteenth Army was pushed into the gun-studded lap of the 36th Division. As the *Beachhead News*, VI Corps newspaper, reported:

“Under the 36th Division command . . . such a great force of artillery was directed on the Germans that more than four thousand vehicles, one 380 mm and five other railroad guns were destroyed, and the main escape gap for the fleeing German army was under constant fire and attack . . . the Division moved in and finished off the kill.”

One Division served as the blocking force against an entire German army at Montelimar, an army thrashing about to escape the constricting jaws of an immense trap.

“Welcome!” cried the Grenoble newspaper in a front-page article.

“Welcome!”

“Yesterday, without warning, we saw them suddenly rising up at the far end of the Cours Jean-Jaures . . . those well-built boys in khaki, those strong, calm fellows who in 1918 had shared with the Poilus in horizon blue all the sufferings of battle, all the joys of victory.”

With increasing fury, as more and more troops were penned in a smaller and smaller area, the Nineteenth Army dashed itself against the thin, tenuous 36th Division line, the only bar across its escape route to the north.

The joining in battle began even while the 36th was still moving its troops towards Montelimar. By 1700 hours on August 23rd, one battalion of the 141st Infantry Regiment had got to within one kilometer of Montelimar before small-scale counterattacks developed along its flanks. By midnight, enemy infiltration threatened its supply lined. The Battalion was forced to withdraw.

Said the *Beachhead News*: *“The Division moved in and finished the kill.”*

Said the journal: *“Enemy activity was reported around the entire perimeter of the Division sector.”*

To make the kill required eight days of fighting. Simplicity itself was the

Riviera to Rhine

plan: To block the roads and so trap the Germans, then wipe them out. Complexity itself was the struggle. Surrounding forces were in turn surrounded, attacking forces fired over a greater arc than did the besieged army; the battle was in reality a maelstrom of assault and counter assault.

On the evening of August 25th, the entire 141st Regimental Combat Team, reinforced by elements of the 143rd, attacked and cut Route Seven several miles north of Montelimar, beating back determined enemy infantry and armor. But the enemy was piling more and more power in a too-small area, and its pent-up might was launched directly at the roadblock. At the same time, the enemy lashed out strongly at almost every point along the entire 36th Division line. A preponderance of strength was his, with his masses of armor and his spirit born of desperation. By dint of sheer weight he smashed the roadblock. He lost heavily in men and equipment, but he opened one narrow floodgate. Our artillery damned the gate with the piled-up wreckage of fleeing vehicles, but he plunged on towards the second road block, at Allex. The blocking party was a makeshift task force of light tanks, armored cars, self-propelled guns, and troops from an engineer battalion thrown into the line as supporting infantry. Lt. Col. Charles Wilber, Hollywood, Cal., had been ordered to hold the block as long as possible and, if forced to fall back, to withdraw eastward to Crest and hold the town at all cost, blowing up the bridges as a last resort. Before daylight, there was heavy pressure at this point. North and northwest of Crest were concentration of enemy tanks. Tank concentrations were reported in the vicinity of Banlieu. A tank concentration was reported near Grance. The northernmost road block, thrown up by the 36th Cavalry Reconnaissance Troop, was forced at daybreak by overwhelming German power.

"The Division moved in and finished the kill."

“Surgical teams worked without respite along the rows of battered, bloody wounded. There was no plasma: medicos gave their blood, got up to administer to the wounded themselves.”

In the rear areas, messengers raced with their reports. Trucks pounded the roads to the beaches for ammunition, returned, pounded back, MP's at the junctions, their eyes red-rimmed with fatigue, routed and rerouted the long emergency convoys of ammunition and food, reinforcements, battalions of artillery tearing into position to smash the German attempts at a breakthrough. Surgical teams worked without respite along the rows of battered, bloody wounded. There was no plasma: medicos gave their blood, got up to administer it to the wounded themselves. The 157th Infantry Regiment of the 45th Division came up, was thrown into the line north of Crest.

The 26th Division Salient at Montelimar was a large squarish fist pushing towards Highway Seven several miles north of the city. The knuckles were at Condillac, the finger joints were at Sauzet and the fingers ended at Cleon. The

Riviera to Rhine

wrist was to the north, at Crest, and the snaking lines of supply and communication ran from the south to Crest. It was a distorted fist, and very uncomfortable. The German Nineteenth Army was to the south, but large forces had made their way across the Durance River before substantial road blocks could be established, and so the node of supplies at Crest, the hospitals and the dumps, were very close to the Germans in the north, though at quite a safe distance from the main body of Germans thronging Route Seven and the Rhone Valley.

The 36th Division had almost surrounded the Nineteenth Army; and the Germans were on three sides of the Division. The attacked were launching attack and counterattack against their attackers. The attackers were smashing heavily in one small sector and fighting almost desperate defensive battles along the rest of the front. The offensive shifted almost hourly. The initiative did not rest wholly with either the Texans or the Germans.

Along the floor of the Rhone Valley itself, where the flattening land was suited to armored warfare, the Germans had grouped the 11th Panzer Division. To prevent the enemy armor from picking up momentum were only the 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion, and the 753rd and 191st Tank Battalions – medium and light tanks, plus the M-7 mounts of the armored artillery, which at best were only half-adaptable to armored warfare, designed mainly for use as mobile support weapons. As the battle shifted, these units were jammed in the various sectors to breast the waves of enemy medium and heavy tanks.

“We tore all over the front,” said Tech. Sgt. Chester Howarton, Fort Worth, Tex. “First we were up at the Alex road block. Then we split up and fought wherever we were needed. And that was all over.”

Behind the 11th Panzer Division, reinforced and backed by fresh units, came the entire 198th Infantry Division. As the 198th mounted a full-scale attack to drive the 141st from its positions northeast of Montelimar and force the artillery to withdraw out of range of the highway, the 142nd and 143rd Regimental Combat Teams raced up from the south. On the 24th of August, the 142nd had reached the battleground and occupied defensive positions twenty-five miles long, followed by the balance of the 143rd. Regimental Combat Teams raced up from the south. On the 24th of August, the 142nd had reached the battleground and occupied defensive positions twenty-five miles long, followed by the balance of the 143rd.

“During the eight days of battle, the field artillery battalions fired well over 38,000 rounds at the desperately confined, retreating army.”

From the 25th to the 30th of August the Division was, daily, subjected to severe attacks. The main blows were struck along a spur valley which ran northeast from Montelimar, in an effort to cut the Division supply routes and encircle the defenders. Meanwhile, the whole defensive perimeter was constantly jarred by a series of sharp spoiling attacks designed to prevent the 36th from launching any attacks of its own.

Riviera to Rhine

During the eight days of battle, the field artillery battalions fired well over thirty-seven thousand rounds at the desperately confined, retreating army. Supporting fires from attached battalions brought the total number of rounds expended to considerably more than seventy-five thousand. The German losses were prodigious. Key terrain held by the infantry allowed gun positions to be disposed in such a manner that the route of German withdrawal was under fire for sixteen miles. This gauntlet of effective concentrations reduced a well-disciplined army to a straggling, decimated body of soldiery. Long convoys were destroyed, and the entire zone was literally covered with a mass of burned vehicles, trains, equipment, dead men and dead animals. Hostile attacks, launched often simultaneously from three directions, were hammered and repulsed by the same paralyzing barrages. Physical road blocks of exploding ammunition trucks and flaming transport occurred so often that long lines of German vehicles were forced to stop where the artillery and air corps would inflict great damage upon them.

But while the artillery brought the German's rear areas crashing down around his ears, the outnumbered infantry slugged it out with his tanks and foot troops. There is no animal more deadly than man, and a trapped man is the most dangerous of all. The infantry was mere yards away from the wounded, cornered beast that had been an overwhelming juggernaut. The men with the M1's and BAR's and thin-hulled bazookas had to stop him.

They stopped him.

Men like Tech. Sgt. Stephen Gregg, platoon sergeant from Bayonne, N.J., who won the Congressional Medal of Honor for guarding a medico who attempted to evacuate seven wounded men from directly in front of German positions. Despite the hail of fire and the grenades which the enemy directed against him, the sergeant covered the medico with a machine gun, firing from the hip. He ran out of ammunition. The Germans ordered him to surrender, but friendly riflemen opened fire on the enemy. Gregg, seizing a machine pistol from a fallen German, managed to escape to his own position, killing one, wounding two, and taking two prisoners, he restored the mortars and reopened fire on the enemy.

Men like Pfc. Joe Stamato of Philadelphia, stopped him. It took more than a flaming field jacket – the result of a burst from a machine pistol at four yards range, a jammed BAR, or a neck wound caused by a concussion grenade, to make Stamato leave his post in a garage door. He wouldn't quit when the enemy attacked and his BAR jammed; he got a rifle and used it. When his field jacket was set on fire by slugs ricocheting from his ammunition belt, he tore it off and kept firing. When an infiltrating German dropped four grenades in the doorway, he didn't quit. He shot the German. He held a sizeable enemy force at bay until more troops came up and he could have his wound dressed.

Men like Sgt. Fenton Brown, Amsterdam, N.Y., stopped him. When Germans attacked his rearguard positions, Sergeant Brown machine gunned and killed

Riviera to Rhine

over a score of the enemy before they withdrew. Two tried to infiltrate and get at his rear. He picked up a rifle and shot them both.

“It was a struggle whose proportions knew no bounds. There were 11,000 enemy casualties. He lost 2,100 vehicles, 1,500 horses were destroyed and all of the artillery pieces of two divisions.”

It was a struggle whose proportions knew no bounds. There were eleven thousand enemy casualties. He lost 21 hundred vehicles; fifteen hundred horses were destroyed and all of the artillery pieces of two divisions. He lost six railroad guns, the potent long range harassing weapons which had been nicknamed “Anzio Annies.” Yet, with such terrible destruction, he fought to the last man. Even on the last day of battle, when the initiative had passed conclusively into the hand of the 36th and the Third Division had linked up with it. Col. Paul Adams, C.O. of the 143rd Infantry Regiment reported to headquarters “I’m expecting a hell of a fight,” he said. At six o’clock in the morning, the last German counter-attack had formed in the vicinity of La Coucourde, but in an hour the drive had been repulsed without any loss of ground. The 142nd moved across to take the high ground east of Livron, its final objective.

When the German resistance in the Montelimar pocket crumbled, the Division turned north towards Lyons, the Boston of France and its third largest city. Reconnaissance elements led the regiments to the east of the city, instructions limiting entrance only to liaison parties to contact the Maqui.

While the Division made its way to establish roadblocks north and northeast of Lyons, bridge reconnaissance parties from the 111th Engineer Battalion entered the city. They were engaged in one skirmish. The Maqui and the Milice – Vichy police whom the French despised as much as they hated the Germans – were fighting furiously. The bridges had been destroyed except for one. The factories fringing Lyons were burning. It was a murderous war in which neither side would yield an inch. They were out to destroy each other, and the Milice seemed bent on destroying the city as well. One whole section of the city was a battleground, and the streets were covered by sniper fire as Frenchmen fought Frenchmen.

There was fighting in the industrial area of Lyons, but across the river liaison patrols were greeted with great cheering crowds of civilians. The jeeps were surrounded by masses of people who just wanted to shake an American hand or stare curiously at the liberators. Pretty girls threw flowers; kids climbed on the vehicle hoods and sat there, proud; FFI officials could not control their emotions. “What a great day is this for France!” cried one as she kissed an embarrassed lieutenant. It was a spontaneous, a very French welcome.

For two days there were celebrations and all sorts of parties in honor of the Americans, drinking bouts in which the French and their guests vied with one another in paying extravagant compliments. Every private home threw open its doors to the liberators. Soldiers in the city were welcomed in the most generous fashion. The city was theirs for the asking.

Riviera to Rhine

The Germans withdrew, and the 36th Division moved out after them. Fires still raged in one or two of the factories, and the Milice were still holding out against extermination, but the Maqui could take care of them. The important mission was the destruction of all the fleeing Germans before they could reach the major defense line across the Moselle River.

“The Doubs River was met and crossed as engineers built a bridge across it in under twenty-four hours.”

The pursuit of the enemy continued as the reconnaissance elements ahead of the vanguard rolled along the roads and pushed back the light delaying parties. The Doubs River was met and crossed as the engineers built a timber trestle bridge across it in under twenty-four hours. There were no bridging materials available when the engineer advance parties came opposite the river, and the enemy rear guards were firing heavily into the area. Working against time, they improvised from the raw materials lying around, to complete a one hundred and twenty foot bridge before the main body of the Division reached the river.

The advance continued, past Louhans, heavily marked by some vandal Teutonic inspiration; past Arbois, home of fine wines and mushrooms, where Louis Pasteur once experimented; past Avenne, to Besancon, then to Vesoul to meet an enemy delaying force of some strength.

Vesoul was the first town in the path of the 36th Division where the Germans elected to make a stand. The enemy was met and beaten down on September 12.

At daybreak, the 141st Infantry Regiment made a frontal attack. The 143rd moved around it's left flank, sending strong blocking parties towards Port-sur-Saone, while one battalion seized the dominating heights overlooking Vesoul from its northern edge.

Two battalions abreast, the 141st attacked the town, and the Third Battalion pressed over a canal, meeting heavy resistance as it broke into the streets to engage the enemy in house-to-house fighting. The Second Battalion, 143rd, in position on the hill, was engaged with machine gun fire and self-propelled fire, and enemy tanks launched a strong counterattack against the positions to the northwest of Vesoul. But, when, after nine hours of stubborn fighting, resistance in the town was overcome and the 141st moved up behind the advance roadblocks, the enemy pressure relaxed. The enemy continued to shell the area to cover his tanks' withdrawal, until the 143rd moved forward to clear out the few detachments which still resisted. Then the Germans fell back.

The regiments continued to drive towards the Moselle River line. German resistance grew stronger, and every town had to be cleared of enemy troops. The Germans threw up roadblocks at strategic points, but these were quickly overcome. The First Battalion of the 142nd Infantry Regiment ran headlong into one on September 14, costing the enemy fifty killed, one hundred prisoners, and eleven vehicles before he could break the engagement.

Riviera to Rhine

On the sixteenth of September, armored units attached to the Division entered Lxueil-les-Bains, last large, defended town before Remiremont and the Moselle River.

THE MOSELLE RIVER

The cracking of the German Moselle River line was a great victory. The Germans had promised that they would hold out all winter behind this water barrier, and while the 36th Division fought into Plombieres and towards Remiremont, they brought up reinforcements and sent for more. The Germans had a lot of troops along the Moselle River: units salvaged from Montelimar, special defense battalions sent from Third Reich to man its outer defenses, crack Luftwaffe ground forces employed as infantry. They had good positions along the high ground east of the river, spread out through heavy woods. All the Germans had to do was pull back to these prepared positions, then wait for the Texans to force a passage. The fords had been zeroed in with machine guns and mortars, the bridges had been long since prepared for demolition, and sizeable mine fields had been laid. Even the weather was with the Germans; they must have felt pretty certain that here was where the "Blue Devils" – as they had named the T-Patchers in Italy – got theirs. The fall rains had already begun. In a fortnight, there would be ravaging floods across the entire valley. The river was rising steadily.

As at Montelimar, the Division had outstripped its supporting trains, and when the Moselle River was reached, there was no bridging material available. The swiftness of the operation had left all the heavy equipment a good distance behind. But, nevertheless, waiting for bridging material would do no good. Soon the river would be unbridgeable. Meanwhile, the enemy was growing stronger.

To strike while the iron was still in the fire, General Dahlquist called on dynamic tankman Col. Clyde Steele, of Cincinnati, Ohio, then commanding the 141st Regimental Combat Team. No one laid elaborate plans. Colonel Steele was told to cross the river with the utmost possible speed, somewhere north of Remiremont.

The same day, September 20, saw the regiment in an assembly area near the tiny village of Raon-aux-Boix. The officers were in the small home of the mayor, seventy-year-old Monsieur Gribelin, trying to plan a way of moving through the dense, trackless forest between the town and the river. The peasants stayed away from it, but one man did know a way. Old Gribelin volunteered to lead the troops directly to the river.

Raon Mayor Gribelin, 70: "I am a retired naval officer," he said, bristling at the suggestion that someone else be found to lead the troops. "I shall lead you."

There was some hesitancy about asking the old man with the scraggly white moustache to go out with the reconnaissance parties, but Gribelin was an old campaigner. "I am a retired naval officer," he said, bristling at the suggestion that someone else be found to lead the troops. "I shall lead you."

Riviera to Rhine

In the late afternoon he led the advance elements to a vantage point, overlooking the enemy defenses.

Again that night, an inky night, the old mayor of Raon struck out through the woods at the head of a column, wearing out men a third his age with his long, tireless strides. His leadership was uncanny in that black forest, where there were no landmarks, and where the aging growths had obliterated the trails. As the men filed forward, a heavy ground mist settled. Men tripped on roots, fell and cursed. Men blundered against trees, stumbled into thickets, but the mayor of Raon led the column straight across the hills and through the forest to a bend in the river opposite Eloyes.

There had been originally some talk of crossing the river at this point, but the veterans who remembered the fruitless and bloody attempts to cross the Cassino-skirting Rapido River noted a great similarity between the deadly S-bend in the Italian river and the curving of the Moselle. Lt. Col. James Critchfield led his Second Battalion into position for a feint there, and as the battalion opened fire on the enemy, the opinion of the veterans was justified. The enemy caught the Second Battalion with a devastating counter-fire from excellent position.

As the Second Battalion maneuvered into position for its feint, the First and Third Battalions trekked across the forest in another area, to a point on the river mid-way between Eloyes and Remiremont. In a column of battalions, they met the river and skirted it to reach the selected ford. The First Battalion of Lt. Col. Victor Sinclair, San Antonio, Tex., passed a secondary crossing point, going towards another ford which had been designated as the attacking crossing. As it did so, the commander of the Third Battalion led one platoon of Item Company and the company commander across the river, trying to force a passage.

A semi-circle of eight heavy machine guns had been centered on the shallows there. Sitting on wooden benches, in strong, concealed positions, the enemy machine gunners tore the platoon to shreds with a murderous cross-fire. There were four survivors.

Pfc. Stuart Cottman, Baltimore, Md., sitting on a rock with his head in his hands, soaked to the waist, told the story: "We got across, all right," said Cottman. "Four of us were detailed to guard at the river bank. The others went over a rise into a little hollow. Then all hell broke loose, with machine guns firing into the hollow. I waited a while . . . nobody came back and the Germans started to come down the flanks."

The First Battalion reached the chosen ford. An engineer, Cpl. Walter Lindsay, stripped off his combat pack and jacket, fought his way across the swollen, swirling river with a half-inch rope. A five man patrol, led by Pfc. Bernard Betz, nineteen-year-old rifleman from August, Mich., made the crossing. Then the rest of the men began the difficult passage. Their clothes slung on their backs, bandoliers lashed on packs, they clung to the rope and battled the stiff current to the other side. Mortarmen and machine gunners, weighted down by their weapons and extra ammunition, clung to the rope and stumbled along

Riviera to Rhine

the rocky, treacherous bottom. One was swept under, dragged down by his heavy burden. Man by man, with every minute counting an hour, the battalion, forced its way against the river, across on the rope. Ammunition carriers, loaded and soaking wet, made their way across, returned for more ammunition, half-drowned, and fought back. Men lost their packs and clothes, but they got across with their cartridges and shells and their guns.

“ . . .the Germans continued to wage a punishing war; then the enemy broke contact, blew the only bridge left standing and withdrew across the Moselle.”

A fully-alerted enemy turned his mortars on the crossing. Snipers from the hills above it splattered the water, hit the rope. The lifeline was almost severed. Another was hastily slung in a more sheltered place, but to get to it the men had to race fifty yards across open marsh with snipers' bullets plowing the ground beside them.

The Third Battalion came upstream after a quick reorganization. It too, crossed on the rope.

Originally a steep bank and a few hundred yards of exposed slope, the bridgehead expanded to the main road, right and left along it.

The Second Battalion, once the others had got across, seized that part of Eloyes west of the river. It then joined the 143rd Regimental Combat Team and crossed the river across a treadway bridge which the engineers had immediately put into position so that supply jeeps and heavy supporting weapons could be put across.

The 143rd went to the left towards the center of resistance at Eloyes, while the 141st went to the right, to try and trap the German garrison fiercely resisting the 142nd Infantry Regiment on the outskirts of Remiremont.

Ninety tough Nazis were between the 141st and Remiremont, veterans of the Russian front, well-armed with automatic weapons, who had been attending a sniper school until the 36th Division had broken it up. They were out to show what they had learned, and they were good battlers. Ninety of them, led by a wily master sergeant, spread out all over the area and needled the advancing First Battalion. There was no line to fight along, just a dragnet across the hills, which broke up into swarming little pockets every time a German was flushed.

To the north, the 143rd took the high ground overlooking Eloyes. Resistance slackened, and on the 23rd of September, the town had been occupied and road-blocks established to the north and northeast.

All three battalions were committed in the fight to take Remiremont as the 142nd struggled against heavy resistance on the west bank of the Moselle. Until the 141st made its way into position behind the bridge and road leading out of Remiremont, the Germans continued to wage a punishing war; then the enemy broke contact, blew the only bridge left standing, and withdrew across the Moselle. The 142nd entered Remiremont, and the entire weight of the Division was brought into play along the still-narrow bridgehead.

Riviera to Rhine

But even with the entire Division centered on the crossings, the situation was precarious. Only one bridge had been constructed, across the lowlands midway between Eloyes and Remiremont. Heavy rains threatened this bridge and all but washed out the improvised approaches to it. It was continually under fire. The bridgehead was less than a mile deep, and progress was slow against stubborn resistance in the heavily-wooded, hilly, roadless terrain. The cold, rainy weather caught the troops without winter equipment. The situation was not favorable.

There were no available reinforcements. The Third Division, in the south, was heavily engaged and unable to move. Advancing towards Epinal, the 45th Division had committed its full strength.

It was up to the 36th, and the Division reacted with vigor, shifting its drive to the north toward Docelles and Bruyeres, deployed on a front twenty-five kilometers wide and eleven kilometers deep. There was no left flank. It was completely open, but the change in the direction of the attack in some measure protected it, forcing, as it did, the Germans to move in from the north and northeast into the front and strong flank of the line. To prevent the enemy from discovering the nature of the 36th Division situation, General Dahlquist did a difficult thing; he pressed his tired regiments to the attack.

The 141st drove overland into Sainte Ame.

The 142nd seized the high ground south of Tendon and maintained contact with the Third Division.

The 143rd captured Docelles.

Then, on September 25, the Germans counterattacked. For three days they beat furiously against the 36th Division line, but the aggressive moves of the 36th had frustrated them. The Texans had penetrated too deeply to be shaken from their bridgehead. Through their speed and durability, their performance under hardships, despite heavy casualties and limited reserves, they had cracked the line behind which the Germans had promised to rest all winter and led the Seventh Army to the Vosges Mountains.

THE VOSGES

Despite the three major battles it had fought, the Division was allowed no rest. It continued to fight, although its ranks were seriously depleted and morale at a low ebb. The equipment was largely the same as it had used in Italy. Newer divisions had come overseas with newer equipment, but the 36th continued to advance with what it had. The men slogged forward through the seasonal rains, cold and soaked. There was no let-up. The Germans fought harder than ever, the terrain grew rougher, the weather turned colder. The men fought on. Severe as the Italian winter had been, the Vosges campaign was its equal. There was seemingly nothing ahead but mud and deep minefields, and the Germans and the mountains. During the Italian winter, Rome had always glittered on the horizon. In the Vosges there was nothing ahead but another mountain, mined, defended mountains leading to the Rhine River. There was nothing across the next barrier but another barrier.

Riviera to Rhine

The men carried wearily forward, almost without a future, as it sometimes appeared. Their talk had one topic: "When are we going to get a rest?" Any rumor, however wild, was discussed and mulled over and accepted until another rumor supplanted it.

But no rest came. Savage battle followed savage battle. The men fought on, fighting on guts and with that unconscious skill that had become a part of them, struggling as much for personal survival as fighting an impersonal war.

Wrote Lieutenant General Alexander M. Patch, Seventh Army Commander:

"In the Vosges foothills, you dislodged a desperate and skillful foe from positions which gave him every natural advantage."

Docelles was cleared September 27, Bruyeres, seven and a half miles away, fell on October 19. It took three weeks to gain seven and a half road miles, three weeks of the most terrible fighting of the entire winter.

Every yard of the Vosges – not merely the roads, not just the towns – had to be wrenched from the obstinate enemy, and in the Vosges campaign, he possessed every advantage. The key fighting was not along the roads and in the cities, but for them, no matter how geographically insignificant. The fighting was around the hills and through the forests, in mud and swamps. Every little hummock assumed a tactical importance. The Germans had been ordered to hold as long as they could, and with the initiative of picking a battleground, they had laid a barrier across Tendon that withstood every thrust. Every attempt to force it was smashed.

"It was a fearsome forest. Every bush, every leaf hid a mine. Ever knoll concealed a machine gun."

For once the Germans had the artillery. They had a lot of it. Capt. Warren Ausland, Grant's Pass, Ore. had his engineer company on the line as infantry. "They had the hills and the op's," he said. "They had us where they wanted us, and they fired all the time. They fired more than we did, and it's the only time I ever saw that happen."

The Germans had the positions, too. Every rifleman and machine gunner was dug in. The foxholes were deep and covered and looked right across the lanes of approach which the Americans had to use. Anything that moved was an American. The foxholes were well-camouflaged.

"Damn, were they well-camouflaged," said a medico. "We never saw them, and when we got on top of them it was too late."

The bloody business of beating against the stronghold and taking it by frontal assault was abandoned. The doughboys went up into the two hills on the right and left of Tendon.

Nerving patrol warfare, replaced the assaults. The hills were crowned and packed with aging growth, so thick that the night was twenty-four hours long, crowded with the fibre-tearing silence of a forest. It was a fearsome forest

Riviera to Rhine

Every bush, every leaf hid a mine. Every knoll concealed a machine gun. If the Germans were an enemy, the woods were a more dangerous enemy, secretive and deadly, made only for animals.

The Germans and the forest seemed to be allied. German artillery bursts in the tree-tops rained searing shrapnel on the unsheltered patrols. The Germans sent out patrols of eight or ten men and an artillery observer. When they contacted an American party, they would melt into the brush, radio the coordinates, and let the artillery pour into the area. Other patrols went out, armed with machine pistols, with snipers outposted, spoiling for a fight. They would infiltrate the Division patrols and storm into the rear areas, firing and grenading the laying mines. Regimental headquarters was often under direct rifle fire.

There were pitched battles, fire-fights that lasted for hours, when patrols met, followed by cagey maneuvering, followed by another overpowering small arms clash. The Germans fought a carefully-planned war, extending the division lines across an almost impassible terrain where the initiative never rested wholly with either side. They held long lines aggressively, using as few troops as possible, while grouping their armor and reserves to smash any attack against one of their centers of supplies and communications.

The first phase of the Vosges campaign ended with the capture of one of the enemy bases, in the battle for Bruyeres.

“Then the doughboys of the 141st Infantry Regiment and the 442nd Japanese American Regimental Combat Team, attached to the 36th, advanced to the hill mass of the Foret Domaniale.”

Bruyeres was not captured and entered in a blaze of flower-throwing, champagne-drinking celebration, like Louhans or Arbois or the hundred little liberated towns of southern France. With the cold methodical fury, house by house, block by block, Germans and Americans fought it out for Bruyeres.

Able Company of the 143rd Infantry Regiment, under Capt. Thomas Brejcha, Chicago, led the assault.

Wrote George Dorsey in *Stars and Stripes*:

“Captain Brejcha’s men had been subjected to a pounding from every kind of gunfire the Germans could bring to bear. Exploding shells made a constant furor, occasional duds slithered insanely through the mud, and some areas were raked with a fire so intense as to make them impenetrable.”

Wrote Joseph Palmer in the *Beachhead News*:

“Veteran observers who witnessed the battle, fought in some of the worst weather yet encountered in France, compared it to the fighting on the Anzio beachhead.”

But the Americans came, as they came to many towns, blew the Germans out, and advanced wearily into the still higher mountains to the east, Belmont fell to a task force of infantry and armor. Then the doughboys of the 141st

Riviera to Rhine

Infantry Regiment and the 442nd Japanese American Regimental Combat Team, attached to the 36th, advanced into the hill mass of the Foret Domaniale.

Then the 141st Infantry Regiment sent its First Battalion forward to take the high ridge and the ground overlooking La Houssiere.

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

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

They were quiet because surrounding them on all sides, somewhere among the closely-grouped tall pines were approximately 700 Germans. They were quiet because they knew they were a lost battalion, and they didn't want the Germans to know it.

“They couldn't get this water whenever they wanted it. They had to crawl quietly during the blackest part of the night, with their fingers itchy on their triggers. The Germans were using the same water hole.”

They had already had their first taste of the hell to come. Not only was their CP overrun, but the Nazis had thrown two full companies at them, coming from different directions, followed by an immediate buildup. That, plus heavy shelling, intense small arms fire, concentrated counter-attacks, that had somehow managed to beat off.

Now they were digging in, tending the wounded, sending radio messages.

One of those wounded was the communications sergeant who had composed the first message. Artillery observer Lt. Erwin Blonder, Cleveland, Ohio, took over, hugged the only 300 radio, slept with it, prayed over it, from then on.

From then on . . .

"Do you know what I kept thinking?" said Pvt. William Murphy. "I kept thinking how wonderful it would be back on my old job as street car conductor in Chicago. And I kept thinking that now I had finally something to tell my three kids when they grew up. You see, I've never been in combat before. I'm a replacement. This was my first time. But I'll tell you something funny . . . honest to God, I wasn't scared . . . I really wasn't."

But a lot of guys were scared. The oldtimers knew what the score was. There's not much you can do when you're cut off like that, with only so much ammunition, with no water, no food, no nothing.

Still, there were simple, essential things to do. The four lieutenants on the hill formed an advisory council with Company A's Lt. Martin Higgings having the final say. A little guy from Jersey City, a 28-year-old cavalry officer who had come to the infantry only five months before, he had a lot of decisions to make.

Riviera to Rhine

First came the defense problem. Quickly, the companies spread out in a complete circular defense, with light and heavy machine guns strategically distributed. There would be no surprise attack.

Then came the shakedown. Every soldier emptied his pack so that the battalion could pool everything. They collected everything from small stoves to gasoline and a few precious chocolate bars.

But these things didn't last long. And then, very soon, the water situation became critical, more critical than the food shortage. Finally they found a mud puddle out of their area. It was dirty-stagnant, but it was water. They could boil some of it for the medicos – not much. Even the smallest fire caused smoke, which might give away their position.

They couldn't get this water whenever they wanted it. They had to crawl quietly during the blackest part of the night, with their fingers itchy on their triggers. The Germans were using the same water hole.

During all this, all day long, Bonder kept busy on the radio, sending one message after another emphasizing the desperation of the situation.

Not that he had to. Headquarters understood the full significance. Already different sets of alternate plans were being made, different battalions were pulling into line. Headquarters was figuring out just how much strength was needed to punch a hole and make the junction.

To the 275 lonely men on the hilltop they radioed: "Hold on . . . heavy force coming to relieve you."

Headquarters threw in crack troops, the men of the 100th and 3rd Battalions of the 442nd Regimental Combat Teams, wiry little men who went into battle carrying twice what they would need, just in case, tough fighters who were fighting a war for a cause, adaptable, certain soldiers. with them S/Sgt. Eino

THE RABBIT TWISTER*

Mac Acosta, Editor

Lost Battalion 1st Sgt. Lost

"I received a letter from my infantry Buddy Stan Kawashima, of Co. F-442 Infantry Regiment Combat Team. He wrote telling me he had received a letter from William Hilker Hull's wife saying that Hiler Hull died of cancer.

"Bill Hull was 1st Sgt. of Co. C., 141st Infantry when the company was entrapped in the Vosges Mountain Battle and was set free by the attacking 442nd and 100th combat team.

"There are very few old timers left that were in that trap. The only ones I know are Enrique Garcia from San Benito, Texas, and Paul Duffy of 553 Hamilton, Lancaster, PA, 17602."

**141st Association Newsletter, 11/'93.*

Riviera to Rhine

Hirvi. Daisytown, Pa., had volunteered to lead his platoon of light tanks, carrying rations and medical supplies. Tanks had never fought in such terrain before. Along their flank drove the 2nd Battalion of the 141.

But the Germans had a heavy force, too. They had self-propelled guns parked all over the hillside, the whole area planted with every kind of mine, they had thick concentrations of mortars and machine guns and supporting artillery and tanks and fortified road blocks.

The first attempted breakthrough was thrown back.

On the hill the men tightened their belts, crowded together to keep warm, to talk.

Behind the lines, every night, trucks loaded with field stoves and rations moved up the broad zig-zag engineer road and waited, just in case.

"We used to talk about food, mostly," said 1st Sgt. William Bandorick, Scanton, Pa., smacking his lips unconsciously. "We talked about chocolate cakes and bacon and eggs and everything that our mothers and wives used to make for us back home. I remember once we spent a whole afternoon just talking about flapjacks . . . golden brown, with butter."

They starved for five full days. Some of the men grubbed for mushrooms, trapped birds. They had very little luck. There was absolutely no food at all. The shelling got heavier. On the third day up there, they buried three more dead. It was a simple service, just a few prayers. Somebody marked down the location for the GRO.

Nobody talked about it much, but inside themselves, everybody kept wondering: How much longer . . . who next . . .

Still morale was high. There wasn't even the faintest whisper of surrender among the men. And anytime Higgins asked for a volunteer patrol, he had his pick of the whole battalion. He sent a thirty-six man patrol out on one flank. It walked straight into a trap. Five men got back to the besieged companies. One, Pvt. Horace Male, a replacement from Allentown, Pa., got through. It took him five days of wandering through German positions, of not allowing himself to relax for a moment, but staying on his feet for five foodless days of anguish. On the fifth day, a patrol found him and brought him in. No one else got out.

“They could loosen their belts, but they couldn't relax. They were still completely cut off; they were still the lost battalion.”

Blonder kept tapping out the coded messages: "Send us medical supplies, rations, water, blood plasma, cigarettes, and, for God's sake, send us radio batteries."

Back at headquarters, they tried to use the big guns to shoot shells loaded with D-rations and aid packets. The first attempts didn't do well. The precious packets buried too deep in the ground or the shells burst in the tree-tops, scattering the supplies.

Then they tried to use P-47 fighter-bombers of the XII TAC to drop supplies from the air.

Riviera to Rhine

To signal the planes, the doughboys chipped in underwear and the white linings of parkas and maps, all of which were stretched out in a long white strip. As a double-check, they tied smoke grenades to saplings, so adjusted that when the planes came over, the doughfeet could release the bent saplings and pull the grenade pins, so that the smoke would explode just as it topped the tall trees.

The first try missed, by one hundred yards.

"We were just praying, that's all," said S/Sgt. Howard Jessup, Anderson, Ind. "We just sat in our foxholes, listening hard, not saying a damn word . . . and we just prayed."

On the afternoon of the fifth day the food-loaded shells and the belly tanks of medical supplies and rations and batteries began hitting the target at the same time.

They could loosen their belts, but they couldn't relax. They were still completely cut off; they were still the "lost battalion".

On the morning of the sixth day, Lt. Higgins was writing a letter to his wife when he suddenly signed off. "Time out for a while, Marge, I've got work to do."

It was more than work. It was the strongest attack the Germans had made. The planes and the shells had finally told them the story. They attacked, certain of easy meat. As a prelude, they dumped a terrific artillery barrage on the area. Then they rushed one sector of the defensive circuit. Fortunately, the Germans picked the one spot where the battalion had concentrated most of its heavy machine guns. The guns were shooting single fire until the Germans came close. Then they cut loose with everything. The gunners had been told not to fire until they were sure they had a good target in their sights.

"We weren't firepowering, we were collecting," said Lt. Higgins.

The collection was phenomenal. The Germans took an awful beating. In the fringes of the small brush, just where the forest ended, there were dozens and dozens of dead Germans. The artillery made a fine collection, too. Spraying the whole wooded area with tree bursts when the Germans left their covered holes, the artillery accounted for one pile which had two hundred and fifty Germans stiff in it.

On the afternoon of the sixth day, Sgt. Edward Guy, New York City, was on outpost when he saw somebody. He strained his eyes looking and then he raced down the hill like crazy, yelling and laughing and grabbing the soldier and hugging. Pfc. Mutt Sakumoto just looked at him with a lump in his throat and the first thing he could think of to say was: "Do you guys need any cigarettes?"

INTO ALSACE

It was a wearing war of attrition from Bruyeres until the doughfeet broke out into the Alsatian plain after having crossed the swollen Meurthe River and forced the Sainte-Marie passes to Selestat and Ribeauville. Even after ninety-

(Continued on Page 57)

Kilmer's Son Writes Poetry, Too

Back in Action on Alsace Front He Carries Volume of Verse With Him

(This article was evidently written and published in 1945. The 36th Division Pictorial History Roster carries his name with HQ-143rd.)

With the United States Thirty-Sixth Division in Alsace, Feb. 15 (A.P.). – Lt. Christopher Kilmer, 27-year old son of the poet Joyce Kilmer, is back in action with the tough Thirty-Sixth Division in Alsace after being temporarily incapacitated by enemy shellfire in Italy.

Lt. Christopher Kilmer first served in the Pacific on Kauai Island after entering the Army by way of New York's "Fighting Sixty-Ninth Division."

Later he was commissioned at Fort Benning Infantry School and joined the Thirty-Sixth in Italy. He was with them when the push across the Rapido River began January 20, 1944.

Wounded by shrapnel in the leg, Lt. Kilmer spent nearly five months in the hospital, then served on limited duty in Corsica. He asked for a transfer back to the 36th and was assigned to same mortar transport platoon he had left in Italy. Now he is a first lieutenant and division liaison officer.

Young Kilmer, whose father was killed in France in WWI, writes a bit of poetry himself, but confesses little has been published. A volume of handwritten verse he carried with him through Italy and during his hospital siege and duty in Corsica evidences a strong strain of brooding over the soldier's lot.

Much of his verse was dedicated to his wife, the former Bert (correct) Daniel of Oxford, NC, and their five-year-old son, Robert. He called his wife "The Tarheel Colleen" and it is to her that his notebook collection of verses is dedicated.

Lt. Kilmer has not had a chance to visit his father's grave at Tar de Nois since he reached France with the Army, but made a pilgrimage there several years ago.

Lt. Kilmer has an older brother and sister in the United States. His brother is Kenton Kilmer in the Library of Congress. His sister is a nun, Sister Michael, in the Benedictine Order at St. Cloud, Minn.

(See Poems Next Page)

Two Untitled Verses By 1st Lt. Christopher Kilmer, HQ-143

If I die here I want my friends to take what they can use,
Map case, protractor, odds and ends, and my enormous shoes.
But send my boy my souvenirs, my ribbon and my pay,
Tell him I'm sorry for the years I've been away.
Send Bert my photograph and book, my billfold and my ring,
Please, God, don't let her feel or look hurt by my vanishing.

Being of somber turn of mine, of spirit sad, I sometimes feel
Beauty is water where my gloom unsurpassed holds steady keel.
Either toward madness or the tomb.
Remember I do not wish it so
My hope is that where I must go
Love and a beauty unconfined
Will follow me, possess my mind,
Always anoint me, always stay.

“Invasion Day August 15th 1994”

(LTC. Pincetl as told to John Coyne)

The following story was told by LTC. Marcel F. Pincetl HQ & HQ Co. 141st Inf. BN 36th Div. in 1970. I knew him as “Marty” and he was my best friend. Marty died in 1978 and is buried in a military cemetery near San Diego, CA. May he and all the brave men of the 36th Division who have died rest in peace. Mary was my best friend. The following is the way I remember it. I have put off sending these stories as I felt you may not want them from second hand. However, I joined the 36th Div. Association in memory of Marty and since he is not here I feel I should send them. This past week I was informed that I had won the 36th Div. Association raffle (\$100.00) so I feel I'm being paid to write these lines. Marty loved to gamble and I'm sure he had something to do with my winning.

Early in the morning we were loaded into the landing craft. The naval guns fired for hours over our heads as the waves bounced our boat up and down. We hoped that no one could survive the guns pounding but we knew better. Being a Catholic I remembered that August 15th is the Feast of the Assumption of Mary. I prayed Hail Mary's one after the other that we would be safe and get through this landing alive. The boats began to move. We hit the beach and heard some-

one yelling from in front. I asked what language is that? "Polish," was the reply and I sent someone who spoke Polish to go forward and find out what they were saying. They were yelling "Me Polish, No Nazi" I said, "Tell them if they are not Nazis then raise their hands and come out." They all raised their hands and surrendered. I told the men "we don't need to tell anyone how we got these prisoners," and we didn't. Prayers were answered.

"Wheel of Cheese"

Southern France 1994 – It was night and we were moving forward under blackout conditions. We followed the noise of the tank treads ahead as it was too dark to see. When dawn came we found to our surprise that our jeep had been following a German tank. The tank noticed us also and stopped. We were lightly armed so we turned off the road and the jeep turned over on its side. (I hurt by back here.) We ran for cover. The tank backed up, the hatch opened, and the gunner took aim. Then one German soldier got out of the tank and walked to our jeep, took out his knife and cut the rope holding the wheel of cheese that we had liberated, and took it to the tank and left. They never fired a shot. They must have been real hungry, and we were sure glad.

"The C.P. That Was Just Too Good"

Southern France 1994 – We came to a town and the railroad station was untouched. The office still had file cabinets, furniture and even some bottles of wine. "What a great place for a C.P." someone said. I looked around and saw how good it looked and got this bad feeling. I told the Colonel "I think we'd better get out of here quick! I think it's a trap." The Colonel ordered everyone; "out and away right now!" Shortly afterwards an artillery shell hit the station and there was nothing left of it. We all would have been killed had we stayed.

"Flash Back"

It was winter, bitter cold and snowing in Lawton, Oklahoma. I was driving Marty to the post office. On the road ahead was a man selling fire wood. The wood was stacked high in cords along the snow-covered roadside. Marty shivered and shook a little as we passed the cord wood. I asked, "what's wrong?" He said, "I just had a flash back." I pressed him to tell me what made him shiver. He said "once when we were in France it was snowing and very cold like today. There had been a lot of fighting and along the road were stacked like that cord wood the bodies of the German soldiers who had been killed in that battle." Marty rarely talked about his bad war experiences except to say that he thanked God he came back alive because a whole lot of good men did not. He never forgot his friends of the 36th Division. – J.C.

"My Story; Thank You From A World War II Kid"

By JOHN COYNE

I was 7 when the war started. I remember my daddy buying drinks for soldiers in the restaurants and inviting any that were alone to come and eat at our table. He always introduced me to them and had me shake their hands and said, "They're going to fight this war for us. That's you and me. We need to thank them when we can." I met a lot of soldiers, once he introduced me to some Army Air Corps men whom he had brought to the house. He called me to the living room and said, "I want you to meet and shake hands with these men, they are going to bomb Germany."

I have never forgotten that day. Daddy took me to Galveston once and showed me the coast artillery and explained that German submarines were just off the coast and that sometimes at night you could see our torpedoed tankers burning in the gulf.

I will never forget Christmas 1943 and on our tree was hung a telegram to my daddy. It was his draft notice. He was 36 and had two children. When he went for his physical the sergeant said, "Hey, old man, what are you doing here? You're 36 and have a wife and 2 kids. You can get out of this." He told the sergeant, "Just process me like the rest of them here." The sergeant said, "Get in that line" as the line moved forward a man was saying as he pointed at the line, "Army, Navy, Army, Navy." My daddy got the Navy. Now the war was at my house and my daddy was gone.

Air Raids At Houston

We had air raid drills and "blackouts" in Houston. Some kids at school said we had a new bomb called the "block buster" and it made Hitler so mad he was going to send a submarine up the Houston ship channel, surface downtown and then blow up all the buildings. That story sure scared us all. At the movies they always showed the news reel first and we were able to keep up with the war. I remember buying stamps each week at school to put in my booklet to buy a war bond when full. I collected newspapers and grease for the war effort.

Then Mama told us Daddy was coming home. Was the war over? No, Daddy is in the hospital but he will be all right and we will be seeing him soon. His whole company at weather school at Lakehurst N.J. had gotten botulism food poisoning. Only 4 lived and they all needed stomach operations to save them. We went to the VA hospital in New Orleans and the doctors told us he had only a 50-50 chance to live thru the operation the next day. Then we went in to see him. He said, "If those doctors told you I was going to die tomorrow don't believe it. I want you all to meet my friends in the ward." He introduced me to everyone and had me go to their beds and shake their hands. He told me those men got hurt fighting for us, you and me, we owe them a lot and we need to thank them whenever we can. The next day my daddy came thru his operation but some of the beds next to him were empty. I said "Did they go home?" "No," he said, "They died last night. The man you talked to the longest yesterday knew he was dying. That's why I wanted you to spend some time with him - to let him know how much we appreciate what he did for us. You are a lucky boy you have your daddy back and you are able to meet these great guys here who have born the battle for us."

Canal Street Parade

I went off to military school in San Antonio and we kept up with the war news daily. Then in the summer of 1945 while home on summer vacation I remember my happiest day. The war was over and New Orleans gave the biggest victory party ever. The streets

were full of soldiers and sailors Canal Street. It looked like wall to wall GI's. My daddy brought a soldier home to have dinner with us and spend the night. He had seen him in a bar sitting by himself. We all sat down to dinner but the sergeant never said a word. After dinner my daddy said to me, "son, you sleep on the couch tonight so the sergeant can have your bed." The sergeant protested, "Let him have his bed, I can sleep on the couch." My daddy said, "He is happy to give up his bed for you, he knows you have been sleeping on the ground for years to win this war for us. He will be proud to give you his bed." And I was.

The next day my parents were gone somewhere and only the sergeant and I were in the house. He called me to my room and said, "I have some souvenirs to give you. You see I don't need these anymore. I came back from the war very angry because of all I went through over there and I didn't think anyone cared what happened to us. But the way your daddy and your family have treated me I know that's not true. People do care and I know that now. When I leave your house I can try to forget the war and get on with my life and I never want any one to do to you what was done to me. I'm going to try my best to see to it that you never have to do what I had to do. Here you take these." He gave me his war souvenirs. My daddy spent the rest of his life in and out of VA hospitals all over the country. Whenever I went to visit he always introduced me to everyone in the ward and had me shake their hand. I will never forget the smiles on their faces as I shook their hands. My daddy died in 1966 of his service-connected disability. McDill Air Force Base sent a squad to give him a military burial. He taught me to never forget what all the men who served in World War II did for me. I have never forgotten and I never will. Thank you and may God bless you all.

"I WOULD HAVE KICKED THEM IN THE SHINS!"

by Michael Stubinski, K-141

"The whole Velletri Battle has not yet been told", writes Michael Stubinski, K-141, and he should know, he was there.

"I was a sniper with K-Company, 141st Regiment on the last hill before Velletri, and made the last attack on the town by dropping a grenade in a hole just behind the town square.

"Being in the lead, I was asked by some tankers to check out a bunker on the right, just before Velletri square. I stuffed a rifle in the hole and let go a few rounds. The tankers were surprised that I did not stick my head in!

"Right at that time, Germans were surrendering in the square. I asked them if anyone spoke Polish, and one said 'yes.' Then he told me that there were many wounded in the cellar. I told them that medics were coming from the rear to help.

"Our officers started yelling at me. I asked if there were any mines in the road and they said 'No.' Just that quick a company of Germans dressed real sharp came goose-stepping down off the hill.

"Our officers again yelled at me, 'Let them come on! That's the way they surrender!

"Hell, I would have kicked them in the sins!"

WORLD WAR II ALBUM

German Propaganda Calling G.I.'s 'Brutes' Disbelieved By Italians

By Sgt. JAMES E. FARMER

(The following reprints a story filed from Italy during World War II action there by Army Correspondent James E. Farmer of Indianapolis)

WITH THE 36TH INFANTRY DIVISION, ITALY – When retreating Germans told them that United States “brutes” would impose both economic and moral ruin on them, the Italians disbelieved because they knew America and Americans through many relatives who live in the states.

American invasion boats brought many a soldier to the birth country of his parents or grandparents and to the homes of aunts, uncles and cousins.

“The Germans couldn't picture the American soldier as a wild man to the Italians because they knew him even better than the Germans,” Dom. Filippo, an American-born priest who has lived in Italy under both Fascist rule and German occupation, observed. “Many an Italian has a brother or sister in Brooklyn or a cousin in Pennsylvania,” he said.

The quiet, thin-faced Dom. Filippo came to Italy from Cincinnati in 1927, studied religion in Rome, and then decided to stay in this country to teach. During the German occupation of his mountain city, the priest harbored some 100 Italian youths in his parish and saved them from capture and German labor battalions. When American troops neared the town, he walked down a winding mountain road in the face of artillery fire to tell them that the Germans had evacuated.

As the warfare moved northward and the little town knew peace and quiet again, the Catholic clergyman held special masses for U.S. soldiers. He gave them an understanding of the Italian people through informal chats.

Native-born Italians, as well as the American-born Dom. Filippo, have shown the American G.I. the hand of good friendship. In combat areas, at times this has meant the risk of death and destruction of property.

The citizens of a little town about three miles inside of “no man's land” were hosts to a 36th Division patrol for three days and two nights. Short, blond Corporal Boyd D. Dove of Criders, Virginia, who headed the patrol, said that Italian natives guided him and his men safely through enemy-sown mine fields and German entrenchments.

“About every other ‘Eyatie’ there had cousins either in Boston or Providence,” the Virginian related. “Our first variety meal in over a month came when our

Italian hosts actually 'killed the fatted lamb' and served us a good hot meal. We'd been eating the Army 'C' ration."

In another infantry action, Private First Class James a. Mask of Fayetteville, Georgia, was trapped behind the German lines for five days. An Italian farmer hid him out in a pig pen and fed him a menu of water, grapes, fried eggs, and spaghetti. The area was thick with German soldiers and it would have meant death for the farmer if Infantryman Mask had been found there.

Early one morning a terrific blizzard hit a 36th Division bivouac area and blew tents down on sleeping soldiers. Some took refuge in a farm house nearby. The host, a stocky, heavy-jawed farmer, moved his family from the best room in his house – and the only one with a fireplace – to give it over completely to the wet, shivering Yanks.

He told his story to the Italian-speaking Private First Class Anthony S. Amoscatto of Newark, New Jersey:

"When the Germans began the withdrawal through his community, he took for the hills nearby with his family, cattle and sheep. Any farm produce he had, he hid as best he could around his farm. The Germans used his home – the same living room where the American G.I.s were warming themselves – as a command post. They stayed there two weeks, burning a winter's supply of firewood the family had stored up. Then they took the living room table and chopped it up as fire wood."

It isn't usually the emergency of a blizzard that takes the Yankee doughboys to friendly Italian firesides. Many make frequent calls to sit in on a family semi-circle before the fireplace. Italians have commented on the American's love for children. Even if he doesn't know a word of Italian, the big, awkward G.I. Joe makes himself respected by his affectionate toddling of a child on his knee and his never-ending supply of "caramella" for the kiddies.



FRENCH REMEMBER THE 36TH – Officials of ten cities and towns of the Clefey and Bansur-Meurthe Valley pay honor and appreciation to the 36th Infantry Division each year on November 20-23, the anniversary of the valley's liberation from the Nazi yoke. Shown here are those who paid homage to the 36th last November T-Patchers are urgently welcomed to attend.

A REPORTER'S ALBUM –

When Our Doughboys Become Men Green and Untried One Moment, They Emerge Fast As Veterans On Italian Front

By Sgt. JAMES E. FARMER

(The following reprints of a story filed by Army Correspondent James E. Farmer from Italy in April, 1994, which was printed by The Indianapolis Star.)

WITH THE 36TH INFANTRY DIVISION IN ITALY – Doughboys of this 36th Division have learned through hard battle experience that a change from garrison soldier to combat soldier is in fact a transition from boy to man.

On September 9, 1943, under an early morning mist these soldiers stormed the shores of Salerno, Italy. They were green, untried. Yet this baptism of fire transformed them into gritty combatmen.

They pushed inland – infantrymen with bazookas and rifles fighting tanks; mortarmen on the flat shoreline terrain combatting well-emplaced 88 mm. cannons in the hills. In 13 days, they made secure the first American beachhead on Fortress Europa.

Reactions to first combat were varied.

"I felt like I was on maneuvers," said one private. But when I saw my closest buddies getting wounded and killed right at my side, I said to myself, 'Hell, this ain't maneuvers!'"

A sergeant recalled, "I was climbing over a barbed-wire entanglement and my pants got caught. I tried to free them carefully from the wire. A machinegun opened up and I felt bullets whizzing by my ears. 'Look at yourself, Mike,' I said. 'Watching out for your pants when your life is at stake.' I plunged forward over the wire and tore the entire leg off the pants. But, here I am today."

"Salerno was something of an adventure to me," said another private. "That was because I didn't really know what I was getting into. I was told on the ship what my outfit was to do. I did my part in that. I didn't think much about it until after the 13 days were over – then I felt rather scared."

Since those early days, these doughboys have seen action that has challenged more of the man in them.

One infantryman was trapped in Altavilla, a mountain city, considered as a "no-man's land" at the time. He lived to tell about tremendous bombardments he underwent there. These included four days of firing by combined Allied ground and naval artillery, German artillery, and a dive-bombing attack by 60 American planes. This same infantryman since has experienced artillery concentrations in

the mountains around Cassino. He considers the latter more severe.

Men of one infantry company went 72 hours without more than the food and water they had on hand – rations for three meals. German artillery had knocked out their mule supply train. Rain water was caught in C-ration cans and helmets for drinking purposes. The food was made to last.

An artist in civilian life, one soldier recalled experiences during rugged mountain operations. He said, "I was in my fighting hole for two days. It was cold. My feet were in two inches of icy water. My sergeant told me to go on a patrol. I was so tired I thought I couldn't move. Somehow, I got up and left. Before that time, I didn't realize my body could stand so much."

Growth into man for some has meant more than the personal risks of warfare and the personal privations of climate and terrain. To the platoon sergeant and the squad leader self-preservation has become second nature. Responsibility has made him develop a knack for looking out for others – the members of his combat group.

"Out in the field you've got to think six different ways from Sunday," one platoon sergeant explained. "You're moving up a slope in attack. A machinegun opens up. You've got to think – see where the best cover is; where and how close the German gun is; how it can be knocked out; where Joe is with the automatic rifle, and Bob and Tom with hand grenades; where to place the other guys to protect flanks and rear. You have no time to get scared yourself."

Doughboys of the 36th have the habit of referring to a soldier who has experienced several combat operations as an "old man." He may have just passed 20 years but they consider him old because of what he knows about battle tactics.

By this self-invented expression, they are recognizing their own transitions from boys to men.

Infantrymen – The Fighters of War

BY BRIGADIER GENERAL W. H. WILBUR, USA

Assistant Commander of the 36th Infantry Division General Wilbur fought in North Africa and Italy, on the bloody Salerno beachhead, along the Rapido River, and in other historic engagements. For entering the French lines under fire at Casablanca and attempting to arrange an armistice to prevent further bloodshed on both sides, he was awarded the nation's highest decoration for gallantry in action, the Medal of Honor. General Wilbur also wears the Silver Star, Legion of Merit, the Moroccan *Ouissam Alaouite*, and campaign ribbons of both World Wars —
The Editor.

In WORLD WAR I the job of the infantry soldier was tough. The 1918 doughboy had to be virile and rugged. In the present war the doughboy's job is even tougher, for during the past twenty-five years many new devices and improved weapons have been developed.

These new contrivances place in the hands of our troops weapons with which they can concentrate a seemingly annihilating fire on the enemy infantry.

In World War I our principal artillery piece was the 75-mm. gun. The 75 was very accurate, and it poured heavy concentrations on the 1918 edition of German infantry.

In 1944 we are using the 105-mm. howitzers our principal artillery weapon. It not only has a longer range, much heavier shell, and greater bursting radius, but,

because it employs high-angle fire, it can get in behind hills, buildings, and other shelters where the 75 could not reach. The 105 is much more effective against Germans and Japs than was the 75.

Our infantry smothers the Jap or German infantry with mortar fire, delivered by mortars which are very much more accurate and which have a much greater range than the 1918 type.

We roll tanks over the Jap or the German, tanks that are so much more powerful in everyway than those used in 1918 that they may almost be classed as a new weapon.

We use rifle and machine-gun fire to seek out the Jap opposing us. The bazooka and the flame thrower, coupled with mortar fire. Make bunkers and concrete pillboxes of limited value as shelter for the enemy infantryman. We throw hand grenades into the hole; here he seeks shelter. We try to weaken his will, to cow him, to make him give up, or to annihilate him.

And the Germans and Japs do the same to our infantry.

The Doughboy Takes a Beating

No other element of our armed forces takes the beating that we expect our doughboys to stand up under. Every new development — tanks, rocket guns, and dastardly box mines — adds to the burden of the indomitable doughboy.

In this, as in all past wars, soldiers and sailors measure their contribution by four considerations. First, by the degree of their isolation and loneliness; second, by the amount of physical discomfort they endure; third, by the amount of danger they undergo and last, by the amount of real aggressive fighting that they do.

Measured by any or all of these standards, the infantry soldier, the "doughboy," is in a class by himself and is pre-eminently entitled to the approbation of the people at home and the plaudits of his fellow soldiers.

War requires the combined and coordinated efforts of the whole Nation. Raw materials must be obtained, weapons and equipment must be fabricated, everything must be transported and finally used against the enemy.

All of these successive steps are essential to the accomplishment of the complete task. Any man or woman who participates in the great undertaking may feel with satisfaction that he or she is a sharer in our national accomplishment.

As we follow the unbroken chain of effort from farm or mine to the front-line doughboy, the job becomes increasingly uncomfortable, increasingly difficult, increasingly dangerous.

Through the years the infantry has changed and developed remarkably. As new dangers have arisen, the infantry has mastered them.

One could rightly marvel at the fact that the infantry has survived. It has done much more. It has dominated new developments and continued to be the decisive element of war.

In the Civil War whole regiments and sometimes brigades charged bravely, shoulder to shoulder, directly at an enemy position. That was standard procedure. Only the higher commanders used maneuver and envelopment.

General Stonewall Jackson is rightly credited with executing a brilliant maneuver at the Battle of Chancellorsville. He led his entire force around the flank and struck unexpectedly. Today it is normal for a squad or a platoon to do this same thing.

No longer does the squad go forward as a portion of a massed company bravely led by the captain. Now the platoon may be alone in a zone of action formerly considered appropriate for a battalion.

The leader must take advantage of every fold in the ground, must foresee hostile fire and the effect of hostile fire, must set up his own base of fire to support and cover the maneuver of the riflemen around the flank or perhaps even against the enemy's rear.

Infantry Soldier a Person Apart

Just as he gets his maneuver well started, the enemy may strike his maneuvering unit on the flank. It is a struggle of wits, a succession of situations which are always different. It demands calm, rapid thinking. That is why only men of high intelligence can fully shoulder the heavy responsibility of leading a rifle squad or a rifle platoon.

Many other arms operate by groups and thus have the psychological strength that group effort gives. If infantry is massed or grouped, it commits suicide.

When we consider the mental strain of battle, the effect of the constant pressure of hostile artillery fire, the constant presence of danger, and the daily visit of death, without question the infantry soldier is a person apart.

Hundreds of times I have marveled at his spirit. I remember, just before we attempted to cross the Rapido River in Italy, I talked with a fine infantry leader who had repeatedly performed acts of bravery and who had recently been decorated with the Silver Star.

A few hours before the assault, he told me of his plans and said, You know, sir, General Walker awarded me the Silver Star the other day. When I think of the number of our men who have given their lives bravely and have received no decoration, I feel how unworthy I am to wear that Silver Star. Today I am going in there and really earn it! "

Twenty-four hours later his body was sprawled on the barbed wire in the very heart of the German position — a grenade still clenched in his hand. He had died at the head of the assault troops.

The infantry soldiers who have been in combat will carry something with them for the rest of their lives. Their minds will be seared with memories that will never leave them. I noticed a picture strip the other day in which a little boy was asking his father, "Daddy, why don't you ever tell me about Tarawa?" The answer was that Tarawa brought up too many grim memories, too many thoughts of comrades who had given their all.

Many other boys will be asking their fathers, "Why don't you tell me about the Rapido?" "About Cassino?" "About Anzio?" "About the landing in France?" "About Saipan?" The memories of those and other bloody conflicts will haunt them for years.

When we consider the need for mental keenness, the need for constant alertness, the ability to act with split-second timing, again the infantry soldier must be tops. Members of rear elements can make mistakes of judgment or can fail to be alert, and they will live to tell of it. Too frequently such is not the case with the doughboy.

I remember seeing a rifle soldier going forward across a relatively open stretch of ground. He was crouching forward—the picture of alertness. Suddenly

a shell struck within a few feet of his left foot and he was swallowed up in a black cloud. I thought sadly, "Another fine young man gone."

Infantrymen—The Fighters of War

Suddenly, out of the cloud dashed that same doughboy. He had beaten that first shell to the ground and then was up and away. He wasn't going to be in that spot when the next salvo hit.

Many infantry soldiers are not so lucky. They receive wounds that they will carry through life. The treacherous new German box mine is made to blow off a man's foot. The infantry soldier is much more likely to carry the scars of combat with him to his grave than are the soldiers of any other arm or service.

It is very American to be proud of our sons, our relatives, our friends. The place where they serve in the armed forces is of little importance. We are proud of all of them, and rightly so, for each one is making a contribution to our great national effort.

We know that every man and woman who is in our armed forces, and who is doing his assigned job as well as he can, is doing his share. But I am sure every one of them will agree that the doughboy does definitely more than his share.

The contribution the men make is shared by their loved ones. Let us not forget that the mothers and fathers, the wives of infantrymen — they too make an outstanding contribution.

From the standpoint of comfort, food, and living conditions, there can be no question that the doughboy and the loyal attached "medics" carry a heavy burden. To be wet, muddy, and tired is normal. Not that the infantry soldier is the only soldier who gets muddy. The artillery struggles and works in the mud, and the engineers live in the mud for days at a time.

During the first winter in Africa the airfields at Oran and Algiers were muddy landing strips surrounded by a lake of mud six inches to a foot deep. The difference is that, while others may have to stand, walk, or work in the mud, the doughboy has to stand in it, walk in it, eat in it, lie in it, and frequently die in it.



SALERNO BAY BEACH, 1993 – It's hard to imagine that it was on this beach that the entire 36th Infantry Division, its men, trucks, tanks and millions of rounds of ammunition poured into Italy to face a well-prepared enemy bent on seeing that we would be driven back into the sea. As the current Mayor of Paestum put it, "But most of all, you defeated them armed with the faith of a free people, and the values of Citizen Soldiers of a free republic. The faith and the values of Valley Forge and the Alamo."



THE HOME TOWNER

By WALTER R. HUMPHREY

Memories of the 36th

When the 36th had their reunion in Fort Worth, Sept. 1969, Walter Humphrey wrote this tear-jerker, and was his last public statement about this ill-fated Memorial Museum for the 36th Infantry Division. He was still editor of The Fort Worth Press.

A proud and battle-scarred division is the 36th, which has been having a reunion here this weekend.

This is the outfit that invaded Europe at Salerno, that was literally cut to pieces at the Rapido River and that had so many casualties in its historic role in the conquest of Nazi Germany.

I am a fan of the 36th. If my job hadn't been so demanding . . . or possibly if I hadn't been too lazy . . . I might have been one of its historians.

No, I didn't have the honor to seve with the 36th division but I was the first to welcome it back home . . . for I met the first hospital train and planes that brought its wounded back from Italy.

That was down at McCloskey General Hospital at Temple. **So the first story of the invasion at Salerno, identifying the 36th, came onto the wires out of Temple.**

This upset the War Dept. in Washington, but the hospital commanding officer stood by the story because the boys were home . . . and it couldn't well be kept a secret any longer.

I never will forget that first trainload of casualties. Some of the men were badly wounded, and walking through cars was a sobering experience.

Men of the 45th from Oklahoma were there, too.

The stories of these men, who they were and what they did . . . and what their comrades did . . . were tremendous.

No newspaperman ever was more

privileged than I to send out over Texas the stories of the gallent men of the 36th. Thousands of words. Stories to make you proud of these Texans.

A few days later a planeload flew into the little airport there. More men of the 36th.

A young boy leaned out of his bunk and called, "Hello, Mr. Humphrey. When I saw you I knew I was home."

And so he was. And Texas quickly chorused its pride in the men of the T-Patch division.

Many others came in as the months wore on, adding to the legend of a great division.

And so, some of us got together and organized a commission to build a memorial there in Temple to the 36th. Leading citizens from all over Texas became directors of it.

The city offered a square block downtown as a site. We raised thousands of dollars, conducted a statewide architectural competition under the chairmanship of Joe Pelich of Fort Worth.

And the Memorial building was to be a beauty.

Then folks elsewhere in Texas began to shoot at us. They hadn't been consulted. Why were we going to build it at Temple, instead of Austin or Brownwood or somewhere else?

Oldtime leaders of the division had different ideas or thought the whole idea was wrong. Stumbling blocks were thrown in the way.

“BIGGEST BOOSTER”

Very Sad Ending

And so, sad to say, we were whipped. The winning architect got his \$1000 . . . and the rest of the money we'd collected . . . not quite \$20,000 . . . finally was turned back.

The city has built a parking area on the block it once gave for the memorial. And only memories of the wonderful project, mostly mine, remain.

I feel guilty because of the failure, for this fine division deserved the memorial. But none of those who didn't want that particular memorial to go through has come forward to replace it.

And so, we keep these men, their sacrifices, their achievements in our hearts only. But may they be there always.



The first post-war gathering of the 36th was in Brownwood Jan. 1946. Photo above was taken at State Park during reunion. At left is: Earl Higginbotham, General John E. Dahlquist chats with Dick Stansell, and Murdock, All are patients from McCloskey Hospital at Temple, TX where most all T-Patchers were sent. Ole Dick Stansell of Amarillo sent this one in.



ONLY picture of the 36th's three commanders: Maj. Gen's John E. Dahlquist, Fred L. Walker and Claude V. Birkhead. This was made January 1946 at Brownwood at the Assn's 1st post- war reunion.

Highest French Honor Paid 36th Division



The Austin American
November 11, 1946



FIGHTING COLORS COME HOME - Colors and standards of the 36th Division, honored by France whose soil this historic unit liberated in two world wars, came back in Texas' Armistice Day observance to the newly-reconstituted 36th. Above, the flags and some of the guidons are borne in proud review at Camp Mabry. Below, left, hands to Colonel Carl Phinney, 36th chief of staff, the official citation of the French government honoring the division, as Brigadier General H. Miller Ainsworth, center, looks on. Lower right, after he had pinned the Croix de Guerre to the standard of the 36th Division, (upper corner) Gen. Mathenet bows and fervently kisses the standard symbolizing the valorous, victorious achievements of Texas soldiers.

T-Patcher's Sister Hopes to Preserve German Cannon From Cassino Battle

Staff writer

TARENTUM, PA – Leona Bark's memories of the Riverfront Park cannon go back farther than climbing on it or swinging from the barrel as a child.

Bark's brother, William Ruediger, was taken prisoner during World War II by German soldiers after a January 1944 battle near Cassino, Italy. During the battle, the German-made cannon was one of the weapons that rained shells on Allied soldiers.

History is hazy on how the cannon came to the park, but most agree it replaced a World War I cannon melted down during a World War II metal shortage.

The cannon was removed from the park last month by scrap metal dealer Ted Tomson after Tarentum officials said it was deteriorating and its rusted condition posed a safety problem.

It now sits on a Harrison farm owned in part by Tomson.

A hail of protest followed the move, as well as calls to have the cannon returned. The borough, however, said it was looking for a new, American-made cannon to replace the rusting German relic.

"A new cannon doesn't mean a thing," said Bark, 70, of Brackenridge.

Her brother was released by the Germans after World War II, but died several years later from illnesses that originated while he was in prison camp.

"I think it's a shame they put that on a scrap heap when those boys gave their lives," Bark said.



"We're not the Grinch that stole the Tarentum cannon," says Ted Tomson. Tomson says he may refurbish it with the help of his brother, Jim, left and Joe DeHose, an area ironworker. Other options include giving it back to me borough – if it pays moving expenses – or to the Brackenridge American Legion.

But Tomson said the cannon will not be scrapped.

“(Workers) called me that Saturday and said, ‘What size do you want us to cut it?’ All I had to say was ‘3 feet’ and go back to sleep. It would have been cut up and melted down before anyone knew it was gone. I told them not to cut it, that we would come down and get it.

“We’re not the Grinch who stole the Tarentum cannon.”

Tomson said moving the 25-ton cannon cost \$4,200, with riggers coming from Butler on short notice on a Saturday. Tomson said he called additional workers, who were later found to be unnecessary, but still had to be paid. The cannon would have been worth about \$60 to \$80 a ton in scrap.

He said he offered to give the cannon back to the borough after the community uproar – as long as the borough paid to move it. He also is offering to donate it to the Brackenridge American Legion in honor of former commander George Collins and his own father, Nick Tomson, a disabled World War II veteran.

Tarentum borough Secretary Joe Davidek said the borough hasn’t changed its position.

“The borough doesn’t want it,” he said. “We’re looking for a new one.”

Collins said the American Legion will wait for the borough to make a public statement before acting on Tomson’s offer.

If both offers are turned down, Tomson said he has contacted Brackenridge metalworker Joe DeRose about refurbishing the cannon. Tomson said the project will cost about \$30,000.

“We want to restore it and pull it in parades,” he said. “We don’t need a cannon. I didn’t want them to cut it up.”

141 T-Patcher Captured at Battle of Cassino



Pvt. William Ruediger
E-141

William Ruediger was an 18-year-old member of the 36th “Texas” Division when he went into the Liri Valley near Cassino with other members of the 141st Infantry.

An attempt to cross the Rapido River and to wrest control of the Liri Valley from the Germans failed January 20-21 in 1944. The Germans, whose weapons included the cannon from Tarentum’s Riverview Park, were ready and fought back the American advance.

The Americans lost the bloody battle, suffering heavy casualties. Many, including Ruediger, were taken prisoner by the Germans and sent to a prison near Poland.

Ruediger was released at the end of the war in 1945, but died several years later from illnesses that originated while he was in prison camp.

(Note: Pvt. Ruediger is listed in G-141 in the 36th Pictorial History and was MIA.-Editor)

Those Were The Days, My Friend

Those were the days when young kids felt adventurous, willing to take chances, and all were talking about just what service they would enlist in. Jobs were scarce, farming was not profitable, the poor economy was not yet healthy, reflecting low sales in the grocery stores and the future appeared dreary, despite the "Fireside Chats" from the White House.

But when you're young, what does it matter? Adventure is ahead. A war is going on overseas and we may be a part of it. The family can manage; I can send some bucks home. And I would like to see myself in that uniform, a defender of my country against Adolph and Benito. Gimme a rifle. I'm ready. I'm a damned good squirrel and rabbit hunter, don't need training. Hell I'm 17, strong and ready to fight.

Sweetheart? Oh, she'll wait! She's as proud as I am. She'll be here when I come back, won'tcha, dear? John (sig)

IT'S 11-25-1941 AND HERE WE ARE



Starting top right and clockwise: (That's to the right of a dial for those who have digitals.)

1. Ray McCall, who became quite a hero in Italy as a Co. Medic, pulling wounded T-Patchers out of German mine fields.

2. PFC Charles Prater, trying to find something worthwhile to do. Wound up as 36th Div. Assn. Dir., and as VP of DivArty. Still is. Great guy.

3. Unnasch, (who provided next two photos) on the left, and Gay Wells, spiffed up and headed for the canteen.

4. Then, there's Prater again, with Top Kick stripes! . . . harmonizing with Cpl. Otis Ridgeway in Italy just as if the war was over. It wasn't, just the battle, but if you could have fun, you simply took advantage of the opportunity, in tune or not.



Cassino General Says German Guns in Monastery Forced Our Retaliation After Five Days.

By **SIDNEY SHALLETT**
Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.



Brig. Gen. William H. Wilbur
Associated Press, 1943

WASHINGTON, March 23 — Warning that the road to Rome will be blocked by “many Cassinos,” Brig. Gen. William H. Wilbur, deputy commander of the Thirty-Sixth Infantry Division, the first high officer to report back from the Cassino front, explained today that Allied troops cannot risk by-passing the stubbornly defended Italian mountain stronghold because it would be virtually impossible for supply lines to move around it.

General Wilbur, who won numerous medals for gallantry in both the North African and Italian fighting, now back in this country for convalescence, shed further light on why Allied troops have been stalemated at Cassino since early February, and why it is so important that we capture the stronghold.

Cassino, he pointed out, is not just a single spot. It takes in numerous vital points along a five or six mile front. The centers of resistance are studded with old, thickly walled buildings, with deep cellars that resist bombardment and with innumerable caves. Then, behind Cassino itself, are other high spots, including Mount Cairo, about one mile in height, where the Germans are entrenched and hold positions of tremendous strategic advantage.

Cassino itself sits astride both a railroad and the Via Casilina (Highway 6), and any attempts to get supplies through the mountainous areas around it would be appallingly difficult, which is a main reason why Allied troops simply cannot swirl past the key to the Liri Valley, leading to Rome, and isolate the Germans, the general said.

Another reason, he said, is that we deem it vital to hold the high spots in order to be able to concentrate our “superior artillery” on the Germans.

Some French divisions have gone around Cassino, doing a particularly good job in by-passing the stronghold, but, without unbroken supply lines and artillery support the situation is not satisfactory, General Wilbur said.

There are other locations between Cassino and Rome that may be equally difficult to reduce, General Wilbur declared, warning of the hard fight that lies ahead.

General Wilbur revealed that our troops camped before the Cassino Abbey for five days, holding back their own fire although the Germans occupying the Abbey were firing at them. The Italians had given us reason to believe the Germans had pledged themselves not to make a military objective out of the shrine “and we had hoped the Germans would live up to our understanding of what was supposed to have been their agreement.”

Infantryman Highly Praised

“When it became dangerously plain that the Germans had no intention of not continuing to use the abbey as a fortress, we finally had to shell the abbey,” he continued.

General Wilbur, who won the Medal of Honor for delivering under fire the letters to the French High Command at Casablanca that led to the armistice, voiced high

praise of the role the infantryman is filling in Italy. He said the doughboy slogs through mud, rain and sleet by night in the Italian mountains, risking German fire and pernicious mines that frequently blow off his feet, but when you ask him how things are going he replies: "Fine, sir."

"The doughboys are the real heroes of the war," he declared. "They are doing things which, without their spirit, would be impossible. They just won't quit."

General Wilbur also noted a change in the attitude of German prisoners. German officers and men still think they are going to win in the war, but they now say they will win it by staying on the defensive and never surrendering, whereas one year ago they talked of winning by taking the offensive, he related.

Infantry Man a Machine

"The private of infantry is himself both the machine and the directing brain. No matter what the danger, he must have the will to maneuver quickly, and his body his machine, must be highly trained so that it will respond. His brain and nerves are the complicated controls of the machine, his brave heart is the engine.

"Here the comparison stops for when the loyal engine is smashed by a shell fragment there is no parachute in reserve.

"Although he richly deserves a thick coat of steel armor, he has none. To replace it he uses courage, cool courage that covers him. That carries him through the hours and days of gruelling, never-ending smothering hell that is battle for the infantry soldier.

"Whether the going has been toughest the spirit of our doughboys has been equal to it. I have asked many hundreds of men the question, "How are you making it?"

"Weary, hungry, thoroughly soaked, they set their jaws and reply 'Fine, sir.' I know they are anything but fine, and they know that I know it, but their spirit is such that they will not admit it.

Germans Tough

"The German soldier is not licked yet. Captured Germans say, 'Germany will win, because she will never give up.' When they say it their faces set in firm resolve that leaves no doubt but that they believe it.

"The American combat infantry soldier is usually very modest. If he has seen action, he has seen his comrades killed, he has seen many brave men wounded. He appreciates the fine support the artillery gives him; he thinks the company-aid men are grand. He goes about his job without thinking of credit for himself particularly, except that he treasures the good opinion of his comrades. He goes on hour after hour, day after day, week after week, many times until he is killed or wounded.

"We must give him his due. He himself will not parade his bravery. I think that the American people should know that in theaters like the Italian theater, where the infantry, air corps, artillery, engineers, and all other soldiers are fighting, the infantry losses far exceed those of any other branch, figured any way you wish, either in totals or percentages of any kind. Infantry leaders, those grand men who wear bars on their shoulders or chevrons on their arms, they pay the heaviest toll. And for each private of artillery, air force or engineer that is killed, 30, 50, at times 100 privates of infantry make the supreme sacrifice.

"When a landing is made, the infantry leads the way; when a river is to be crossed the infantry goes over first; when a pillbox or a town will not surrender to the blasting of artillery and the bombing of planes, the infantry is assigned to the task of taking it. We call on the infantry soldier to do miracles and he does them. Truly good infantry must have qualities that only God can give, for the doughboy is the soul of our fighting forces."

Once Half-Texan 36th Division All-American at End of WWII

WITH THE AEF IN ITALY – (Delayed) – (AP) – Since our Army headquarters has announced that detailed reports on the activities of the 36th Division up to date may be released this is as good a time as any to recount how the one-time Texas outfit has set a bunch of brand new records for war's history books.

It was May 25 when the old T-and-Tommyhawk crew from Salerno was re-committed to the combat line at Anzio with order to break through the last big bastion before Rome.

Exactly one month later the men of the 36th had:

(1) Smashed the Velletri line permitting history's first successful assault on Rome from the south;

(2) Continued the attack, hounding the Germans 240 miles as the road widens from the Anzio jump-off point;

(3) Captured more than 5,000 prisoners, not to mention having killed additional thousands.

In a proudly worded message of congratulations Maj. Gen. Fred L. Walker, the division commander, told his men that "history will record forever your outstanding success" that the division routed the enemy "from his strong, well-organized positions and drove him across the Tiber in disorder.

He told the men that General Marshall had sent him a personal message of congratulation and that their historic drive would substantially shorten the duration of the war.

It seemed right and just to those who have followed the 36th throughout nine months of bitter battle that the outfit which established the first American beachhead on the European continent – the first beachhead secured anywhere by Americans against German opposition – would be the men to chalk up these achievements.

But not all the men were present when the last chapter was written. Nearly 2,000 of those who came ashore at Salerno fell during the first 10 days of September fighting on foreign soil. During two bitter weeks of December, more than 2,000 fell in the assault on San Pietro, and three bloody days at the Rapido in January cost about 1,500 men.

Some of these were wounded and returned to battle later but in addition to these casualties there were the many who fell at Camino, and Summucro, Mount Lungo, Mount Rotundo, and at a score of other battle grounds now marked by cemeteries.

Such casualties caused a complete turnover in the division personnel and although many of the veterans subsequently returned to the ranks, the outfit which was about half Texans at Salerno was all-American when it struck at Velletri. With well trained replacements it was back at full strength again but only 10 or 20 percent were from the Lone Star State where it originated.

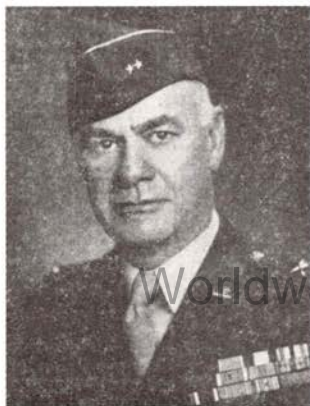
The number of men lost in this last triumphant campaign has not yet been announced but there's one thing the tired but proud T-and-Tommyhawk boys will tell you grimly:

"This time, the Germans lost a hell of a lot more."



MUSEUM COLORFUL AND GROWING – This photo was taken from the doorway into the enclosed Texas Military Forces Museum. Other vehicular and track displays are seen before entering this large room. Displayed before getting to this spot are tanks, trucks, artillery pieces and a plane or two. When in Austin, Texas, take MOPAC (a six-lane speedway) to 45th. The museum is something in which all can be proud. (Photo by Rose).

Gen. Fred Walker Praises 36th on "The Army Hour"



Maj. Gen. Fred L. Walker

MG Fred L. Walker, new Commandant of The Infantry School addressed a nationwide audience on THE ARMY HOUR reporting on his service as commanding general of the 36th Infantry Division during the Italian campaign.

General Walker outlined the varied terrain and weather conditions which the men of the 36th faced and paid tribute to the various arms and services that made up the division. He also said that he had observed a material lowering of the morale and fighting qualifications of the German soldier since last Winter, noting that recent captives have been willing to talk freely and admit they have lost the war.

General Walker paid high tribute to the Infantry soldiers of his Division and said that, "The roads into Berlin and Tokyo will be carved by the bayonet of the Doughboy."

Following is the text of his address on THE ARMY HOUR:

"I am proud to have served with the men of the 36th Division – a division of many heroes. I served with the men of the 36th from the landing at Salerno on September 9th 1943 to June 25th of this year (1944). The division had reached a point approximately twenty miles south of Livorno.

NAZIS LIE IN WAIT

"During this period, the Division was engaged in many varied types of operations. Its landing at Salerno was opposed by German forces which were awaiting on the beaches for the American troops to land.

"Later, the Division was assigned to a mountain sector which required it to operate on mountains as high as 4,000 feet, where there were no roads or trails. Following the mountain operations, the Division was assigned the mission of crossing a river (Rapido) which formed the principal obstacle of German organized position. Later it made an attack to envelope Cassino and withstood one of the most severe German counter-attacks that was made in that sector. Finally the Division was sent to the Anzio beachhead where it conducted an infiltration and envelopment maneuver which broke their defenses east of Rome. It then pursued the retreating German forces through the city of Rome and beyond. The pursuit covered 240 road miles during which some 5,000 German prisoners were captured.

LAUDS ARTILLERY

"I would like to tell you all the men of the 36th Division – of our battalions of tanks and tank destroyers, our battalions of anti-aircraft artillery and chemical

troops. Too much praise cannot be heaped on the signal and cavalry and engineer troops. And I do not recall a single case in which any German counter-attack was made in the sector of the 36th without being blasted by artillery fire. The Infantry of the Division is very proud of its artillery support and always speaks enthusiastically about it.

"And that brings us to the doughboy – the Infantryman. A lot has been said these last months about these courageous fights and not one word of it is exaggeration. I have seen Doughboys fight and I have seen them slogging along mile after mile, winning yard by yard, foot by foot . . . and I know there is no greater soldier.

"You know the deeds of some of the 36th more publicized heroes such as Sergeants Charles (Commando) Kelly and James Logan and Private William J. Crawford who won the Congressional Medal of Honor, and Sergeant Manuel Gonzales who now wears the Distinguished Service Cross. But the Division has thousands of other heroes – real infantrymen – who have proved that they're the kind of men you're proud to soldier with.

INFANTRY BEARS BRUNT

"The bitterest fighting and the highest casualties go to the infantry. There are many who believe that bombing from the air can destroy defensive positions – especially towns and pillboxes. That is true to some extent, but Cassino remained in the hands of the Germans even after it had been completely destroyed by our howitzers and our bombers.

"Infantry is the backbone of an attacking army and the roads into Berlin and Tokyo will be carved by the bayonet of the Doughboy.

"I have observed our American soldiers in battle on the Italian front over a period of some ten months, and I am convinced our soldiers are better than those of the Germans. They are more cheerful, more confident, better marksmen. After having seen our soldiers going through the hardships of last winter, during which they were subject to almost continual rains, mud, cold rations and continual artillery and mortar fire, and maintaining throughout a cheerfulness far superior to that of the enemy, I feel that they are capable of being the best soldiers in the world.

NAZI SPIRITS LOW

"At the same time, I have noticed a material lowering of the morale and fighting qualifications of the German soldier since last December. Prisoners taken recently have been willing to talk freely. They admit that they have lost the war. In most instances, they are delighted to be captured and to be out of the war. This condition is general throughout Italy.

"But let there be no mistake . . . the enemy is still fighting fiercely on all fronts. American men are still dying as they have been dying every hour of every day and every night since Pearl Harbor.

"To those who believe the war is almost won, I say this: "Ask the Doughboy in the foxhole if he thinks the war is over.

He'll tell you the end is not yet in sight . . . And remember this, he's the man who ought to know . . . for he's the man nearest the enemy.

THANKS TO THE SUBSCRIBERS AND WRITERS OF "THE FIGHTING 36TH" QUARTERLY

By GORDON ROSE, EDITOR

IN BEHALF OF THE 36TH DIVISION ASSOCIATION, I SAY
"THANK YOU!"

Stimulated by journalist Bill Jary, the Quarterly was born to record the gut-wrenching stories of T-Patchers in combat, as well as those of camp and maneuvers of the 36th Infantry Division . . . the history told about the barracks, foxholes, and artillery emplacements and impossible entanglements of which was made World War II. Texas born, yes. But during mobilization in 1940, the "Texas Division" became "America's Team." Just as the Dallas Cowboys have been so named.

In 1979, the 36th Division Association created a standing committee called, the "Historical and Records Committee," to collect and record artifacts and literature to preserve the legacy of the 36th.

As a follow-up to that laudable purpose, the Quarterly was formed and opened the door to the private and general to spill their personal action, frustrations, and commendations in "Fighting 36th Division Historical Quarterly."

Since the small membership dues could not afford the printing, subscribers were sought to fill the bill. Well, we had loyal and historically minded T-Patchers to pitch in and to support the Q. Printing costs forced the 36th Assn. to subsidize it.

Those guys were you, and those before you, who felt the importance of preserving the legacy of the 36th Division over and above attendance at Reunions and other parties.

You have done remarkable jobs in telling stories which will last for many lifetimes and thereafter. No other publication has recorded what you have written. It is permanent history. Without what you have written and supported, there would be little but public recounts of our existence, (and many times they were wrong and lacking in detail).

You have given us personal accounts of battles - Salerno, Rapido, Velletri, Rome, Anzio, Montelimar, Alsace, the Vosges, the horror of concentration camps, the worshipful feelings of freed Italians, French and Germans, and the pitiful gore of our buddies who sacrificed their own lives for the freedom of others in foreign lands. Only you, and no other, recorded and supported these stories of events and emotions of a major war.

Throughout it all, you exemplified the pride you had of the 36th Infantry Division, liberator of the forlorn and enslaved peoples under despotism. They, after recovery from stress of oppression, have erected permanent markers in appreciation of our efforts.

After your 13 years of support, this 3rd Editor of the "Fighting 36th Division Historical Quarterly," extends thanks to you and all of the writers whose stories were submitted a heartfelt

COMMENDATION FOR MERIT AND LOYALTY

for

MANY STORIES AND FULL SUPPORT SUPERBLY DONE

for

"THE FIGHTING 36TH DIVISION HISTORICAL QUARTERLY"

to

Preserve the Legacy

of

The 36th Infantry Division

From the Riviera to the Rhine

(Continued from Page 31)

two consecutive days of combat in France, they battered their way through the passes, in an assault on the hitherto considered impregnable Vosges massif. In thirteen days, they forced the narrowest and steepest pass in the Vosges Mountains against almost fanatical opposition. Holding a line extending an almost unheard of eighty kilometers, they captured almost eighteen hundred prisoners in attacks often made without any supporting armor whatsoever, so tangled was the terrain.

The attack began near Saint-Leonard, on the Meurthe River. The 143rd attacked across the river on November 21, encountering heavy resistance from roops concealed in elaborate trench systems, the approaches to which were mined and heavily snarled with barbed wire obstacles. Traps and ditches prevented armored reconnaissance, and previously conducted feints had forced the enemy into drawing on his limited reserves and placing them in this section of the line. Nevertheless, in three days of grueling combat, the infantry battered its way into the network of defenses, until the enemy withdrew under severe pressure.

Motorized and armored, the 142nd jumped forward to exploit the breakthrough, driving back a desperate, last-ditch stand by the Germans near Haut-Mandray. Pushing its advantage, the First Battalion moved towards La Croix, contested by groups of Germans blocking the precipitous, tortuous road that traversed the vicious terrain.

“While Love Co. attacked the outer defenses, the remainder of the Third Battalion marched across the crag-climbing mountain trails to take the town.”

The seizing of Sainte-Marie itself was a highly-involved, dangerous undertaking. The only road to the town passed through an extremely narrow defile, flanked by wild growth on harsh ridges. It was a country which lent itself to easy defense by very few troops; and the fully garrisoned, strengthened positions were so situated that they could only be attacked by a minimum number of men. While Love Company attacked the outer defenses, the remainder of the Third Battalion marched across the crag-climbing mountain trails to take the town. So complete was the surprise, that the town fell, although its defenders were not overcome until several hours of street fighting.

Barely a few hours after Sainte-Marie had fallen, the First Battalion made a circuitous maneuver through terrain so difficult that it was wholly impossible for any armor or even the lightest vehicles to support the attack. The Germans had rushed reinforcements forward from Selestat, however, and before the First Battalion could complete its mission and seize Sainte-Croix, the Second Battalion had to advance along the main road in a frontal assault. Sainte-Croix fell; Hoch-Koenigsburg fell to the Third Battalion, and the road was open to Selestat, which was taken shortly after.

As the lines extended, the 141st Regimental Combat Team was emplaced

THE TOWN OF ANOULÉ
IN GRATITUDE
TO THE SOLDIERS OF THE
36TH U.S. INFANTRY DIVISION
WHO DIED FOR THE LIBERATION
OF THE COMMUNITY IN NOVEMBER 1944

(HOMMAGE DE LA COMMUNE D'ANOULÉ
A CEUX DE LA 36ÈME DIVISION U.S.
QUI SONT MORTS AU COMBAT SUR SON TERRITOIRE,
EN NOVEMBRE 1944, POUR QU'ELLE RECOURRE LA LIBERTÉ.)

*" Ces soldats sans doute ne retourneront pas; mais ils se taisent
par pudeur. Cet assaut est dans l'ordre. On puise dans une
provision d'hommes. On puise dans un grenier à grains.
On puise une poignée de grains pour les semences."*

TERRE DES HOMMES.

A. DE SAINT EXUPÉRY

WorldwarTwoVeterans.org

Riviera to Rhine

along the right flank of the Division, while the 143rd pushed on into Ribeauville and the small towns gathered in a semi-circle between it and Colmar.

No army had ever accomplished so much before. Somewhat less than an army, the 36th Division did it. Reorganized regiment by regiment, as the incessant struggles tore its ranks, tired after so long a period of arduous campaigning, it still had spark enough to drive across the last remaining barriers and begin its debouchment into the Rhine Valley. That the men managed to stand the grueling beatings which marked every slight encounter with the enemy was remarkable. Their resources were low, but their commanders could proudly boast that when something had to be done, their men had the guts to go out and do it. The climax came at Selestat and Riquewihr.

On the morning of December 13, the Germans switched from the defensive and smashed with all their strength at the flanks of the 36th Division line.

The first assault came in the early morning at the very left of the Texans' line, in the city of Selestat. Given close support by tanks and tank destroyers and the 105 mm howitzers known as "Pete Green's Mortars" after the 132nd's CO, the 142 Regimental Combat Team held. The Germans struck with elements of two divisions, better than a thousand infantrymen, but they were driven off with massed firepower after over twelve hours of bitter fighting. The Germans lost three hundred and thirty-three prisoners, and reconnaissance units later on the battlefield found twenty-six bazookas, thirty rifles, and ten machine guns that the evacuating Germans had discarded.

It was of this attack which Heinrich Himmler later reminded the defenders of Sigolsheim in an official order. "What the Americans did in Selestat, you can do in Sigolsheim," he wrote.

But the main assault broke during the middle of the morning around Riquewihr, where the CP of the 141st Regimental Combat Team was located. The main German thrust was aimed directly at that town. Five hundred Germans infiltrated two kilometers up a draw from the west, overrunning a chemical mortar platoon which had set up in the draw. Retreating into the town, the mortar-men called for fire from their other platoon, located on the other side of town. Then they launched an attack of their own, supported by some volunteering wiremen from regimental headquarters, and pushed the Germans back to retake every mortar they had lost.

The infiltrating Germans had been spotted by Cpl. Harry Karpan, Ventura, Cal., from his observation post in a tower in the middle of town. As he called fire down on them, the enemy spotted him and raked his position with small arms and machine gun fire. He called for heavy artillery and brought down a concentration on the draw, forcing the Germans to disperse along the ridges on either side.

Had they but known it, the Germans could have silenced him with a pair of pliers. A wire team from the 131st Field Artillery Battalion, led by Sgt. Bob Stamford, Tex., had sent up communications a bare quarter-hour before the attack had begun, and their wire lay, exposed, through the draw in which the T-

Riviera to Rhine

Patchers were scrapping it out with the Germans. The wire was never cut, and Cpl. Karpan and Sgt. Kearney Haas, Comfort, Tex., called down a bingo mission from three battalions of artillery that secured the area. It also cut the wire, the but enemy had evacuated.

“While the (1-141), machine guns to the fore, ripped into the scattered enemy in fierce fire-fighting – at some places hand-to-hand combat developed in the storm, at others, there were point-blank shooting frays, these squads tried to hold the town.”

Small groups of Kraut officer-candidates had managed to sneak into Riquewihr, however. While the First Battalion of the 141st, machine guns to the fore, ripped into the scattered enemy in fierce fire-fighting – at some places hand-to-hand combat developed in the storm, at others there were point-blank shooting frays, these squads tried to establish a foothold in the town. Combat Correspondent Pfc. Clarence Lasky, Portland, Conn., left his typewriter for a carbine, rounded a corner, and took three prisoners. Regimental cook Pvt. Ralph Inglese, Brooklyn, N.Y., left his kitchen to help in the defense of the command post, wounded two more and took them prisoner.

But the Germans had not put all their eggs in one basket. As this attack grew in fury, a second prong, two hundred strong, swung in from the south, struck at and severed the supply line of the Second Battalion.

The Third Battalion had to turn and face an attack that had already gained momentum. I. Company led a drive to free the route to the rear while the other companies tenaciously battled to slow up and halt the enemy. The story was the same. The enemy were tough youngsters, seventeen to nineteen years old with no battle experience. They had close mortar and artillery support, but they did not use it. They tried to intercept the Third Battalion by surprise.

Both battles around Riquewihr continued ferociously all day. But while the assault at Selestat died out, the effort to smash the right flank continued to develop. A party of forty engineer officer candidates infiltrated to cut the road between the 36th Division Command Post and its rear. Enemy from this party involved members of the 133rd Field Artillery Battalion in a fire fight. The enemy had been sent in with a double mission: to block the road and to knock out the artillery. Under cover of terrific automatic weapons fire, demolition experts set their charges, blew up one howitzer and some ammunition. In a nearby building, Sgt. Theodore King, Linden, Tex., massed the small arms fire from his section in an attempt to cut down the enemy before more damage could be done. A jeep was blown up by a bazooka. The house in which Sgt. King's men had tried to establish a strong point was set on fire in two places. Anti-aircraft gunner Cpl. Albert Wagner, Chicago, Ill, eased over to his multiple fifty calibre-mount, fired eleven hundred rounds from the four machine guns into the surrounding area. The leaden spray silenced the German small arms.

Riviera to Rhine

The Germans went on to the second part of their mission. Having halted traffic along the main road to the rear, they signaled for two companies of infantry which, according to plan, were to infiltrate the same gap in the lines used by the engineers and come to support the road block. The Second Battalion of the 143rd Infantry Regiment, thrown into the gap, blocked this attempt to disrupt completely the rear area. A severe fire fight erupted.

“German units had taken hills 351 and 393 between Riquewihr and Colmar, continued on to erect strong points in the small town of Minnwihr. But that afternoon saw the tired doughfeet fight the Germans to a complete standstill.”

Along the front, the Germans continued to attack. Heavy artillery was brought into play, Ribeauville and the Division Headquarters were shelled. Road blocks were established to block an enemy attack from further along the front, but the Germans had enough. The larger group, which had attempted to come in from the west, was thrown back with over one hundred of its men left dead on the battle ground. The entire day of the fourteenth was spent with all available troops centered before Riquewihr, and the attack slowed considerably. Six infantry battalions were thrown at the enemy, supported by every piece of artillery. German units had taken hills 351 and 393 between Riquewihr and Colmar, continued on to erect strong points in the small town of Minnwihr. But that afternoon saw the tired doughfeet fight the Germans to a complete standstill.

That day also saw the cessation of German activity in the rear area. One Company from the 111th Engineer Combat Battalion, thrown into the lines to act as infantry, prevented their rejoining their lines as a group, and the enemy had to split forces. Traffic was reopened along the road, which was patrolled by engineers and controlled by members of the 36th Division Military Police stationed on road blocks at the crossroads.

The next day, seven battalions of infantry from three regiments started an offensive of their own. The veterans of the 36th Division very slowly began to move the Germans out of their positions. Relentlessly, but aching in every tired limb, the doughboys carried forward in a brave attempt to erase the German gains. They restored most of Minnwihr, they climbed the slopes of 351 and 393, they plugged every gap in the line. The Germans, in turn, threw heavy artillery and mortar concentrations against them. Artillery fire crunched the streets of every town within range, and mortars unceasingly harassed the infantry. Deep mine fields blocked the path. Rockets were thrown into the scrap. For three days the Germans had their day – from the thirteenth to the sixteenth of December they threw everything in the book at the infantrymen. They didn't miss their chance, but it was fought out from under them by the gutsy fighting men of the 36th Division.

The Third Infantry Division began the relief of the 36th in this Colmar sector on December 19, and the 141st Regimental Combat Team trucked up to Strasbourg to take over part of the quiet Rhine River line there. It was soon followed by the rest of the Division.

Riviera to Rhine

The capital of Alsace, Strasbourg, over whose liberation the members of the French Senate had wept, was just across the Rhine from the Germans, yet Strasbourg was peaceful compared to the rest of Germany-bordering France. The people roamed the streets. There was beer, and wine a plenty. There were young girls, pretty and well-dressed, not the frightened, dumpy women of Selestat. Strasbourg was a thoroughly civilized city and not a bad place to be for Christmas.

The Division remained in Strasbourg for five days. It moved the day after Christmas, the day after Lt. Col. Herbert E. MacCombie, Lynn, Mass., and M/Sgt. Downing Smith, Galveston, Tex., had thrown a party for the city orphanage and all the GI's had chipped in from their Christmas packages.

The Division moved into a rest area near Sarrebourg, except for the artillery. The rest did not last long.

The Division had barely begun to train its reinforcements when the first infiltrated the XV Corps in the vicinity of Montbronn. It was necessary hasty summons came from from Seventh Army.

German action quickened at the bridgehead across the Rhine. Fresh troops poured forward in an offensive to retake the important cities of Strasbourg and Saverne. The 143rd was rushed into position to blunt the attack which threatened the entire VI Corps front, and it was immediately followed by the 142nd. Barely had the shift been accomplished when the units were committed against the driving Tenth Panzer Division, which had gained considerable ground the day before.

The defensive line was an arc from Rohrwiller to Weyersheim, and the enemy slammed squarely into the middle of it. It was partly wooded, but the woods gave way to wide spaces ideal for armored warfare. In the woods, the infantry fought tenaciously, but when the enemy tanks came into range in the clearings, the tank destroyers cut lose.

“Outnumbered five to one, the 636th Tank Destroyer's gunners drove off the enemy, cost him seven tanks, never gave him a chance to fire a single retaliatory round.”

Outnumbered five to one, the 636th Tank Destroyer's gunners drove off the enemy, cost him seven tanks, never gave him a chance to fire a single retaliatory round. The Battalion Commander, Lt. Col. Charles Wilber, Hollywood, Cal, explained the battle: “We had to be geared for extremely fast action,” he said. “It was a case of the guy who got in the first round being the victor. We got in the first round. Jerry never even got a chance to fire back.”

The warning net had alerted Charlie Company three hours before the German tanks ground into range. The Third Platoon, commanded by Lt. Lee S. Kiscadden, Lebanon, Pa., was emplaced along a heavy thicket with a clear field of fire in three directions. Two guns were there, about twenty yards behind the infantry. Six enemy tanks slid out of a tree line about two thousand yards to the east. The T-Patch TD men moved forward to the edge of the woods and sat there, waiting.

Riviera to Rhine

A driver, Cpl. Lem J. Luke, Tifton, Ga., marked the enemy's progress. "Yonder they go. Yonder they go." He repeated excitedly. "Yonder they go." The enemy tanks kept coming. They crossed a small bridge and stopped.

Col. Wilber was standing next to Lt. Kiscadden. "When are you going to shoot?" he asked impatiently. Lt. Kiscadden was standing next to the mount driven by Sgt. Rufus Brantley, Tennille, Ga., He called to Gunner Cpl. Wiley Johnson, Alpine, Ala. "Whenever you're ready."

The enemy tanks were sitting ducks, halted just across the small bridge twelve hundred yards away. It was Sgt. Brantley's first action as a tank commander. The day before he had been a private first class and a medico. He spotted "the biggest damn tank on this earth." Two rounds smashed into the target, two columns of orange flame and black smoke roared into the grey snowy sky. The monster was two Mark Fours sitting hull to hull. Both were destroyed. Sgt. William B. Rutledge, Houston, Tex., spotted two other tanks at the same time. Short a loader, he had to observe fire and handle his gun alone. Two Tiger tanks had forced their way past the infantry defense line and were two thousand yards across the plain, going away toward the rear. Sgt. Rutledge poured three rounds into one, shifted his fire to hit the second. The second tank withdrew; the first was crippled. Another round disabled it.

Lt. John Kehoe, New York City, had his Second Platoon on the edge of a town where his three guns covered the open space from the right flank. He was in an observation post directly behind his mounts when he saw two groups of enemy medium and heavy tanks come into sight in front of the tree line, at this point about four thousand yards away. The first group was larger, seven tanks. All told, there were twelve. It was a large order for the three guns of the platoon, but the men had been waiting to even an old score. In their last action, their platoon sergeant had been shot out with his fourth tank destroyer.

Sgt. Claude Stokes, McAllister, Okla., watched from the turret his "Oklahoma Wildcat," driven by twin brother Sgt. Clyde Stokes. The enemy were still over three thousand yards away when he opened fire. "We had to peel them off," he said later. "They were shooting up our infantry." He spotted a Panther tank just when the artillery dropped a smoke shell behind it. Silhouetted, it made an ideal target.

But the first kill went to S/Sgt. Leonard Collingworth, Dodd City, Tex., who had been sitting watch in the "Oklahoma Wildcat." It was another sitting duck, twenty-five hundred yards away.

It looked like easy shooting. It was phenomenal. Across the snow and against the grey sky, the tanks were barely visible. The range, while not excessive, was very long. As the colonel said: "But those boys, they handle that three-inch gun like it's an overgrown rifle. They're deadly accurate."

“It looked like easy shooting. It was phenomenal. Across the snow and against the gray sky, the tanks were barely visible. The range, while not excessive, was very long. As the colonel said: “But those boys, they handled that three-inch gun like it’s an overgrown rifle. They’re deadly accurate.””

Riviera to Rhine

When Sgt. Stokes took over the "Wildcat." Sgt. Collingsworth led two mounts down to an alternate position where they had a better field of fire. Frustrated, German tanks and infantry had shifted their attack and were trying to slip into the town from the flank. Sgt. Hester Bentley, Cullman, Ala., and his gunner, Cpl. Harry L. Beatty, Saxton, Pa., caught two tanks out of eight that had stopped to fire at the infantry. They drove the first back to the tree line, knocked out another with three rounds. The others left the position, taking their supporting foot troops with them. Sgt. Harvey Hale, Fairmont, W.V., spotted another tank that tried to lead a large number of infantry flanking the town. As it stopped to fire on American troops dug in along the road, Sgt. Hale pumped five fast rounds into it at the almost impossible range of thirty-five hundred yards. When the tank caught fire, he traversed to pile up the enemy infantry around the tank.

On the right flank, the three guns had accounted for four tanks and countless enemy infantry, plus one tank damaged. On the left flank, the two guns had knocked out three tanks, crippled another. S/Sgt. Warren G. Stedman, Warren, Ark., had gone to lead up supporting tanks, but by the time they got there, the area had been secured. The Germans never attacked again.

Up in the north, there was sensational fighting; back in the States there were screaming headlines. Patton drove in from the south and Montgomery smashed in from the north, and the German bulge was eradicated. The entire line from the Netherlands to Luxembourg was ablaze. The Seventh Army front was the quiet front. The newspapers howled with black, bold letters about the fighting and printed long communiques about the Third Army and the First Army and the Ninth Army, and then a few words about the fighting in Alsace.

For the papers Alsace wasn't big news, but for every last muck-eating, shell-ducking doughfoot, Alsace was tough sledding.

"What about Oberhoffen?" cried one. "What about Hagenau?"

"For five days and nights," wrote Stars and Stripes correspondent Ed Lawrence, "a small-scale battle has been raging with fantastic drunken violence in a row of 11 houses on the German bank of the Moder River in Hagenau.

The men in Able Company say no sober Krauts ever fought like this.

Monday after dark, S/Sgt. Roy (Chief) Chiatovich, copper-skinned Piute Indian from Bishop, Cal., with six riflemen and a heavy machine gun squad, crossed the plantbridge over the creek-sized Moder. They moved into house 5 while other doughboys took over houses 2 and 4.

The Germans had been caught napping.

While the other soldiers went downstairs to fry some spuds, Pfc. Ralph Couture, Berlin, N.H., on guard at the cellar door, saw Kraut silhouettes behind a chicken coop. They fled when he fired, but returned to take the first and second floors with bazookas and tommy guns. The six Yank riflemen set up their heavy machine gun in the cellarway and sprayed the back yard.

Two German bazooka shells tore the cellar door from its hinges and it fell on the machine gunner, stunning him.

Riviera to Rhine

The yard was mined, so the Americans kept fighting from the house, which was by now quaking and crumbling under artillery fire.

Pfc. O'Neal Jones, Scottsboro, Ala., watched a bazooka man crawl forward, fired, and heard him squeal. Pfc. Joseph Grant of Tuscarora, Pa., hit another one. That was all for a few minutes.

They went into the basement and resumed eating fried potatoes when a runner came with an order to scout the next three houses. "We lost our appetites," Chief says.

Jerry mortars were spilling all over the neighborhood when they went out. They found houses 6 and 7 vacant. Eight was spraying fun-fire. They moved into seven.

"Then things happened so fast we didn't have time to think," says Grant. "We just tried to stay alive!"

One doughboy, watching at a window, was thrown down and badly hurt when a shell plowed through the wall near him. The Germans attacked with machine pistols and bazookas, probing the building from attic to basement with their fire.

A bazooka lay beside a dead German and Couture, crouching in the doorway, saw another German pick it up and run behind the wall bisecting the garden. He waited while the German helmet rose from behind the wall. Then he tossed a grenade. The German helmet jerked down and potato mashers began coming from over the wall. Couture tossed another and he heard the German scream.

“The house was disintegrating under the combined blows of mortars, artillery and bazookas. Grenades were rolling down the cellar steps and flying over windowsills.”

The house was rapidly disintegrating under the combined blows of mortars, artillery and bazookas. Grenades were rolling down the cellar steps and flying over windowsills. Chief and his men moved back to number five and joined forces with Sergeant George C. Cassidy, Norwood, Ohio, and his squad.

A couple of heavy shells tore away part of the the upper story. A German soldier came bounding down the cellar steps, his gun spouting. BAR man Pfc. Arthur LaMountain, Barrington, Ill., shot him in the stomach. Another German followed the first shouting "Hello!"

The BAR man missed. Other soldiers seized the German but he kept shouting and they couldn't make him shut up. Cassidy backed him against the wall and slammed him on the head with a gun stock. The Kraut lowered his head and charged like a bull. Cassidy hit him again, but the Kraut kept going and ran upstairs with bullets nipping all around him.

They couldn't follow him to the attic, because the roof was torn away and other Germans had been shooting from the roof of number one. They could hear him shouting above. "Ya Ya, Das ess Goot."

An American TD opened up from across the river on number six, and the Germans set fire to the house.

Riviera to Rhine

Chief sent instructions across the river for S/Sgt. Willie Calhoun of Norfolk, Va., to listen for small arms fire around number 5 and deluge the house with mortars if he heard any. The attack came soon and Calhoun began pouring them in. "Was a nice feeling to hear those shells," said Chief.

Thirty-six hours had gone by since they had crossed the river. It was only the beginning. During the next eighty-four hours they got as far as number eleven, but today they were in the ruins of number 5..

They were scheduled to take number 8 this afternoon."

The 36th Division closed the Germans out of Alsace along the Rhine and Moder Rivers. It was a sluggish unrewarding grind, just a succession of tough battles, town after town, which the German troops had been ordered to hold. The Texans plugged through town after town, taking on SS troops and Volksturm alike who faithfully tried to carry out orders.

36th Signal Sgt. Among Division Contingent at Monument Rites On Green Beach, Drammont

(Also recalls "cease fire" order)

Ancient French costumes, brilliant vestments of the clergy, naval guns firing from the French fleet and a "fly-over" of French planes celebrated the dedication of a monument to the 36th, 45th and 3rd Divisions at Drammont in July, 1945, on Green Beach where the 36th landed.

S. Sgt F. J. Gehrlick, 36th Signal Co., was one of 240 T-Patchers representing the 36th Division in ceremonies dedicating a temporary monument shaped like the open doors of an LCI (Landing Craft Infantry) to which bronze plaques of the three divisions would be placed. Lt. arthur M. O'Connor Jr. division engineer, had already begun work on the structure. Estimated cost of the monument was 20 million francs, Gehrlick was among the American and French troops which passed in review after which dinner was served on the lawn.

The native of wapakoneta, OH, was on duty at 36th Division Headquarters two months before, when he received from the Commanding General of the 7th Army the order to "cease fire" which ended the war.

On May 5, 1945, "a memory I cherished most," said Gehrlick, "I received a radio transmission which read as follows:

DATE: 051850

FROM: CG SEVENTH ARMY

"DIRECT ALL UNITS TO HALT IN PLACE

DO NOT FIRE UNLESS FIRED UPON

GERMAN ARMY SURRENDERS EFFECTIVE 061200"

G3 36TH DIVISION

ACKNOWLEDGED: 051900

Riviera to Rhine

Even saying that such battles were victorious would be contested by the men who fought them. Nothing is an absolute victory unless it is one-sided, and the men who fought through those shell-battered houses and across those bullet-fanned streets, knowing what they went through to take every heap of rocks and broken glass, a good many of those men must believe that, fighting under the conditions they did, they took nearly as much as they gave out. But the battles were actually more one-sided than it would have appeared to the doughboys whose view was obscured by a logged roadblock, or by the corner around which a Tiger tank had just struck its nose.

The men of the 142nd Infantry Regiment slaughtered their way through Oberhoffen, taking four hundred and sixty prisoners in six days. The 257th Volksgrenadier Division took a worse beating than any 36th Division unit ever had, losing two battalion commanders and a third of its combat strength.

In Roihrwiller, the First Battalion of the 143rd Infantry Regiment captured one hundred and forty more prisoners, killed a battalion commander as he fanatically tried to shoot an escape route through an entire platoon.

The Division never faltered in its advance. It pushed up to the Moder River and grouped its forces in Pfaffenhoffen and Hagenau. The 103rd Infantry Division on its left flank, the French on the other flank, gathered themselves, and then the entire front cracked wide open.

It was the last big push in Franch.

The primary objective of the drive was to capture Wissembourg, last large French town still in enemy hands, uncovering the Siegfried Line, penetrating it to seize Bergzabern and Landau and reach the Rhine River at a point deep inside Germany. The coordinated attack along the entire Seventh Army front was aimed at establishing a consolidated front along the Rhine River, seizing a great portion of highly-industrialized western Germany, and rendering useless the last heavily-fortified positions in the Siegfried Line.

On the left, in the vicinity of Pfaffenhoffen, was the main task force, the 143rd Regimental Combat Team augmented by three companies of tanks and td's, an engineer bridge train, and other mobile troops.

The first day, the task force drove five kilometers to Gunstett. On the right flank, a task force from the 141st Infantry Regiment freed the Surbourg road and cleaned out a pocket in the Hagenau forest.

The second day, the 142nd Infantry Regiment moved through the 143rd and advanced ten kilometers, with the 141st racing along beside it.

On the third day after the jump-off, Wissembourg was in American hands, and Col. Charles H. Owens had personally led the 141st into Germany.

Ahead was the Siegfried Line.

The 142nd drove forward. There was strong enemy fire, artillery, mortar, tank, waiting for the Second Battalion as it stormed the high ground north of Schweigen.

The 141st pushed up one thousand yards, probing for cavities in the dragon's tooth tank defenses. It was met with furious nebelwerfer, small arms, and artillery fire.

Riviera to Rhine

The day it hit the Siegfried Line, the Second Battalion of the 142nd took out eleven pillboxes. The next day it took out twelve more. It was slow, deadly work. Special “knock-out” squads of infantrymen and engineers had to drag themselves up to each pillbox under cover of heavy supporting fire. One man would make his way to the rear and plant a “beehive” – a high explosive cone which directed all its force downward into the concrete and steel of the pillbox – to blow out the defenders. Then the squad or another one would go on to the next pillbox. Every pillbox covered the ones around it in a complicated system of interlocking fire. An entire sector had to be knocked out at a time, not merely one fortification or several.

As the Germans in their supposedly unbreachable defense line wavered, more pressure was applied. The 143rd stormed back into the line and made its way into Bergzabern, which fell after a furious, last-ditch defense was shattered. The 141st engaged the Line’s defense, then broke a battalion away to race into Bergzabern.

Resistance slackened, then suddenly virtually disappeared. On the 22nd of March, the artillery had fired 198 missions. On March 23, it fired ten. That day the 143rd secured the ferry sites as the 141st and 142nd cleared the last small towns and closed up to the bank of the Rhine River.



NETTUNO CEMETERY (near Anzio) – This photo was taken by editor last year on the 50th Anniversary of Salerno Tour. All American soldiers who died in Italy during the war were buried here. Upon relatives’ requests, the Army moved many bodies back to states for burial in hometown cemeteries.

MEMORIES

36th "Texas" Infantry Divison

By Bob Bunker, Company M, 143rd Inf.
New Brunswick, N.J.

It has been 50 years since these incidents took place. All are valid experiences that happened between September 1943 and November 1945. Over the years, these happenings "popped up" in my mind and then were forgotten again. With time, dates have a tendency to fade but the places mostly remain.

What really prompted me to prepare these stories was a WWII History Club from a local high school. The students will bury a WWII Capsule this November (1993) as part of a 50 year remembrance and the Club, in a newspaper article asked for certain items of the era. I sent them some V-Mail letters saved over the years. The Club also interviews veterans of WWII which are taped for the Club archives and made available for school reference. The capsule will be retrieved in the year 2043 and family members will be invited to the event. (I have no immediate plans to attend). I started to prepare some stories for the interview and decided to also contribute to the Historical Quarterly. Sometimes memories are best let be, but, history of an event, even a small role or part, should be recorded for new generations and for those veterans who are no longer with us.

When we left New York by boat for North Africa, part of the equipment issued was a white colored mattress cover. For some unexplained reason, we could not find out what in the world the covers were for. We knew sleeping on a mattress was a luxury we would not likely find in a war zone. When you arrived where you were going, the covers were turned into the supply room. Of course, later we found out they were mainly used for burying the dead. In North Africa, they were very popular with the local Arab's who used them for clothing. Anyone caught selling them to locals were court martialed or received similiar punishment.

As for the local Arab, we were warned that some would steal anything of value including clothes on your back after they slit your throat. Local villages were mostly "off limits" and if visits were made you went in groups and any equipment was kept under guard at all times. Our bivouac area was under guard 24 hours a day, every day. I cannot explain the animosity felt between the U.S. Military and the local Arab population. We were never permitted a chance to get to know any of them as we were kept isolated. I am sure there were many Arab's for our cause, but, where we were located it was a battle of survival..

While enroute to Casablanca on the infamous 40 and 8 box car, some guys tried selling shoes to the local populace when we had our frequent stops. The shoes would be tied together with one man at the door with one shoe showing as a "come on" and othe other guy behind the door with the other one. Waiting until the train started to move the local Arab would run along with the train trying to make a last minute deal for the shoes while waving his money. The trick never did work very well and was given up after several tries. The Arabs had a play also, they would bargain with the G.I. (mostly fruit, etc.) and it was not uncommon for them to run away without giving any change that was due. You gave only correct change when making any purchases.

With the box car doors open and the train moving, it was not uncommon to get a brick or stone thrown at you. Some guys did get hurt this way, although nothing real serious.

German Dead Draw Stares

Before the battle for San Pietro we had been on the line for about a week. I am fairly sure our position was on Mount Longo or was it Mount Rotondo, not sure. I remember the heavy rain and cold most of the time and our overcoats were water logged and very heavy. A lot of coats were seen on the mountain trail when we were moving to our positions. There was one incident which drew constant stares. It was a group of German dead who had been gathered and placed in a stack similar to a wood or log pile. There was a front line aid station nearby. These dead were probably gathered to be moved down the mountain for burial. Many of these men had been dead for some time as their skin had turned mostly black and of course rigor-mortis was well in place. I would venture these dead numbered between 20 and 30 men. There were no comments from our group as we passed by only the sound of our passing. You could sense the respect from our group for these dead, be they enemy or friendly.

British Hold On to Tea Water

Prior to the Southern France invasion in August 1944, we were waiting on a British Landing Craft Infantry ship in Naples harbour. We were being fed rations from heated cans of beans, hotdogs, etc. We asked the British crew if we could have some hot water for our canteen cups to make the powdered coffee drink. The kitchen crew refused to give us any and a riot almost came about. There was no valid reason to refuse our request and many guys were mad as hell. Some of them went into the small troop quarters to get their weapons. We were determined to have coffee or else. Most of us were combat veterans of the fighting in Italy and tempers flared. There is no telling what would have happened if our Company Officers had not intervened. We got the hot water.

Battalion Position Vulnerable

In Italy, December 1943, we were relieved from the line and placed in reserve. This was prior to the attack on San Pietro. The move was made at night and our positions were in a ravine which was facing North (toward Cassino). We were told to "dig in" but to keep our movements very curtailed because of the German observation capability. Later, after gaining more experience, we often discussed among ourselves the bad decision to place our Battalion in such a vulnerable position under the eyes of the enemy. Although it was dark, we dug in as best we could. When it became light we did have some cover from the olive trees and discovered we were in an orchard. Food was brought in and with it some mail with Christmas packages.

We dug a two man hole on each side of a terrace, which was better than a slit trench because we had overhead protection from tree bursts. We worked on and off most of the day and by evening, we had a pretty good hole for the two of us. No shelling took place in our ravine although we could hear enemy shells landing in the valley nearby and North of us.

On the terrace above our hole, two buddies had dug a slit trench. Their names were George Chaiko and Eugene Felter from a town in Penna, called Moosil. Both had been school friends and came in the Army together. Like most of us, they were not older than 19.

Late in the afternoon/early evening, we could hear enemy shells creeping closer up the ravine until we started taking heavy fire from the German artillery. We took an untold number in our area and the call of "Medic" was often heard. I don't know how long it lasted but we were both glad we had cover. Earlier in the day, Sgt. Barrington, Platoon Sgt., had come by several times checking on us and had told

Chaiko and Felter to get some top cover on their slit trench because of the olive trees we were under. Several shells landed very close with one landing in the tree above the slit trench of Chaiko and Felter. Gene Felter was killed instantly and George Chaiko lived only a very short time, calling for his Mother. I don't have to dwell on the feeling when your friends are with you one minute and gone the next.

Later in the dark, we moved out of the ravine and took up positions further to the rear.

The next morning several of us returned to the ravine with Sgt. Barrington and collected what mail and other personal items that had been left when the platoon moved out the evening before. Graves Registration people were also there and Chaiko and Felter had been removed and their bodies placed on stretchers prior to evacuation.

It has been about 50 years since they were killed but this incident will always be vividly remembered by me even though we had more deaths of guys I knew later in the war. I often thought of their families and loved ones who grieved their loss and the notification of their deaths probably arrived during the Holiday Season of 1943.

This incident of WWII will always be remembered.

We had a Platoon Sergeant in Company "M", whom, it was whispered was issued and not born into the world. His name was Quentin D. Barrington of Coolidge, Texas. He was an exceptional leader, fearless, who always placed the men under him first, and who watched over us like a mother hen.

One time, in Italy, we watched in amazement from our dug-in positions while Sgt. Barrington tried on a raincoat under shell fire. He stood up to check the length, etc. It was like a person in a clothing store trying on a garment for proper fitting. The fact that we were under fire did not seem to faze him at all.

Sgt. Barrington would always pick-up loose equipment that had been discarded by a G.I. and make some arrangement to get it to supply or have it stock piled where it could be picked up and saved. If any of the men lost equipment or neglected to maintain it properly, Sgt. Barrington would get them straightened out very quickly.

He was highly respected by all and did survive the war. I understand he declined a battlefield commission when it was first offered. He was an exceptional person.

We were very fortunate in Company "M" to have excellent leaders. The officers and sergeants in the company exhibited the right decisions during World War II. My recent story about the ravine incident near San Pietro which resulted in deaths was not the result of any decision by a Company "M" officers. The placement of our positions was the result of orders issued at battalion or regiment level.

During my period with "M" Company there was one C.O. who was held in highest esteem by all members of the machine gun and mortar platoons. His name was Captain Robert Hand of Yakima, Washington. I was deeply impressed when I first saw and met him after reporting as a replacement in 1943. He was a rough and tough individual, a natural leader who drew from the G.I.'s under him a deep respect. You got the impression right away he was not to be questioned when an order was issued and that it was to be carried out to the fullest. At the same time you got a gut feeling he could be trusted with your life and you were willing to follow him, in combat, anywhere.

I have to be fair and say that other officers in Company "M" were also highly respected. Captain A.J. Malchow, Captain D.J. Hanrahan, Lt. L.J. Kalcut, Lt. J. Henson and Lt. H. A. Simon. These individuals came from different states from Washington, New York and Texas. Lt. Simon was a former Platoon Sergeant who

received a battlefield commission. All played a major role in the success of "M" Company and I have not named them all.

We had a tragic incident on a British manned Landing Craft Infantry while awaiting the invasion of Southern France. This took place in the bay of Naples during a break in preparations. We were taking some time out and sitting around on the deck talking and enjoying the sun (sometimes rare in Italy). There was an "ack ack" gun near the bow and the barrel's were parallel to the surface. (Unusual in many respects). Some of our people were sitting near the gun and also to the front on the

An American First

(William Kervin, unit, had a "jump start" when he saw "442nd" in the headline of the Detroit Free Press, 5/25/93. It turned out to be a story of an American-born soldier of Japanese ancestry named Shuemon Mimura, whose family suffered the degradation, deprivation, humiliation and imprisonment at the hands of Americans. Yet, when his country's Army called in 1943 for defenders from Japanese Americans (JA), 10,000 responded for the 3,000 openings, Mimura, 20, and a brother were selected for the 442nd Regimental Combat Team. Mimura said some of those 7,000 rejected cried because they couldn't serve. Among those were, including his sister and her husband and two children, confined in internment camps, some holding 11,000 JAs, for the duration of the war.)

SHUEMON MIMURA, 442ND RCT, attached to 36th Texas Division. Bronze star-"V" for valor, Purple Heart, Good Conduct Medal, Presidential Unit Citation, three campaign stars, Army Medic pin.

From the *Detroit Free Press*:

The 422nd first saw action in Italy, suffering heavy casualties. The best-remembered battle the Nisei unit fought was the rescue of the 36th Infantry Division from Texas (The 'Lost Battalion,' 1st Bn., 141st Inf. Regt.-Ed), which had been surrounded by German Forces in France (the Vosges mountains). "Nisei" is the Japanese term for second generation.

Other elements of the 36th tried twice, unsuccessfully, to rescue them. The 442nd was asked to take on another attempt, and succeeded with huge losses.

"Some companies (442) were down to maybe 13 men from 167," Mimura said. His own company was down to 30 men.

The Nisei units suffered nearly 20,000 casualties during World War II. Counting awards for bravery and its Presidential Unit Citations, the fighters formed the war's most decorated unit of its size.

America reveled in victory in 1945. Bar patrons in New York City bought drinks for Mimura and other Nisei soldiers. Texas governor made them members of the 442nd honorary Texans.

Still wearing his uniform, Mimura, intent on resuming studies for a medical degree, applied to Chicago U. Medical School and was accepted. Upon completion, he became an ear, nose and throat specialist, moved to Detroit, and worked at Harper, Children and Warren Kieffer Hospitals.

Mimura said he did his share to defend this country and to prove his loyalty. But, he says, "It's hard for some Americans to see a face that's different and believe they're All-American at heart."

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
WASHINGTON 25, D.C. 10 DECEMBER 1947
GENERAL ORDERS
No. 24

UNITS ENTITLED TO FOREIGN DECORATIONS

I. GENERAL. - 1. The following list of units of the United States Army to which decorations have been awarded by cobelligerent foreign governments during World War II, together with the citations therefor, is confirmed, in accordance with paragraph 2, AR 260-15.

2. Individual wear of the French and Belgium Fourrageres and the Netherlands Orange Lanyard will be in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 18, AR 260-15.

II. LIST OF UNITS AND CITATIONS. - 3. Divisions

1ST ARMORED DIVISION

FRENCH CROIX DE GUERRE WITH PALM.

1ST INFANTRY DIVISION

FRENCH CROIX DE GUERRE WITH PALM.

36TH INFANTRY DIVISION

FRENCH CROIX DE GUERRE WITH PALM, awarded under Decision No. 277, 22 July 1946, by the President of the Provisional Government of the French Republic, with the following citation:

Hq & Hq Co, 36th Inf Div
36th Cav Rcn Troop (Meretz)
111th Engr combat Bn
111th Medical Bn
141st Inf Regiment
142 Inf Regiment
143rd Inf Regiment
Hq & Hq Btry, 36th Inf Div Arty
131st FA Bn (105-How)
132d FA Bn (105-How)
133d FA Bn (105-How)
155th FA Bn (105-How)
Hq. Sp Troop, 36th Inf Div
36th QM Co.
36th Sig Co.
736th Ord Light Maint Co
Band, 36th Inf Div
MP Platoon, 36th Inf Div

An elite unit which, from its landing in the south of France, did not cease to give proof of the highest combat valor and of the finest offensive spirit. It particularly distinguished itself from 24 November to 2 December 1944 in the Vosges, where it contributed in a decisive fashion to the victory in Alsace. Executing a daring maneuver, it seized by surprise attack, the pass and town of Sainte-Marie-aux-Mines, in spite of a very difficult terrain and the savage resistance of the enemy. Following up immediately, it occupied Ste.-Croix-aux-Mintes, Rombach-Le-Franc, and Hautk-Koenigsburg, broke into the place of Alsace and seized Selestat 2 December 1944, at the cost of hard fighting. This established a wide breach in the German defense system. Next, with untiring ardor and energy, and in spite of desperate counterattacks, the unit carried on daily combat, which completely broke up the defensive organization of the enemy. In the course of these actions, it took more than 3,000 prisoners and seized a large amount of matériel. Worthy of the finest tradition of the American Army, the unit opened an important penetration route towards Colmar and for the 2d Army Corps, prelude to the complete liberation of French soil.

WWII Veterans Gather for 50th Anniversary

By OTIS FRANCIS

Sweetwater Reporter - September 9, 1993

It was the most exciting thing that had happened to them in their lives.

It was a day when a "foxhole conversion" didn't last, when a nice "hiding place" was really a couple of well-camouflaged German tanks, when a Sweetwater man apparently became the first American foot soldier to die in action on the European continent during World War II, when a man threw away several days' rations and had to live on fresh figs for several days.

It was Sept. 9, 1943. It was the day which culminated 27 months of training – training designed to ready members of the 36th Infantry Division for an invasion of Italy on the beaches of Salerno in the southern part of a nation occupied by the German army – at Camp Bowie near Brownwood, and in Louisiana and Massachusetts.

Important elements of that famed 36th were the 141st, 142nd and 143rd Infantry regiments. Important to the 142nd was Company E, which was headquartered in Sweetwater when it was a National Guard unit.

Some of the other West Texas companies federalized on Nov. 25, 1940, were G, of Snyder; F, of Lamesa; B, of Coleman; and H of Amarillo.

Before the 142nd was through in Europe, its men earned eight Congressional Medals of Honor, 42 Croix de Guerres, 67 Distinguished Service Crosses, 583 Silver Stars and 1,415 Bronze Stars. "And nearly everyone got a Purple Heart," said F.E. Healer of Sweetwater.

Three wartime buddies gathered at Healer's house one day last week to talk about the Salerno invasion in particular and the war in general. It was a way to mark the 50th anniversary of an experience none had had before and has never had since.

Healer is 71. Pat McElyea of Sweetwater turns 74 today. C.W. Dulin, who joined Company E while he was living in Colorado City, is 72. Gerald Stevenson, also of Sweetwater, is 74.

Memories are sharp when men undertake such a momentous task as hitting the beaches in a foreign country with artillery fire crashing nearby and bullets whizzing overhead. McElyea remembers the exact time he hit the beach – 4:37 a.m.

McElyea thinks he may have been the first man to hit the water from the landing crafts. "I stepped in and completely sank. My pack was too heavy, so I stripped it off and rose again to the surface.

"All my food and everything was in there, and I had to live on ripe figs for days.

"We knew when we left Oran (in North Africa) that we were going *somewhere*, but not exactly where," he said. In fact, he said, the defending Germans may have known more about the mission than the Americans. "They were waiting for us," he said. "They knew we were coming."

Dulin recalled being in a foxhole with another man who apparently was still feeling the effects of a substantial intake of wine.

"Those shells were coming in, and he yelled out. 'Oh Lord, if you don't let one of those shells fall into this foxhole, I won't drink any more.' A shell didn't fall into the

hole, but he was drinking again the next day just like before.

Stevenson, who was the Company E first sergeant, thinks it was the grace of the Lord that he is still here today. "I wanted to get over this wall," he said, "so I made a run for it. I jumped, but couldn't get over (because of the equipment he was carrying) and fell back. About that time a German machine gun raked the top of the wall, right where I was. It would have cut me in half."

McElyea figures the good Lord was with him, too. He said he was well away from the beach when he drew fire. He dashed into what appeared to have been a protective grove of trees. "I ducked into cover and, surprise, I was right in the middle of German tankers." He left immediately, he said.

Stevenson remembers the ferocity of the enemy fire. "They had those machine-guns . . . Boy, I don't see how anyone survived."

Dulin considers himself lucky in that respect. He and a sergeant tried to take cover to escape the shooting on the beach, but the cover wasn't quite good enough for the sergeant. "This machine gun raked him up the leg, right next to me. I wasn't hit. The only thing was, the bullets kicked up a lot of sand and threw it all over me."

The first battle death among Company E troops – and perhaps among all American troops who landed on the European mainland – was Enock Whittington of Sweetwater. Stevenson said that Whittington was shot and was in an exposed area of the beach – so exposed that none of his buddies was able to go out and retrieve him.

"He lay out there all night, and he died the next day in the hospital."

It wasn't supposed to be that way.

"They told us the Italians had given up," said Dulin "that it would be a piece of cake."

McElyea said that plans called for the Americans to hit the beach in waves eight minutes apart, and for them to reach the mountains by noon.

But it wasn't a piece of cake and the Germans and Italians hadn't given up. It took until nightfall for them to reach the mountains.

In fact, Dulin probably wasn't supposed to have shipped out with Company E in the first place. He and a fellow Colorado City resident named Clarence Walker had come to Sweetwater to enlist in the National guard unit. "I figured I might as well get it over with," he said of the pre-war time of late 1940 when the United States was drafting an army.

"I bet it wasn't a month later that they nationalized the Guard." That was on Nov. 25, 1940.

The men of Company E and the 36th didn't hesitate to go when called, however. They were ordered to Camp Bowie but no transportation came. So they started out walking to Camp Bowie, said McElyea, and "we got as far as the Divide (across Nolan County) before they picked us up."

Healer estimates that about 20 of the 89 on the original Company E roster are still living.

He said that, of the estimated 60,000 men who hit the Salerno beach 50 years ago, around 29,000 of them – nearly half – eventually were casualties, meaning that they died, were wounded or were captured.

The 36th went on to help liberate Italy, Austria, France and Germany, but that first day was the one that the men in Healer's house will remember best.

A Letter from Salerno

Written by Pfc. Glenn C. Clift

Somewhere in Italy
22nd October 1943

Now that censorship has relaxed somewhat for us, a few lines suggestive of our activities during the past few weeks.

To our Division, as you probably know by now, has come the honor of being the first American troops "on the mainland of Hitler's German-held Festung Europa." Of the Division my own Battalion was the first to hit the beaches that early, historic morning and hence my Company of our Medical Battalion the first Medical soldiers to get in and set up for business here in Hitler's backyard.

It has been said of us that "by the grace of God we established and maintained the beach head over which will flow the Armies of the Four Freedoms." I don't know about that. It sounds mighty flowery – like the super-duper leads newspaper boys sweat out on tablecloths over Manhattans and coffee in good white cups. All I know is that those first few days we waited a lifetime for reinforcements to get in and help us hold that narrow, precious strip of beach. And for the British to come up and cinch the deal. There will never be another waiting like that. I hope.

Our boys came in with the third and fourth waves that morning. You have read by now (*Time* has the story pretty straight) how the Germans let the first two waves in without resistance, then opened fire on the third and fourth waves, the only ones that came in that first hour or so.

They threw the book at those early waves, literally and figuratively. You have seen the ads in the magazines. Soldiers crouched low in assault boats, planes roaring overhead, shells and machine gun fire raining against the sides and off the ramps of the landing craft. It was much like that for our gang. Only the advertisements can't quite convey the indescribable sounds and the smells and the hellacious suspense of a ship-to-shore operation. If *that* could be written into an advertisement people would "blow their tops" buying bonds. Or they'd win wars and end them anyway they could.

That landing should occupy a sizeable paragraph in our military annals. We landed with what we carried on our backs against Hitler's choice Panzer divisions dug into the high hills overlooking us; landed and met his best tanks and screaming 88's with rifles and bazooka guns. And we came to stay.

There were times those first forty-odd hours when we looked a hundred yards ahead into Jerry's tanks and gun emplacements, and behind us to the beach. And there wre no boats there. Not then. But let no man doubt it, all hell couldn't have stopped the Texans that morning. Couldn't have and didn't. It sounds fishy and on the tall tale side but one Company of our boys hit the beach, tore off their

helmets, rolled up their sleeves and charged into Jerry tanks with their rifles and knives and hand grenades.

Army men are calling that landing the good soldier's perfect dream of a good scrap. We had other names for it. Quaint names made up of four-letter words. You wouldn't know those names though.

No need to deny it: there for a while, before reinforcements could land, before we had captured airfields and while the British were rushing up to join us, it was anybody's fight. But before the second day was ended another good batch of Rebels (interspersed of course with a percentage of Yanks) came in and the first act of the show was practically ended.

Of our own "Pill-rollers" someone else will have to write. Anything I might say here would smack too much of bragging. This I will say: any member of A Company, officers and enlisted men, from this day on can walk proudly and at ease in those ranks reserved for the courageous, the unselfish – and the lucky. And that I deem it an honor being a tried, if not a worthy, member of the team.

I guess after that young outburst I'll have to tell you of one of us, one who will not soon forget that first Italian sunrise we watched.

He's a Yankee this fellow. He spent most of his twenty-two years battling a near-fatal siege of infantile paralysis – and won his fight just in time to get in the Army and to join us the week we left the States.

I can't give you his name. You wouldn't know him anyway. We call him "Foxhole" because one day over in Africa he gave us a "Venoed" exhibition on how to enter a foxhole head on, from a running start fifteen paces off.

He is here with me now so I'll let him tell his story in his own words:

You see it was like this. I came in with the third wave, just like the other boys. It was around four-thirty, not quite daylight. How it was, I was dug in on the beach and there was a lieutenant there beside me in the slit trench.

The lieutenant noticed one of the assault boats had been hit by an enemy artillery shell. Soldiers were jumping out into the water over the sides and out over the ramp. It was down. Some of the boys were on fire. The boat was facing me and I saw an arm waving for help from the floor of the boat.

The first thing that came into my mind was that if that was me out there I would want someone to come after me.

I threw off my equipment and the soldiers on the beach started hollering at me not to go. I went around trying to get a couple of volunteers to go with me but machine gun fire was pretty hot right then and all the fellows ducked down in their slit trenches to get away from me.

I kept teasing them and one of the boys says "I'll go with you." Then another guy right beside him said he would go too.

They were Medical men, too, so I told them to get out of their equipment and hurry. (Our equipment is heavy and too bulky to swim in.)

We ran down the beach with heavy gunfire on us. The boat was about forty yards from the shore and was burning pretty bad now. We started to swim out there. We could hear the bullets hitting the water all around us. It was pretty

close. One of the boys wanted to turn back but we kept teasing him to come on.

We reached the boat. You see, how it was these other two boys hung onto the ramp and I climbed up in the boat. They were four in there, a major and three enlisted men. The fire was so hot by then my clothes started steaming. We went over the major. He was burnt, bad. The major was dead. The other three were wounded in the legs. I didn't know where else.

I drug the three soldiers to the ramp. Then I went back to try to get the major off and that was when a shell hit the stern of the boat. Shrapnel flew all over. I hugged the floor. Another hit the water right by the ramp where my friends were holding the three wounded men. Lucky there, not a one of them was touched.

I decided then we would have to leave the major and told the boys if they could swim one of the wounded men to shore I could bring the other two. While we were coming in there was still machine gun fire all around us.

We started first aid soon as we hit the beach. While we were doing this I heard an awful blast. That boat I was on, the gas tanks had blown.

It was like this. The Shore Engineers took the three soldiers away. Everybody started hollering to see if we got back. I told them it was pretty close. They kept hollering up and down the beach so I started looking at myself to see if I was hit. I was deaf as a post from the close explosions out there but otherwise still in one piece.

About this time a Beach-master came up to me and said: "That was a brave thing you did." I told him it was just the first job and he started laughing.

After that I moved on up forward to help with the wounded and a Chaplain said to me: "Why don't you go back to the beach and rest?" You see he knew me I guess. So I went back to the beach and saw the sailors who had carried the wounded boys away and they told me they were doing fine. I felt pretty good about those fellows doing all right. I ate my breakfast then, right there on the beach.

Don't assume that all of us have conducted ourselves in such a commendable manner. Far from it. On the whole there is little in combat of movie-style heroism. The man who accomplishes the impossible, and lives, is motivated always by the same excitement, the same fears that make him crawl with us on the ground from Jerry's "rattlesnakes," that cause our knees to knock when the bombers dive, when the screaming shells make Believers of us by the hour.

No, Foxhole's story is far from typical, but the rest of the boys have given good accounts. I have a feeling Davy Crockett and Bowie and Dan'l Boone and Kenton are well pleased. The old boys might have done it differently but I'm damned if they could have been more thorough.

When our initial mission was accomplished we were pulled out of the game and sent to the showers for rest. That is what we are doing now, resting, washing, writing letters and – most important – receiving those long awaited lines from home. That and waiting for the order that will send us in again.

Naturally enough we have not come this far without our Purple Hearts nor can we hope to escape them in the days to come. But we have received our bap-

tism of fire and with the help and the protection of the General who doesn't wear stars we have come through it intact of body, stronger than ever in spirit. Whatever is to come we can take now, more wisely and with stouter hearts. Somehow that comes when one has walked side by side with Death – and found him not so terrifying after all.

There is something else we will carry with us into the next campaign or on to the beaches ahead. This is something that is born deep inside us when we come to know *why* we are here, when we have learned how very important it was that we did leave you and all we love for – this, and for the future we know well enough can have so many different endings.

Yes, a lot of things will be different when we go in again. Home and wives and mothers and dads, America and the American's God are newer to us – now in October. Strangely new and heartbreakingly dear. I don't know exactly what this is or how honest it is but we'll have it the next time. And most of us will never lose it again. Not now.

I went one afternoon recently to the dedication of a small cemetery. It was halfway up a hill we came to know pretty well, a hill that one day will be as familiar to you as San Juan or Chickamauga. The sun was warm that afternoon. Birds were singing and the sea out across the flat was blue and white-capped and so peaceful that it was hard to accept the task at hand.

But I remember one thing the Chaplain said there: "Ahead of us are more invasions, ahead are more bombs and more shells and wounds, maybe even death. But we will face that future unafraid because those who rest here have made the past secure."

It's about like that. You will know what I mean.

So try not to worry unnecessarily. No call for both of us to work overtime in that department! I know a part of what you suffer, waiting as you must – not alone for news of me but of the others of our family here, in the Pacific and now in the Royal Navy.

In the vernacular, it won't be nearly as long as it has been. We're on the winning team and if the Lord isn't entirely with us certainly he isn't being overly helpful to the other team! Too, many of the hours you think of us in the thick of the battle we are actually visiting cities and shrines many of you will never have the chance to see and to enjoy. So you see this isn't entirely without its brighter moments and that a lot of your worrying is needless.

In fairness to you and the censor this is all. Till next time bless you for your letters, your encouragements and your prayers.

This also brings my every good wish that your Christmas will be pleasant and untroubled and that the New Year will indeed be one of good cheer and of promise for us all.

GLENN

Funeral Unites Buddies After 50 Years Living in Missouri Just 17 Miles Apart



Bill Butler (left) and John Lindsay (right).

Bill G. Butler, after attending a military funeral in his hometown of Bethany, Missouri, chatted with a fellow from nearby (17 mi.) on the way to the parking lot when the stranger noticed a "T-Patch" on Butler's pickup truck.

"What outfit were you with?" asked the stranger.

"I was with Company A, 1st Battalion, 141st Infantry Regiment, 36th Division," proudly responded Butler. The stranger became an instant friend when the replied, "I am John H. Lindsay member of Company A, 1st Battalion, 111th Combat Engineers, 36th Division. Tell me Bill how did you get across the Mosell River?"

Their thoughts and vivid memories flashed back to September 21, 1994, in France.

"Hell, I held on to a rope attached to some trees on the other side and pulled myself across," said Butler.

"Well," said John, a transplanted Texan, "Do you know the guy who took the rope across?" "No, sure don't, but I was glad he was there and the rope was there," said Bill. "Who did?"

"I did that," said John. "It was early in the morning and still dark when I swam, rope in hand across the river and tied it to some trees, then I went upstream and tied another rope across the Moselle."

With the help of these ropes, A-141, still in the dark, crossed the Moselle River.

"Quite a guy was John," said Bill. "He got a Bronze Star Medal and Purple Heart. He started out with the division in North Africa and served with the 36th until the end of the war."

"I joined the 36th in the Liri Valley, got my baptism of fire at Anzio and was with them through France, Rhineland, Germany and Austria," said Butler.

As a final note, John said, "And to think that we were close all those times over there and did not know, after 50 years of being so close over here – just minutes from each other, that we had to meet each other at the funeral of a mutual friend."

John B. Lindsay
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Albany, MO, 64402

Billie G. Butler
1515 Beekman St.
Bethany, MO, 64424

– Thanks, Bill, for the story. – Editor GAR

SHORT-CHANGED QUARTERLY

by GORDON ROSE, EDITOR

I have an apology to make for the shrunken Fall, 1993, Quarterly which does not match those of the past 13 years.

I thought I had done my best in preparing the information and the layout of the publication, but circumstances forced me to other diversions, leaving me with what I thought were competent people who would carry out my definite instructions in printing the Fall, 1993, Quarterly (the one with Gen. Walker at Rabat standing beside a Texas flag).

I'll not over-excuse the error in size. The type was set with the same dimensions as all others. I even pasted my layout on a former quarterly with expressed dimensions as to page size.

Then, two things happened. After three years of trying (after retirement), our house finally sold. We HAD TO MOVE. At the same time, I, as your president, was to head the 36th Delegation to Italy for the 50th Anniversary of the Landing at Salerno.

We moved to Seguin, TX., (near where my Ph.D. wife, Angie is working at SW Tx. State U. in San Marcos) on a school-age crime curriculum for the State of Texas. Sight unseen, we leased a place for a year, and moved all belongings and two cats 250 miles from Dallas.

On the morning I left for Italy, I sent specific instructions as to the layout. I gave a verbal instruction for the cemetery scene, (which includes a Star of David in response to a critic who objected to my phrase in another context, "white crosses and all others," and found out later that my Kinko (appropriately named) contact by phone couldn't spell "evangelist."

Once printed and delivered to me, I had no choice but to deliver them to you, the subscribers and writers.

Head hung low, I brought the matter before the board, which is cost conscious, as it should be. It agreed we should reprint the 3-93 Quarterly so as to conform to all others. It has been done.

So, if you want the Fall, 1993, Quarterly to be delivered to you, I will guarantee, personally if necessary, that you will get one.

I appreciate all of you and the late Bill Jary who initiated this publication for preserving a great history and legacy of a great 36th Infantry Division.

The mission is still yet to be accomplished. So hang in there.

- Gordon A. Rose, Editor
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The Fighting 36th



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