



"And We Died"

STUTTGART
APR. 26, 1945

"FINIE"

WÄLDBRONN
APR 23 45

VOHENLOHE
APR. 19, 1945

OBER HEINREIT
APR. 17, 1945

Sappersberg
Dec 6, 1944

Pöberg
Dec. 4, 1944

Shalbach
Dec 7, 1944

REST - Hartzviller
Nov. 28, 1944

HEILBRONN
APR. 6, 1945

MAGINOT

Emchenberg
Jan. 5, 1945

Lemberg
Dec. 16, 1944

Montbronn
JAN. 1, 1945

PLAINS

REST - Ratzweiler
MAY 4, 1945

Roos L'Etape
Nov. 21, 1944

HIMMEL

Nov 24, 1944
ST. BLAISE

Serruoyes
Nov. 28, 1944

GROSSGARTACH
APR 6, 1945

Messenbach
APR. 5, 1945

GEMMINGEN

REST

Mar. 16, 1945

REST

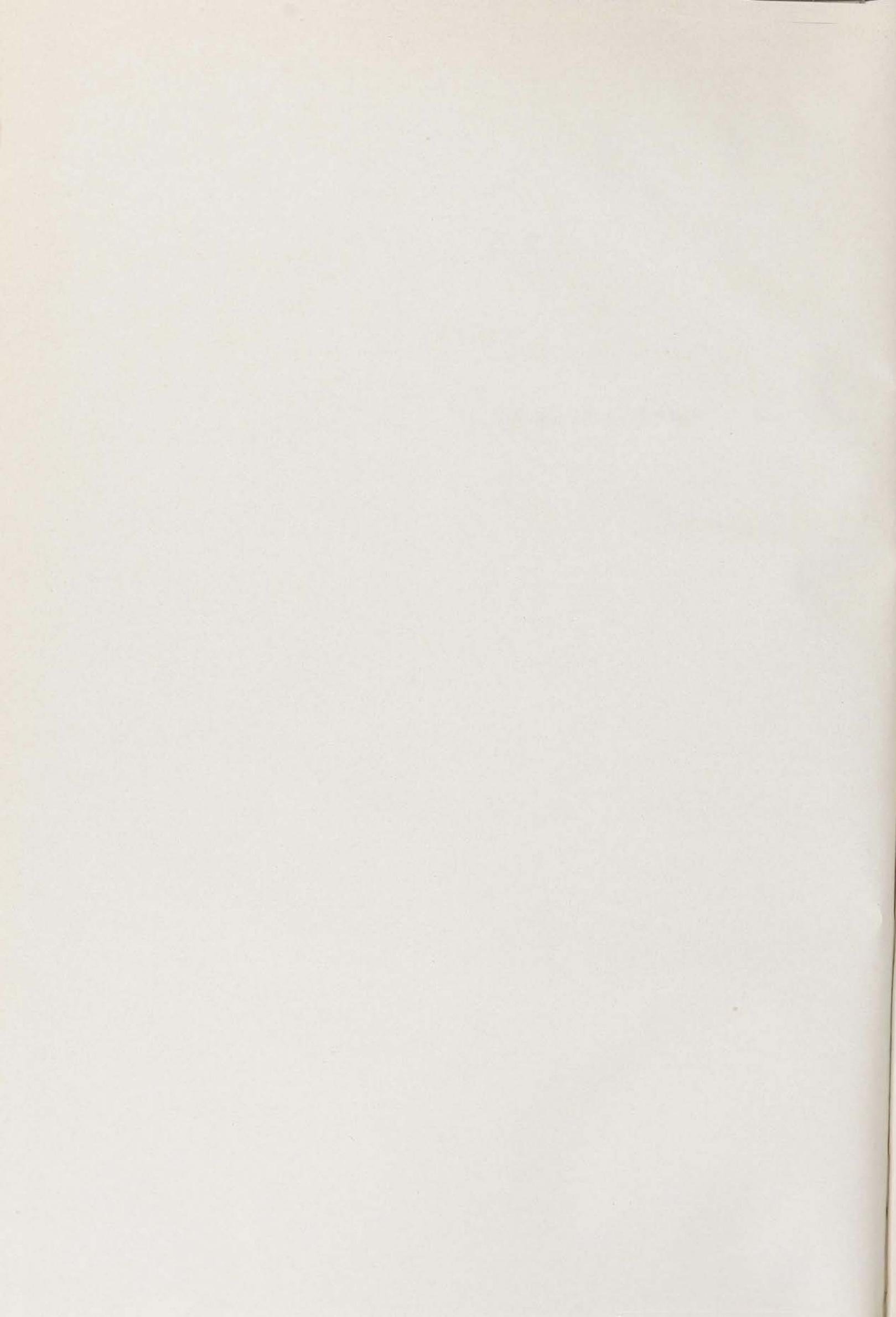
REST

REST



ARTILLERY, THE KING OF BATTLE

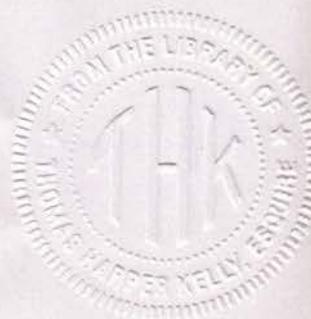
This narrative depicts the story of the "Men Behind The Guns." It is dedicated to those Officers and Men, who trained, fought and died with the 925th Field Artillery Battalion.



**"WE CAN WIN,
WE MUST WIN,
WE WILL WIN THIS WAR —
SO HELP US GOD"
.... FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT**

"and we did"

Compiled and Edited by Members of the 925th Field Artillery Battalion.
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HEADQUARTERS 100TH INFANTRY DIVISION
Office of the Commanding General
APO 447. U. S. Army

To the Officers and Men of the 925th Field Artillery Battalion:

It is most gratifying to learn that the splendid combat achievements of your fine outfit are to be recorded in the form of a history.

As a result of hard and intelligent work, you entered combat splendidly trained for the performance of your mission. As an integral part of Combat Team 399 you were in the first group of the division to enter the front lines in the Vosges Mountains on November 1, 1944. Your history will tell of the glorious part you played thereafter in bringing about the greatest victory of all times.

By your constant, effective, courageous and intelligent devotion to duty you were able to give the best possible support to the infantry throughout six months of continuous combat. By so doing you have saved many lives and gained the full respect and admiration of all who have ever been associated with you.

I am extremely proud to have served in combat with you. My best wishes will go with you always.

Faithfully,

W. A. Burress

W. A. BURRESS
Major General, United States Army
Commanding



WITHERS A. BURRESS
MAJOR GEN.
U. S. A.

Former Commanding Gen., 100th Inf. Division from Activation to 18 Sept. 1945
Now Commanding General, 6th Corp, 7th Army

HEADQUARTERS 100TH INFANTRY DIVISION
Office of the Commanding General
APO #4417

3 November 1945

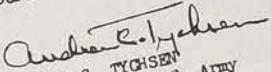
TO: Officers and men of the 925th Field Artillery Battalion.

It is a pleasure and an honor to greet the officers and men of the 925th Field Artillery Battalion and to express my gratitude to a fine organization who so ably supported the 399th Infantry Combat Team throughout training and combat. The relationship between the regiment and the battalion was always one of strong partnership and exemplified the team spirit throughout.

The magnificent courage and eagerness to render close support of the operations displayed by the officers and men on duty as forward observers will never be forgotten by their comrades in the Infantry. The constant attrition of officers and men through casualties along with the front line rifleman testifies to their willingness to give their utmost regardless of danger to support their comrades in action.

The officers and men on duty with the Fire Direction Center and the communications personnel displayed throughout superior technique and efficiency. The officers and men handling the pieces at the batteries and the ammunition details never faltered once regardless of difficulties. The entire battalion was animated by one desire, and that was to hit the enemy hard in order to pave the way for the doughboys up front.

I cannot let this opportunity go by without paying tribute to the fine leadership of Lieutenant Colonel Edgar A. Clarke who so ably trained and led the battalion until wounded in action near Raon L'Etape, France. Often he had expressed to me his admiration for the doughboys up front and that he wanted to be up there with them all the time. Despite my warning not to become involved in any front line action, he could not resist the temptation and was severely wounded firing his carbine in close combat. While Colonel Clarke's loss was a severe one, Lieutenant Colonel Ted Corry assumed command at once and led the battalion magnificently throughout the remaining months of combat. One could always find Colonel Corry up front devising some new scheme to blast hell out of the enemy. He exemplified the spirit of the 925th Field Artillery Battalion and I am happy to pay tribute to him and all the officers and men who so ably and loyally supported the 399th Infantry and the division during the entire period of operations.


ANDREW C. TYCHSEN
Brigadier General, U. S. Army
Commanding.



ANDREW C. TYCHSEN

BRIG. GEN.

U. S. A.

Commanding Gen., 100th Inf. Division
from 18 Sept. 1945 to —



THEODORE BUECHLER

BRIG. GEN.

U. S. A.

Commanding Gen. 100th Inf. Division Artillery
from Activation to 13 Oct. 1943
also from 13 Aug. 1945 to -



JOHN MURPHY

BRIG. GEN.

U. S. A.

Commanding Gen. 100th Inf. Division Artillery
from 15 Oct. 1943 to 13 Aug. 1945





MAJOR ABB CHRIETZBERG
in command from 27 Aug. 1945 to —

BATTALION COMMANDERS

LT. COL. ROBERT HENDLEY
in command from Activation to 9 July 1943
Picture unavaible at time of printing



LT. COL. TED H. CORRY
in command from 16 Nov. 1944 to 27 Aug. 1945



LT. COL. E. CLARKE
in command from 9 July 1943 to 16 Nov. 1944

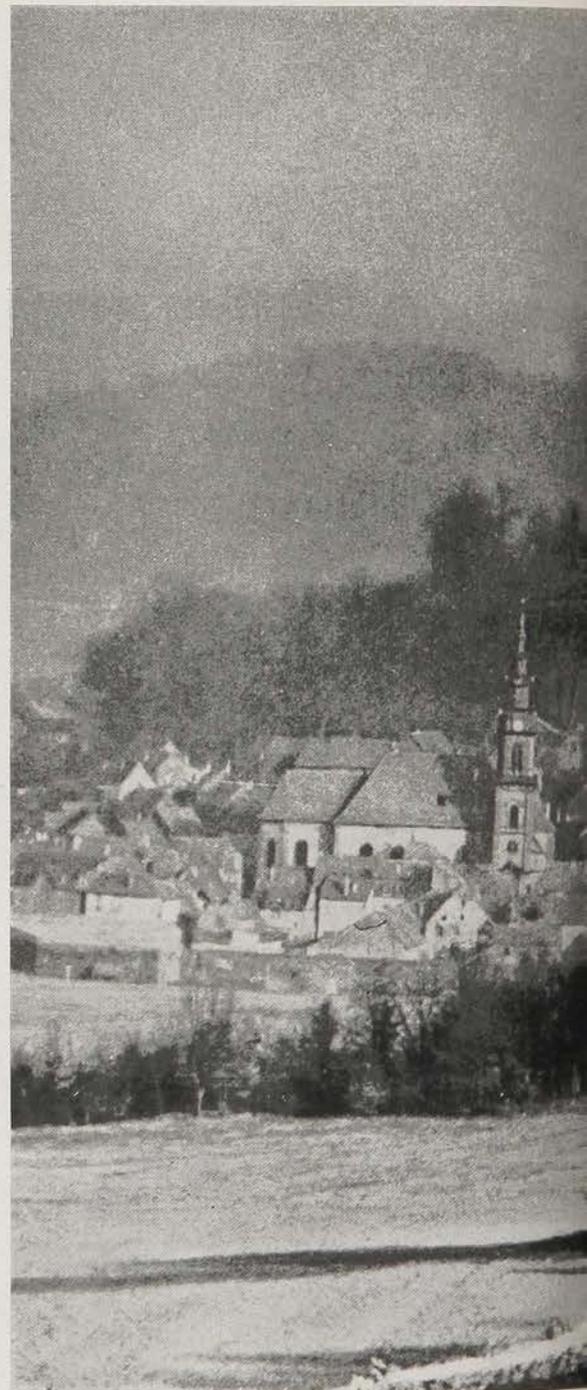
To most of you this History brings memories of the unit to which you devoted the majority of your Military Service. You participated in its activation and served with it until shortly before its deactivation. You were responsible for its success in combat. No greater spirit of cooperation, courage, and devotion to duty can exist among men. It is a pleasure and a source of pride to me to have had the privilege of serving with you for the past three years. May God speed your return to the States and to your families.

Abb Chrietzberg

Artillery played an even more important role in this Global War, or World War II, than ever before in the history of man. Artillery was second only to those hard fighting, mud slugging doughfeet; it made successful many an attack that might have otherwise proven futile. The big guns of the Divisions and Corps afforded support that was of the utmost importance in destroying the enemy, launching attacks, or sustaining counter-attacks. Their targets ranged from horse-drawn chow wagons and supply vehicles to fortified positions, pill-boxes, and gun batteries. The amount of destruction and devastation which they could hurl upon the enemy was here-to-fore unthought of.

The War Department, on November 15, 1942, ordered the activation of the 925th Field Artillery Battalion as an organic part of the 100th Infantry Division. A cadre consisting of ninety Officers and Men from the 30th, 76th, and the 77th Infantry Divisions was the foundation of this Battalion.

The conversion from civilian to soldier began on December 28, 1942, when men from all walks of life and from the many States of the Union were gathered together at Fort Jackson, South Carolina.



*Artillery Marking Target
For Air Corps Bombers*





There is much truth in the saying, "The first six weeks in the Army are the toughest," but these six weeks were even tougher, for they began during the Christmas season. Squads right, squads left, to the rear "harch" echoed from the drill field. Hup, hut, hreep, four was a haunting refrain. Snafu, goldbrick, and like terms became a part of our ever growing vocabulary.

Then came inspections — inspections of clothes, inspections of arms, inspections of barracks, inspections, inspections, inspections!

Our duties were numerous. For our own protection, we soon learned to keep a vigilant watch on the bulletin board. Failure to notice our name on the highly honored guard list, kitchen police, latrine orderly, trash details, and etc, resulted in extra work. However, before we could stand guard, we were required to memorize our General Orders; and if we didn't stand guard, the First Sergeant had details more undesirable. Gradually we improved and made fewer mistakes. We took pride in our own accomplishments and gained confidence in our own abilities.

Our first "full field" came when General Simpson, then Corps Commander, toured the area. We practiced for this event for six days, laying out our clothes just so. On the final day, we trundled out our aiming circles and tape to make sure that all was perfection.

Following this snowless Christmas season, a severe epidemic of homesickness ushered in a new phase in our training. Men volunteered (you, you, and you) for the various jobs in an Artillery Battalion. Those of us who had experience in certain fields, attempted to follow those same fields in the Army. Some of us were successful. Others had to perform jobs foreign to previous experiences. We became Battalion Staff Officers, Battery Commanders, Battery Executives, Motor Officers, Cannoneers, gunners, and radio operators. Special schools were set up within the Battalion in order to instruct us in our new duties.

A short time later black eyes and even red one were sported around the area. The black eyes being the trophies of our first firing of the Lee Enfield rifle, and the red ones a remembrance of tear gas.

Our first Battalion Commander, Colonel Hendley, and his dog Daisy Mae, have since become legendary figures in the history of this Battalion. Daisy Mae, a pure bred setter, was more than just another camp dog. She was a dog with high ideas. On occasions she lapped water out of our canteen cups, and if the mood struck her she would crawl on our bunks for a nap. We soon learned that it was better to cater to her than to face the wrath of her master. Daisy Mae also had her good points. If we spied her, it was a good sign that the Colonel was in the area on one of his inspection tours, and to those of us who were inclined to "gold brick" she was a sentinel that heralded his approach. Colonel Hendley did not believe in pampering his recruits, but he also did not believe in pampering himself. If we went on an especially gruelling march, you could be sure that the Colonel was up at the head of the column setting the pace, and if it was a cold wet day while we were on the firing range, he would show no hesitation in dropping down beside us in the mud to explain the rudiments of good marksmanship.

Hints of coming passes, and promotions, greatly increased our interests. Cannoneers-hop became a thing of pleasure to us. Few were absent from the formerly abhorred classes. This new enthusiasm carried over into the Corps Tests, Battalion test I, II and III which were being conducted at this time.

Basic would soon be over, and "Wait until you go into the field, just wait until you go into the field," became a sickening and tiring phrase. The eventful day came, and the only thing that made us want to go back to garrison was the persistence of the well known bug, the chigger. Weeks later we were still going to the medics in droves trying to get rid of them.

All this was a prelude to our Division test, during which we simulated support of the Infantry for the first time. At last we were functioning as a Battalion.

After many tests, both physical and firing, we were ready to participate with the Division in its maneuvers against the VI Cavalry, which we carried out successfully.

About this time many of us were sporting the newly earned Ranger patches. Physical fitness, speed marches, and demolitions were the outstanding and unforgettable features of this training. We prospective Rangers crossed through swift currents of rivers in assault boats and on rope bridges, while charges of T.N.T. were detonated around us.

"We're going on maneuvers." Maneuvers in Tennessee, maneuvers in Louisiana, maneuvers in Alabama! Rumors flowed freely through the Battalion grapevine from the first soldier to the number seven cannoneer. In the mess hall, in the barracks, in the service clubs, and theaters. All discussion was of the coming maneuvers.

During our remaining days at Jackson, there was the hustle and bustle of trucks bringing supplies, and the many inspections in preparation for the adventures that lay ahead.

On the morning of November 9, 1943, we passed through the main gate of Fort Jackson. The Division Band paid us tribute as we passed by, playing, "As The Caissons Go Rolling Along." Silence predominated as we watched the roofs of the barracks fade into the horizon. The blank expressions on our faces and the look in our eyes were indicators of our reluctance to leave the only home we had known for the past ten months. However this was soon forgotten, and the era at Fort Jackson was only to be remembered at bon-fire sessions, and beer festivals.

The brisk November weather, accompanied by frequent rain made us anything but comfortable. Those of us with foresight wore two sets of wool underwear, both sets of O.D.'s, sweaters, field jackets, and overcoats, while others soon followed the example. Harmonicas, and the husky voices of men singing popular songs of the day, could be heard above the rumble of the motors. Occasionally we passed a convoy from another Division returning from maneuvers, and typical remarks in Army slang were exchanged. It was a joyous atmosphere in spite of the cold weather and crammed trucks.



*Presenting
BASIC TRAINING or
I'll be back in a year —
little darling,
with a Section 8.*



*Oh,
Happy Days!*

Our lunch bags contained jam, cheese, and meat sandwiches, which were served with a hot drink prepared on the kitchen truck while enroute.

Early in the evening, we arrived at our first destination, an assembly area near Athens, Georgia. We "pitched" camp on the ground belonging to the University of Georgia, and after a stimulating hot meal, we turned to various forms of recreation.

Some joined in fireside chat and song, while others participated in one of the many games of chance played in the area. Others accepted the hospitalities of Athens, with its wine, women, and song. It had been a long day, and nearly all of us had retired by taps. As the last note died away, and with the glow of the fires reflecting on the sides of our tents, we drifted off to sleep.

The morning was started by reveille and a hardy breakfast, after which we rolled our packs, loaded the vehicles, cranked the motors, and were off on another day's journey.

Joking, laughing, and singing made the day pass quickly, and towards evening our convoy arrived at Fort Oglethorp, where a surprise was waiting for us--- the Wacs were throwing a party in our honor.

"Hey, lend me a tie." "Lend you clean pants if you lend me a clean shirt." "This--- ice water." Such terms and remarks rang throughout the area, and when six-thirty came all that remained in the area were the fading echoes. There were so many of us that the party was split into two groups. The party was a great success; even the beer was paid for by the gracious Wacs. At midnight, after an evening of hilarious fun and dancing, the parties broke up. We came back tired and happy, but our happiness was short lived as we crawled into our refrigerated pup tents.

The next morning everyone awoke with eager anticipation, as this was to be our day of entry into Tennessee. The day dragged on and even the singing, and wise-cracking was secondary to the eagerness of our arrival. Finally we sighted the town near which we were to bivouac. About three miles beyond Lebanon, Tennessee, we turned left off the main highway and continued down a winding dirt road where we halted in a large area scattered with cedar trees.

We were not permitted to be idle for a moment, for there was much to be done. Latrines and sumps had to be dug, the supply tent and kitchen fly had to be erected.

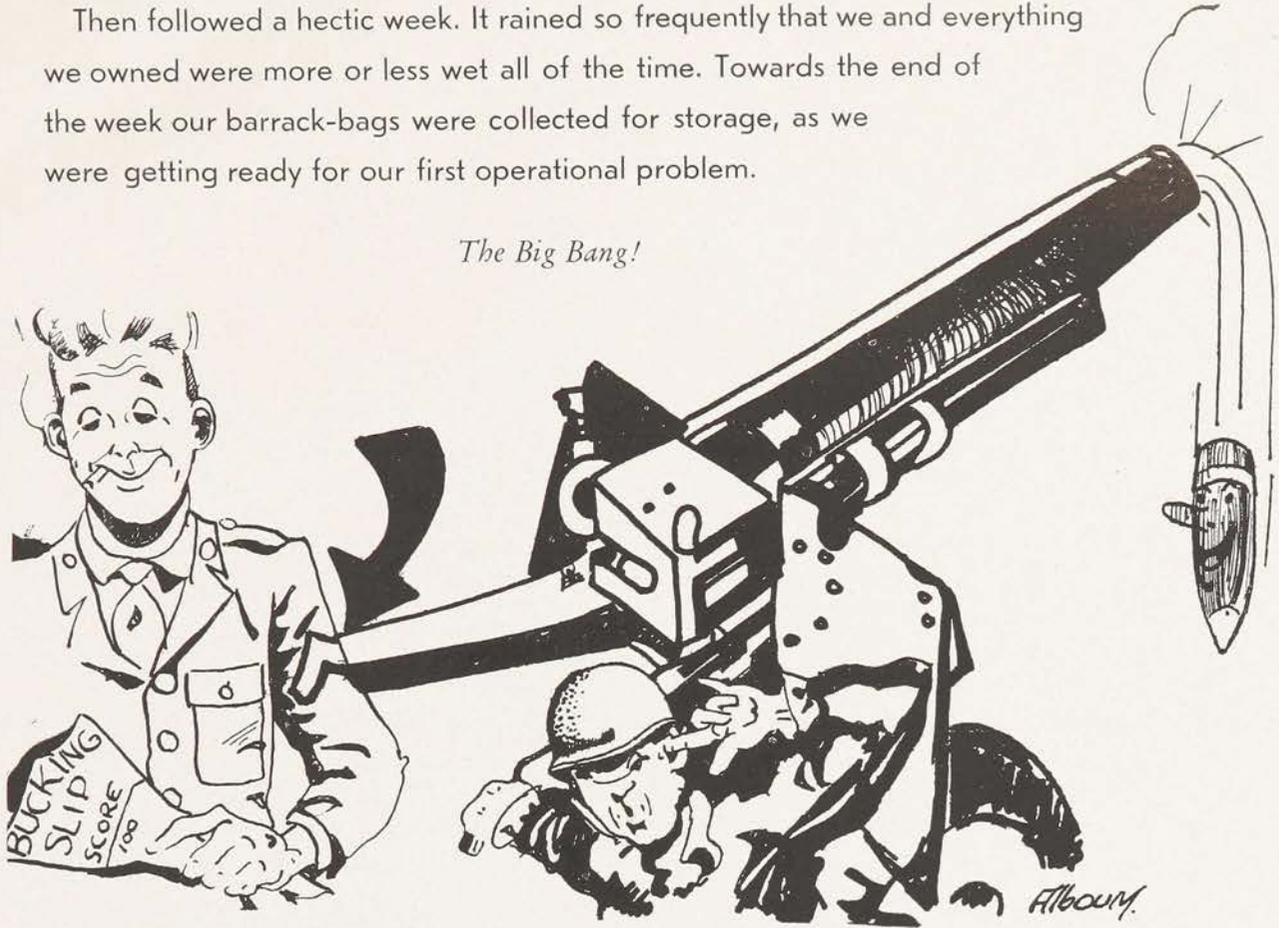


That first 5 Miler!!!

When at last we could open up home in our own pup tents, we were faced with a problem. The area was muddy from the abundant rainfall of the past week, and the lucky ones had already pitched on the little humps that rose above the muddy surface. The rest of us were left to use our own ingenuity. It was first come first serve.

Then followed a hectic week. It rained so frequently that we and everything we owned were more or less wet all of the time. Towards the end of the week our barrack-bags were collected for storage, as we were getting ready for our first operational problem.

The Big Bang!



On the eve of our first problem, we were called together for an orientation. The Battery Commanders told us that we were the Red Forces, and that our objective was the high ground in the National Park near Murfreesboro. Our opposing force was to be the 35th Infantry Division and attached units.

The next morning everything became tactical. That was one word we were to hear time and time again throughout maneuvers. Final instructions were given concerning our conduct, and reminders of how we were to be judged with particular emphasis on keeping our chin straps buttoned. The forward observers left on their assignment, and the maneuvers were officially under way.

After traveling for several hours without making contact with the enemy, we stopped to recheck our route. Surely we should have made contact before this. After checking and double checking the route indicated on the map, we were certain of our accuracy and resumed march. Moments passed, and soon rifle shots could be heard in the woods to

our immediate rear. The vehicles halted abruptly, and the men dispersed into the adjacent fields. We soon discovered that both the forward units had bypassed one another, and had made contact with the main bodies. All elements drew back and formed lines of resistance. Here we had our first experience with simulated artillery fire, for umpiring teams came around ringing cowbells and waving red flags. We thought we were among a herd of cattle until we were informed that the cowbells were rung for the duration of the barrage, and that the red flags covered the area of impact. We feared two things: capture, and the fate of being tagged as a casualty. Rumor had it that capture meant kitchen police, or some other odious detail, while being tagged meant an uncomfortable trip to the clearing station from which one had to often hitch-hike back to his outfit.



Back at the gun positions men were simulating fire by calling out the number of the round while pulling the lanyard. To add more realism, each fifth round was a blank cartridge, and smoke pots were used to show that fire was being conducted.

The nights were long and cold, two or three of us slept together to take advantage of body heat. Most movements were made at night. And because we moved so frequently, new methods were devised to enable, one to make a sleeping bag out of our seltzer-half and blankets.

On the fifth day, after hours of heated debate, the judges called the problem to an end. Their decision of a stalemate was greeted with cheers — both sides being too tired to argue.

Saturday became a day to which everyone looked forward. Names were put in for passes to Nashville. Since transportation was limited we waited with anxiety to see who would be the lucky ones. Arriving in town, they made a mad rush for the showers at the Y. M. C. A., after which came a good meal, a movie, or a dance. We adjusted ourselves quickly to the customs and courtesies of the city, and we enjoyed the periods of relaxation with the many new friends we had made. These periods were all too short, for time, tide, and convoy wait for no man.

The weather was turning from bad to worse, and it rained continuously throughout the next problem. Our morale hit a new low, and we were getting discouraged. Higher Headquarters soon realized that we were inadequately equipped with individual clothing, and they permitted us to build fires to help protect us from the severe cold. This consideration brought about a swift change in attitude. Nothing could stop us! We

gained our objective within three days, and the drive gained momentum enough to take a secondary objective in less time than our first.

As time passed, we knew that our training was paying off. The officers were becoming more efficient in handling the mass movement of troops and in combat team coordination. We were learning to work under adverse conditions. We were being hardened to the cold, the rain, and the mud, and learning to get along with the makeshift instead of the prepared. Our vigilance was sharpened as we found how easily errors can be made. Unknowingly we were building a solid foundation for things to come.

On Thanksgiving Day, we awoke to find that the sun did shine in Tennessee. This day was one that we always looked forward to, and wanted it to be a day of festivity, and song. The cooks surpassed their usual skill in the preparation of the turkeys. No one could complain that there wasn't enough turkey, dressing, cranberry sauce, and cream-mashed potatoes, nothing was forgotten, not even the candy. The last touches of homesickness were alleviated as trucks left loaded with men on their way to give prayers of thanks in the beautiful churches of Nashville.

Our memories of the maneuvers would never be complete without a mention of the many officers and men who acted as judges. With the ever-present rain, it was difficult to keep ourselves and our equipment dry, especially cigarettes. On numerous occasions, by offering a medic or an umpire a dry cigarette, he overlooked the fact that we were supposed to be casualties.

*Hit ye'r holes!!!
The blue armys
shell'n us.*



*Tennessee
Maneuvers*

Our Christmas started off with all signs of being a morbid and depressing affair. The day was cold and wet; it was an exception to stand on firm ground instead of sinking to our ankles in mud. However, our spirits were lifted when we learned that one of our Battalion Liaison Officers had secured a vacant dining room for our use. Once started, there was nothing that could hold down the holiday mood.

Even the thought of our muddy camping ground and wet tents did not stifle the warm glow in our hearts.

Besides being a holiday for us, Christmas was an indication that our maneuvers were drawing to a close. Our last six day problem was designed for the combined forces of the 100th and 35th Divisions to penetrate the defensive positions of the 87th Division. Upon accomplishing this, the 14th Armored Division was to be committed, and pushed through the gap opened by the Infantry. The overwhelming forces of the three Divisions proved too much for the defenders, and we gained our objective three days ahead of schedule. But to our bitter disappointment, new objectives were added to fill the remaining time. These days, however, passed quickly for we could look forward to hot showers, indoor movies, and joy of joys, a roof over our heads.

To all of us Fort Bragg symbolized warm barracks instead of pup tents, and cots in place of the cold, hard ground. We were anxious to get started. We spent three days in the vicinity of Sparta, which was the assembly area for troops finished with maneuvers. Profiting from our previous experience with motor marches, we dressed warmly before departing.



Our interest during the return trip was maintained by the scenic beauty of the new route, and it was especially highlighted when we passed through a layer of clouds high in the Smokey Mountains, thirteen hundred feet above sea level! It was evident that the people of Shelby, North Carolina, where we spent the second night, had received advance word of our coming, and prepared to welcome us. That night when we went into town, we found bathing, and recreational facilities all at our disposal. There

were several dances at which everyone had a pleasant time. The hotels showed true Southern hospitality when they held open as many rooms as possible, permitting us to spend a comfortable night. It was with sincere regrets that we left Shelby, but our eagerness to reach Fort Bragg knew no bounds. The trucks seemed powered by our feelings, and seemed to be going faster, and faster.

On January 18, 1944 at dusk, we reached our final destination. The lights of Fort Bragg were a welcome sight, and it was a tired lot that flopped on unmade bunks, and heaved sighs of relief.

There was much to be done. The next few weeks were spent cleaning furnaces, washing walls and windows, mowing lawns, and other such details. Dayrooms were furnished with pool, ping-pong, and writing tables, obtained from Special Service in order that we might have decent places to spend our leisure periods. Measures were taken to re-establish laundry, and tailoring facilities to remove signs of toil and tribulation. The post exchange made special efforts to obtain sorely needed toilet articles and writing equipment.

Yes, we worked hard these first few weeks, but it was eased by roofs over our heads and hot meals. By this time our training took on a new meaning. We were to take General Headquarter's tests given by Corps, which were to be the final proof of our combat efficiency. In this phase emphasis was placed upon closer coordination of Artillery fire with Infantry assault tactics. Service practice often included firing over the heads of the Infantry. The experience gained by these problems increased the confidence of our gunners, and the Infantry respected our ability to give them safe supporting fire.

Individual leadership and combat intelligence were also stressed. Though specialists in one job, we were taught several others. Our training was further aided by the showing of actual combat films, we profited by the experiences of others. Some of us were selected to attend specialist schools to enable us to become more proficient in our jobs.





*Those Saturday-nites
at Fayetteville*

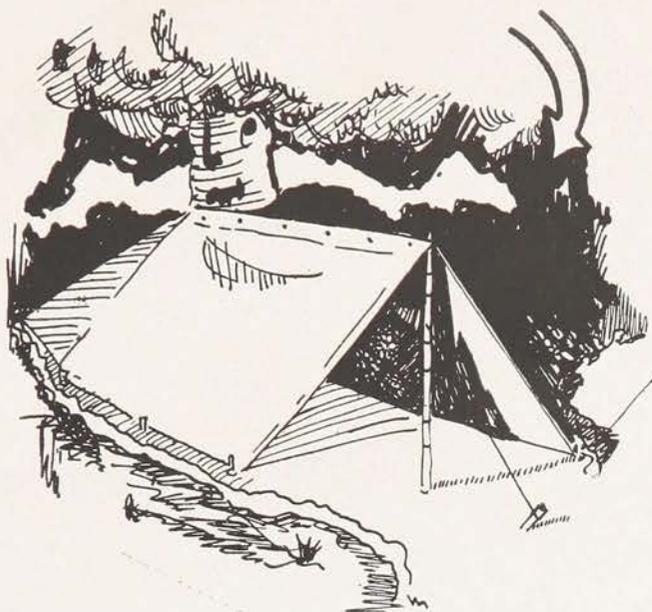
It wasn't all work. We were rewarded with leaves, furloughs, and three day passes. There were numerous recreational facilities on the post. Such as dances at the Service Clubs. There were several theaters at our disposal, and a beer garden was opened in the Battalion area. There were also U.S.O. shows presenting such celebrities as Joe Louis, and Gypsie Rose Lee.

For those of us who sought broader fields of entertainment, there was Fayetteville with its theaters, dances, and restaurants. The most popular spots in town were the railroad station, and the Town Pump. Can we ever forget them?

Among other things for which Fort Bragg will never be forgotten, was its bus service. Nothing could compare to the sight of sixteen men trying to squeeze through a two foot bus door at the same time. Busses were always loaded to twice their capacity, and when pulling from the curb, they looked like blown-up sardine cans. Arms and legs dangled from doors and windows. What surprised us was the driver's ability to find room for one more rider.

Because of our proficiency in the assault team exercises, we were requested to demonstrate Artillery and Infantry coordination for Under Secretary of War, Patterson. It was highlighted by the Infantry attacking behind a rolling barrage. The praise received for this demonstration resulted in a request to repeat it for Allied newspapermen, and again for high ranking industrialists.

Very pretty!



FM. ○—○○

Nomenclature-shelter

half M1—A1

But we learned fast!!!





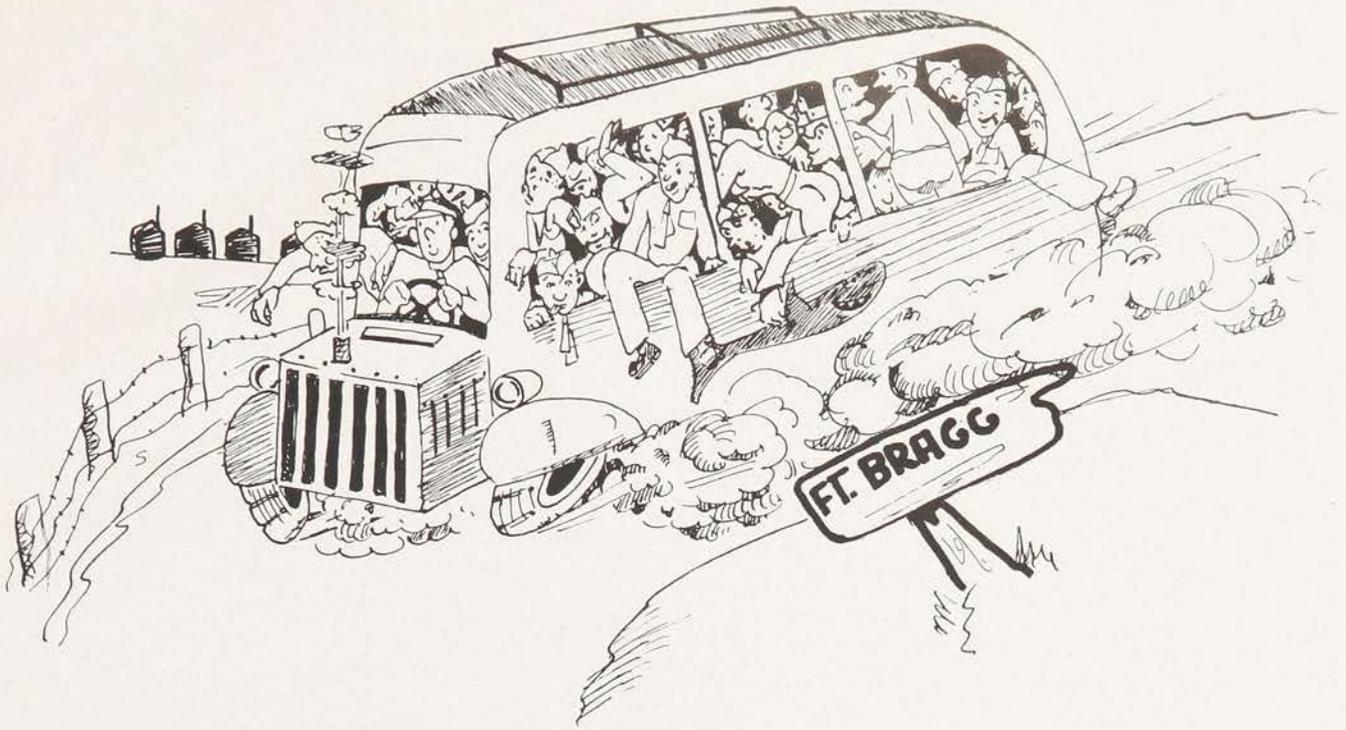
*Those Fayetteville MP's
were so-o-o-o alert.*

The news of the invasion of Normandy was accepted calmly, for we knew it was a matter of time. The day was spent in silent prayer, and listening for the news bulletins on the radio. Previously, rumors indicated that it was time for our overseas movement. The

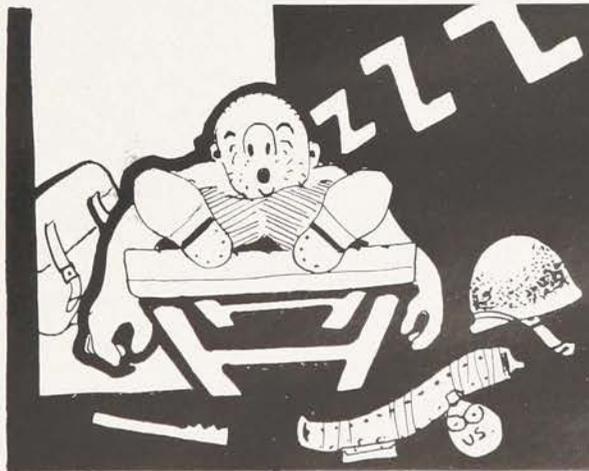
invasion lent strength to it; so we worked harder for perfection. With the announcement that another round of furloughs and additional three day passes would be given, we were convinced that this was to be our final phase of training.

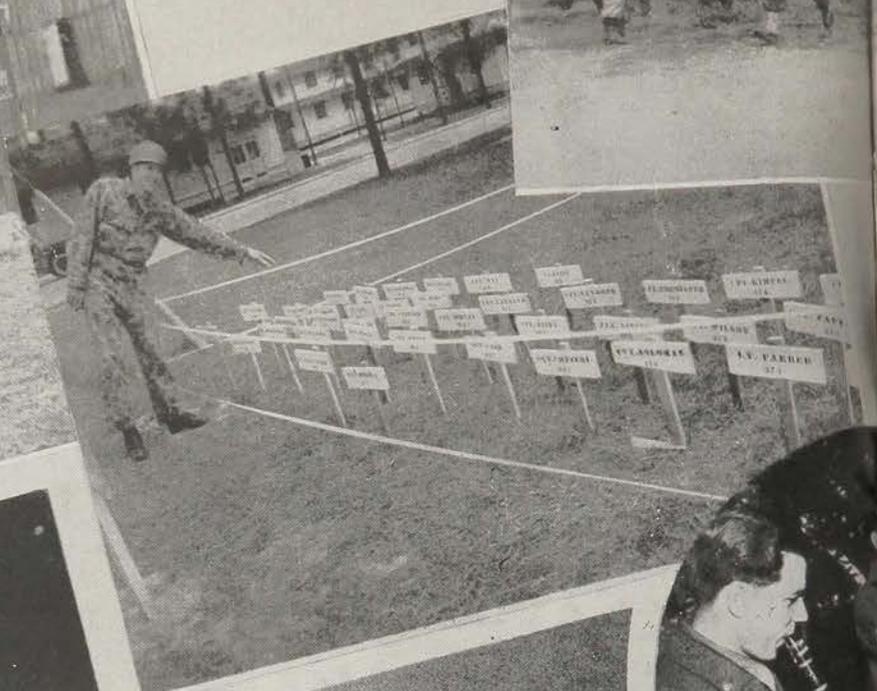
For the first time in our course of training, we went to the right place at the right time, Myrtle Beach. Though no Riviera, it was more than adequate for the work, and recreation in which we were to engage. The reasons for going were to gain experience in shooting at water-borne targets and physical conditioning. We participated in intra-Battalion competitive sports with emphasis on swimming, softball, and volley ball. In the evenings we received passes to Wilmington, where we enjoyed especially good entertainment.

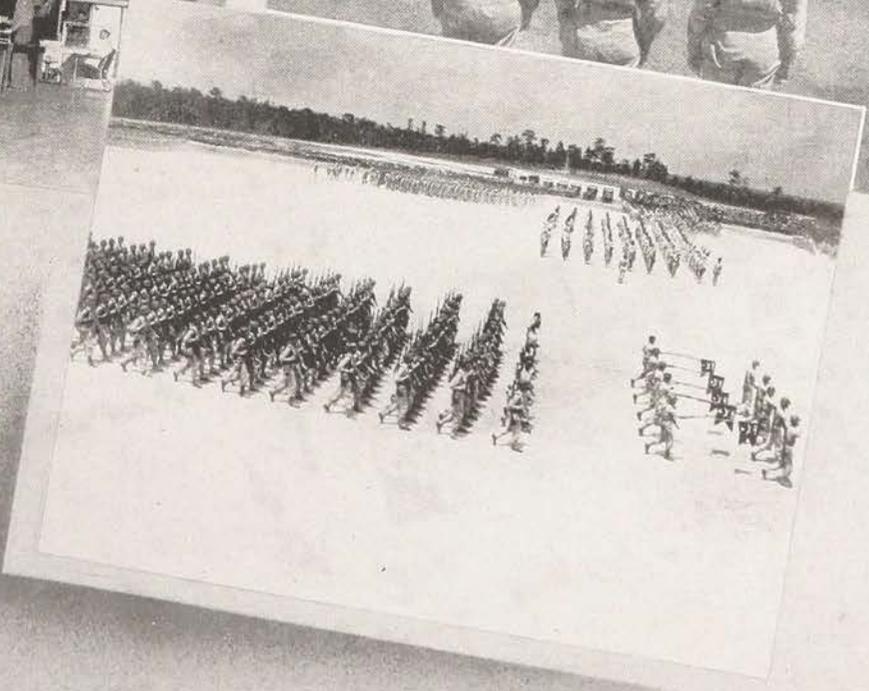
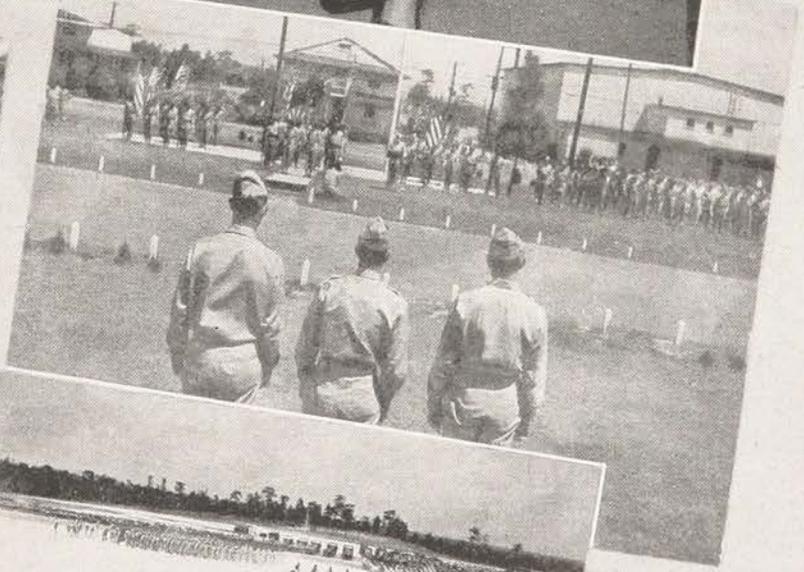
All too soon, we found ourselves once again in the heat and dust of Fort Bragg preparing for the all important Army Ground Force examinations. We knew these were examinations given as a final check up on a well groomed outfit before sending them into combat. We were continuously reminded of this by constant Divisional check ups, and inspections. Men were chosen at random, within their respective fields, and questioned accordingly. The Inspector General's office sent representatives to inspect individual equipment and clothing. Quartermaster, Signal, and Ordnance checked over equipment within their respective categories. Invariably men were stopped in the immediate area, and questioned about anything and everything concerning the Army.



The anxiety of waiting for the results was ended with the arrival of our shipping orders. Now the rush really started! The area was cluttered with trucks hauling needed supplies as well as removing surplus equipment. Packing and crating crews worked in shifts throughout the day and night. Everything was cleaned, painted, and coated with cosmoline. The clerical department worked overtime checking records and bringing them up to date. Insurance and allotment forms had to be readjusted and lastly, our individual prescribed clothing had to be marked, and the excess turned in. We worked diligently, and our efforts were rewarded with a last round of three day passes.









On the night of September 28, 1944, we stood on a railroad-siding waiting to board the troop train that would carry us on the first leg of our overseas movement. The Divisional Band, playing stirring military melodies, was on hand to bid us farewell, while we strained to get both ourselves, and the enormous amount of equipment we carried into the cars. This ordeal completed, the engineer received his signal, the wheels began to turn, and we were on our way. As the train gathered speed and with the strains of "Over There" still ringing in our ears, we said goodbye to Fort Bragg.

It was a pleasant surprise to find that instead of having to sit up all night, we had sleeping berths. After a bit of experimenting, and with the help of the porter, we finally arranged them to our satisfaction. However, the antics of various Battery comedians, the urge to participate in a game of poker or crap, all combined, made it practically impossible to sleep.

After arriving at Camp Kilmer the following afternoon, we detrained, and were overjoyed at finding truck details waiting to handle our heavy duffle bags. We marched to our assigned barracks, and once settled we attempted to adjust ourselves to the schedule prepared for us.

In the next three days, we received physical examinations, shots, and intensive last minute training. This included information on the proper usage of the new type gas mask, various methods of abandoning ship, how to stay alive in a lifeboat in case of disaster, and lectures on what to do if taken prisoner.

After the three days of processing were completed, we were allowed twelve hour passes to New York City. This was what we had all been waiting for! Many of us had families or relatives that lived there, and we were anxious to see them before leaving the country. For others among us who had never been above the Mason and Dixon line, it was an opportunity to see the famed city, with its many fabulous sights. On the fifth

day in Kilmer we traded our names for numbers, which were written across the front of our helmets. We were alerted the morning of the sixth day.

In the early afternoon of the same day (October 5), we were called out from our barracks with all remaining possessions on our backs. Our duffle bags were already loaded on the waiting trains. We automatically lined up numerically, made a right face, a column right, and we were marching off toward the same railroad station from which it seemed we had just detrained.

For many of us the train ride was just another step in the progress towards embarkation. To others it meant just a little more in that they passed buildings, streets, and scenes that were familiar to them. We detrained in Jersey City carrying all our equipment, and walked through a large terminal onto a ferry boat. As the boat churned out into the Hudson river, and swung down stream, the silhouette of downtown New York slowly disappeared, reminding us that we were about to close the last page of our Unit's life in the U.S.A. Reaching Staten Island, we again lined up on the pier according to our number. The American Red Cross, on hand to say farewell, passed among us with coffee and doughnuts, while we waited our turn to board ship. Once up the gangplank guides directed us to our quarters, and after a bit of exploring, we decided to test the worthiness of the Navy bunks.

The Battalion left New York along with units of the Division at 0900 hours the morning of October 6 aboard the U.S.S. General Gordon.

The ship was a new coast guard transport having made its maiden voyage transporting the 44th Infantry Division to Cherbourg, France. It was one of the more modern troop transports, affording satisfactory security to us dubious landlubbers, having a complete modern radar system, more armament than a destroyer, and enough speed to outrun a "wolf pack." Besides the feeling of protection, the ship offered luxuries in the form of fresh hot water showers, adequate toilet facilities, ventilation, movies, and a post exchange.



Recreation onboard ship

To add to our pleasures while living the static life aboard ship, the American Red Cross gave us reading material and games.

A few hours out at sea we stood on the deck watching the shore line of home fade into the distance. Still thinking of the past, with our hearts at home, we were suddenly lifted out of our reverie by the closing statement of a radio broadcast, "This is the United States of America." Shocked into the final realization that we were actually on our way, our thoughts turned to the adventures which lay ahead.

The novelty of this new experience, for the most of us, soon wore off; we then settled down to shipboard routine, and tried to find outlets for our pent up energy--- and find them we did!

The unofficial occupational sport of the G.I. was again in evidence, dice began to roll along, and sometimes off the top deck. The 398th Regimental band provided good music, rendering familiar arrangements that created a sad, nostalgic happiness among us. Then too, calisthenics and police formations relieved monotony and prompted the inevitable G.I. griping. There were religious services on deck, each act of worship a new found significance.

Some of us were picked to form crews to assist the regular Naval gun crews on the watches. Here we learned the differences, and similarities between Naval and Army artillery. Friendly arguments occurred between us and the sailors on the relative merits of our own respective guns. As usual, nothing was settled.

Of course, sea-sickness was prevalent and time spent "on the rail" was considerable. The sailors, seasoned veterans and long since immune to the continuous rocking of the ship, were often amused, and wise-cracked, "When you have had as many ships under your belt as I have..." "Don't be silly," we would cut in, at the same time diving to the nearest rail.

Thus went the days, comparatively peaceful, uneventful, until the storm. It was a "nine point storm," which in Navy language is just short of a hurricane. Even the sailors were a bit pale, and the more emphatic rolling, the unconscious fear, rain pellets pounding the men on watch, the U.S.S. Washington with broken rudder chain floundering dangerously near, made us extremely alert, and sleep impossible. But morning broke clear and calm, and we forgot the storm, enjoyed the ocean beauty and waited . . .

Life aboard our ship began to bloom out again with the arrival of the soul warming sun. Some of us listlessly promenaded the decks searching for new activities, exercising sluggish muscles, while others of our more unfortunate seasick friends stood at the rail looking longingly for any promising signs of land. We were occasionally thrilled with the spectacle of the Naval gun crews in action, and we were impressed by the speed and deftness with which they performed their duties, and the effectiveness of their fire.



Convoy! Away

One afternoon our activities were abruptly interrupted with the announcement over the ship's loud speaker that two oil tankers had collided, and could be seen burning in the distance. With our interests diverted to the fatal event, we rushed to advantage points, and witnessed one of the greatest tragedies that can befall an ocean going vessel — fire at sea.

After the fire, and its near disaster had passed from view, monotony, aggravated by false rumors of land, set in once more. The ocean had lost its fascination, and we were still gazing into the blue horizon, not passively enjoying its beauty, but rather hoping for sight of land. Days became interminable and our vigilance unrelenting.

Finally our continued searching was rewarded at noon October 17, with the coast of Africa dimly outlined in the distance. At dusk, we passed through the Strait of Gibraltar into the Mediterranean Sea. The thrill of sailing between two continents was surpassed only by the knowledge that these were lands, exotic and mysterious.

In the Strait, we were introduced to a character who was to become well known to us in the months that followed, "Berlin Sally"! During a radio broadcast, she startled us with these words, "Thanks to President Roosevelt my audience in the Mediterranean is growing. I welcome the 100th and the 103rd Divisions!"

Excitement was beginning to run high now that we were nearing our destination. We busied ourselves with preparations for debarkation. Our activities were limited to hunting misplaced equipment much of which we never found. Officers spent much time receiving "final instructions to follow for the next few days", which were passed down through channels. On October 20, we reached our first goal — Marseilles.

Slowly, as our ship snaked its way through the freshly made path in the mine infested bay, Marseilles grew from a looming silhouette into a definite outline of homes, and stately buildings. We were oblivious to the immediate dangers of detonating a stray



Chow! Navy style

mine, as our attentions were attracted to the deft activities of the coast guard crew in preparation for docking. Our spirits were high with the expectation and anxiety of setting foot for the first time on foreign soil.

The Germans had done a thorough job of destroying the docks, but the ingenious engineers had in a month's time cleared the wreckage sufficiently for our units to disembark. This we did in a very efficient and orderly manner waiting our turn according to roster and numbers. We filed through passage ways, down a ladder to a lower deck, across the deck, out through a gangway, over the upper deck of a sunken ship, and on to



dry land, the first in fourteen days, and started the most memorable hike of our Army life.

The last few days of our life on the U.S.S. General Gordon rumors had run rampant. But the most vicious of them all was that we had ahead of us on debarkation a seven mile walk to our assembly area and barracks. We couldn't believe that such a thing would happen to us, especially since we carried full-field packs, horse shoe rolls, raincoat, K-rations, steel helmet, carbine, overcoat, and a canteen of water — but we did!

Not far from the boat, we encountered a convoy of trucks filled with battle weary paratroopers; their job done they were homeward bound on the same boat we had just left. The joy they felt was evident on their faces, and by the many remarks called to us over passing shoulders. "See you in the States fellow." "Don't lose that steel helmet, you'll need it." "Keep those Jerries on the run." Too concerned with adjusting our heavy packs, our answers were few.

It was during the first ten minute break that we learned that this was no dry run. We were all chattering, wise-cracking when there was a sudden commotion that stirred confusion and fear within us for we didn't know what to expect in lawless Marseilles. Lights going out, traffic coming to a halt, and the shrill of the sirens caused cold, prickling chills to run up and down our spines. What was it? Rumors ran fast, and still we had no information, when high over head we saw and heard anti-aircraft fire. It was then that we got the order to disperse for which we had the alternative of jumping over a twenty-five foot wall into the bay, or scaling a seventy-five foot cliff. For many of us our hearts were in our mouths wondering if this was going to be a major bombing and strafing mission, or as we soon learned, just a reconnaissance flight.

The confusion of the blackout was soon restored to order. Lights blinked on again, traffic was resumed, and our ten minute break had come to an end. We were not sorry, but rather relieved, as we were anxious to get started. Our imaginations were working: if one plane had made it why couldn't others?

Our progress was slow, and hampered by the congestion of troops, and loaded trucks. Life ran on a twenty-four basis, there was hardly a moment when the narrow streets were not blocked by the huge "ducks." This caused many an unannounced, unplanned, and unavoidable halt. But our bodies were receptive to the stops, for each rest was like a rejuvenating shot in the arm. Our feet were paralyzed, our legs numb, and our shoulders ached from razorsharp suspender straps. For every hill we stumbled down, it seemed that we had to crawl up two, and our heavy packs were either pushing us down or pulling us back. At our frequent halts, we would lie down and gaze dreamily into the starry sky, often uttering a little prayer: "Oh God, why couldn't I be a Colonel or a General?" Our hearts were throbbing from overwork and our spirits were low. Gripping turned from gayety to sarcastic remarks. Once down, we found it hard to muster enough energy to get up. But once up and started our walk became mechanical and somnambulant.

Tent City



The old oil!!! Bon Bon for Mama???



morning from an incomplete sleep at the usual army time-0630. What greeted our eyes only aggravated our stiff and aching backs. Life in the camp was slow-starting, for mud, lack of toilet facilities, and the prospect of a cold breakfast was no competition to warm, cozy, wool blankets. Activities for the first day were centered around organization of the camp, and getting oriented as to what we could expect in the next few days. And that was plenty!

With our friends in G-2 rumoring, we unofficially learned that our unit and our combat partner, the 399th Infantry, would be the first to leave for the front lines in the assignment of replacing the 45th Infantry Division. Our time was limited and work was plentiful. We worked through a twenty-four hour schedule regardless of rain, mud, and personal discomfort. Our equipment was rolling into the huge assembly area amazingly fast. Our first efforts were made towards setting up our kitchens to escape the ulcerating C and K rations. The first hot meal came on our third day, and it was a feast that any king would have been proud to eat. Nothing was more appreciated than this first meal cooked by our own kitchen personnel since we had left Fort Bragg.

To take our minds off the present, we chisled on the next day's rations, and encouraged rumors that our destination was just over the next hill. Life, to put it lightly, was miserable.

At approximately 0200 hours, we staggered into our assembly area to find no barracks but only cold, bleak ground. Fatigue ridden, we dropped our packs and slumped along the side of them. Some of us found enough energy to pitch tents because of the threatening rain. However, most of us merely unrolled our blankets and crept in between, dropping almost immediately into a deep sleep, oblivious of the pelting rain which had now become a reality.

We were aroused the next



We worked hard in the face of the transition from the accustomed hot running water to the distant lister bag, from warm sand to cold, sloppy mud, from warm barracks to the small, leaking tents, from smooth shaves to scraping, dull blades... But our tasks were lightened with the occasional passes to Marseilles and Aix. The luxuries that were taken for granted in the States

were not to be found in the war torn French towns. Besides cheap souvenirs, watery beer and newly made wine were all that could be bought. A few of us going on pass with the sole intention of consuming a good meal soon learned that all that could be had was black bread, potatoes, sour green beans, and these only for exorbitant prices. From then on we carried K-rations, feeling that they were quite superior to anything offered by the French restaurant! In the night spots we inaugurated a new style of dancing to the French girls who were cooperative, but uncomprehending. Although these passes were not satisfying, we always took advantage of them, drawn by the desire for a change of scenery.



After five days of ceaseless effort, we could see that they had not been in vain. Huge wooden crates disappeared and our howitzers, trucks, fire direction instruments, and machine guns materialized. On October 27, we received orders to move. And on October 28, 0854 hours, we left the Delta Base staging area on a motor march that would eventually bring us to the front. The weather was fair, and we had ample opportunity to view the French country side, which was beautiful, but a stark contrast from the war scarred buildings along the way. As we passed through towns, civilians, knowing only too well where we were going, cheered and waved until we had passed from view. The first night was spent in Valence.



"Fire!" On the way . . .

The next morning at 0900 hours, we got under way again. The scenery was changing from mountains to great rolling plains. We had not gone far when we saw a mass of German vehicles piled along the ditches. Each turn in the road gave us new evidence of the destruction wrought by our mighty air force. Arriving at Dijon at 2000 hours, we ate a late but much appreciated chow, and pitched our tents for the night. The same night we were issued ammunition for our carbines. We now realized that we were getting close . . .



Rain!! mud . . .



The morning and the afternoon of the third day's march was uneventful in that we were not surprised by anything that we saw. About 2100 hours, dull, red flashes began to appear on the horizon. We were close to the front; so we stopped at Housseras while the order was relayed back to black our lights. Artillerymen from the 45th Division pumped us for information about home, our outfit, and if we were going to relieve them. They laughed when we seriously answered every question with our shipping number-2206-L. The quick, jerky manner in which they spoke told us of the strain these men had been under, and we felt that we were relieving them none to soon.

We bivouaced in a wooded area outside of Hausseras. It was pitch black, and we were told by the officers not to move around unnecessarily, as the woods were mined and booby trapped. We were also advised to dig-in, but as yet we all felt this was just another maneuver exercise. Suddenly the roar from nearby „Long Toms” split the night, and an excited voice shouted, “We are being shelled!” Immediately picks, shovels, and even steel helmets could be heard scraping rock, and all thoughts of sleep were forgotten.

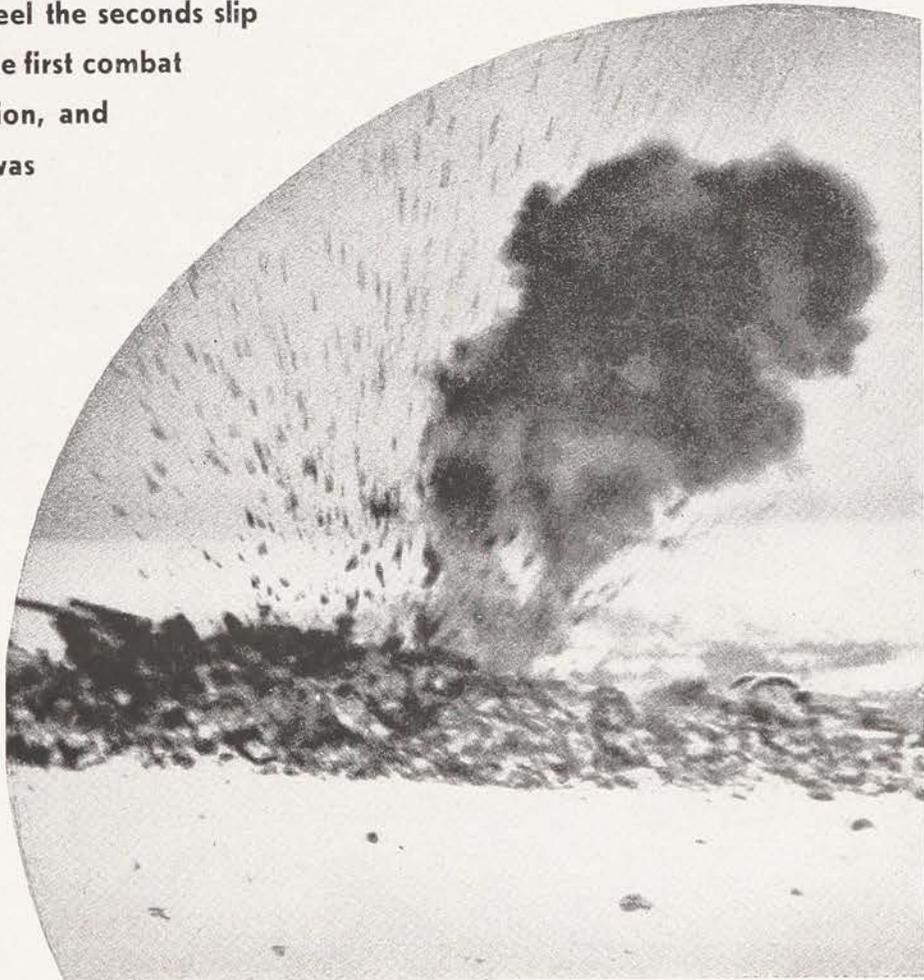
The air was heavy with suspense as we awoke in the morning. We tried to relieve our tense nerves by busying ourselves with trivial last minute jobs. Some of our interests were absorbed by a minute inspection of the area in search of souvenirs. Our fruitless laboring was suddenly halted, and we were rudely brought back to our senses by a

piercing explosion. A three-quarter ton, which had been carefully skirting the woods, decided to go across country and had hit a land mine. We didn't have much time for contemplation as the command "MARCH ORDER" resounded through the woods, and the scurry that followed made us forget the unfortunate mishap. Being well organized the movement was hastily and smoothly carried out. After a short journey, we entered a clearing that was to be our initial gun position.

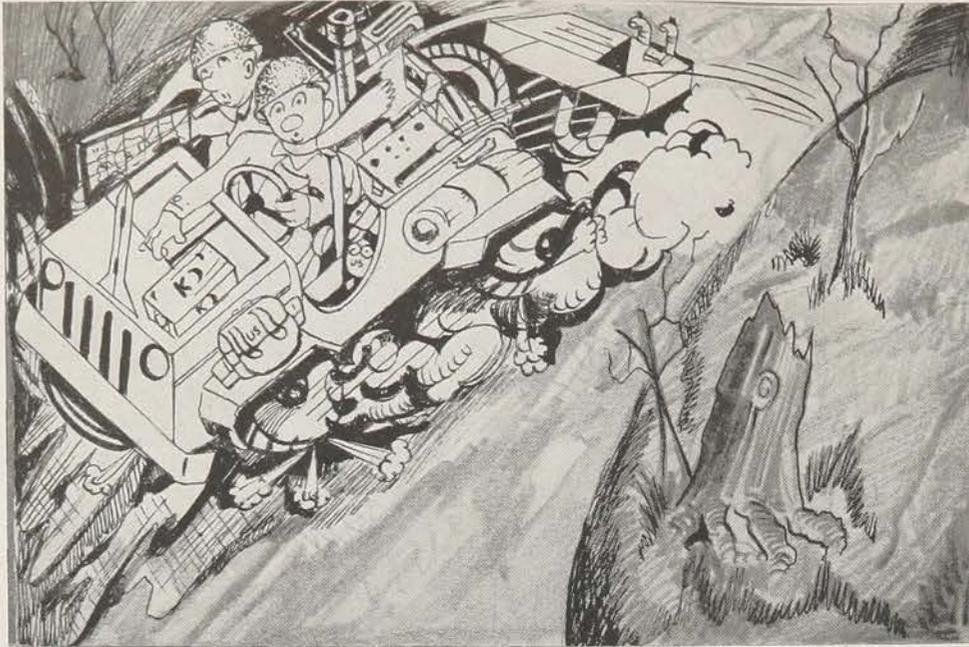
"PREPARE FOR ACTION." The ensuing hustle and bustle would have put beavers to shame. The guns were laid, the trails dug-in, and the ammunition was prepared. When all the initial preparations were completed, the fury of the activity abated. Some of the more cautious men, utilizing this spare time, started to dig foxholes. This spare time was short lived. At the Fire Direction Center, data had been received from the forward parties for the registration. Maps, deflection fans, slide rules, and pencils, were used to transform the received data into commands that could be applied to the guns.

The G.P. telephone rang! The executive shouted, "FIRE MISSION." The men of "B" Battery scrambled to their assigned jobs, and all were ready and waiting. "Battery Adjust, Shell-H-E, Charge Seven, Fuse Quick, Base Deflection Left 334, Si 300, Base Piece One Round At My Command, Elevation 450."

One could almost feel the seconds slip by. Then, "FIRE!" The first combat round of the Battalion, and of the Division, was "On the way." We felt that we had now earned the right to call ourselves combat troops.



*We experienced
enemy artillery
fire . . .*



We loaded the "jeep", with everything, including the sink

The ball was rolling! The weeks of rising excitement had been somewhat eased with the firing of that first round by Pfc Fred Pisano. Our spirits were somewhat dampened by the gentle but continuous rain. We tried to seek protection under trees and under shelter-halves. Our dugouts were soon filled with water, and the mud began to accumulate on our hands, faces, clothes, carbines, and even on our howitzers.

That night we bedded down on wet, cold ground. The rain, which we soon learned to loathe, drummed a steady tune on our shelter halves, lulling us off to sleep. Suddenly the ground shook, and a thunderous roar brought us from our subconscious state. It was our neighboring "Long Tom" Battery's answer to a fire mission. Even though our sleep was broken several times during the night by these terrifying reports, we felt secure in the knowledge that these were our own guns, and how else could one get better local security than flanking "Long Toms."

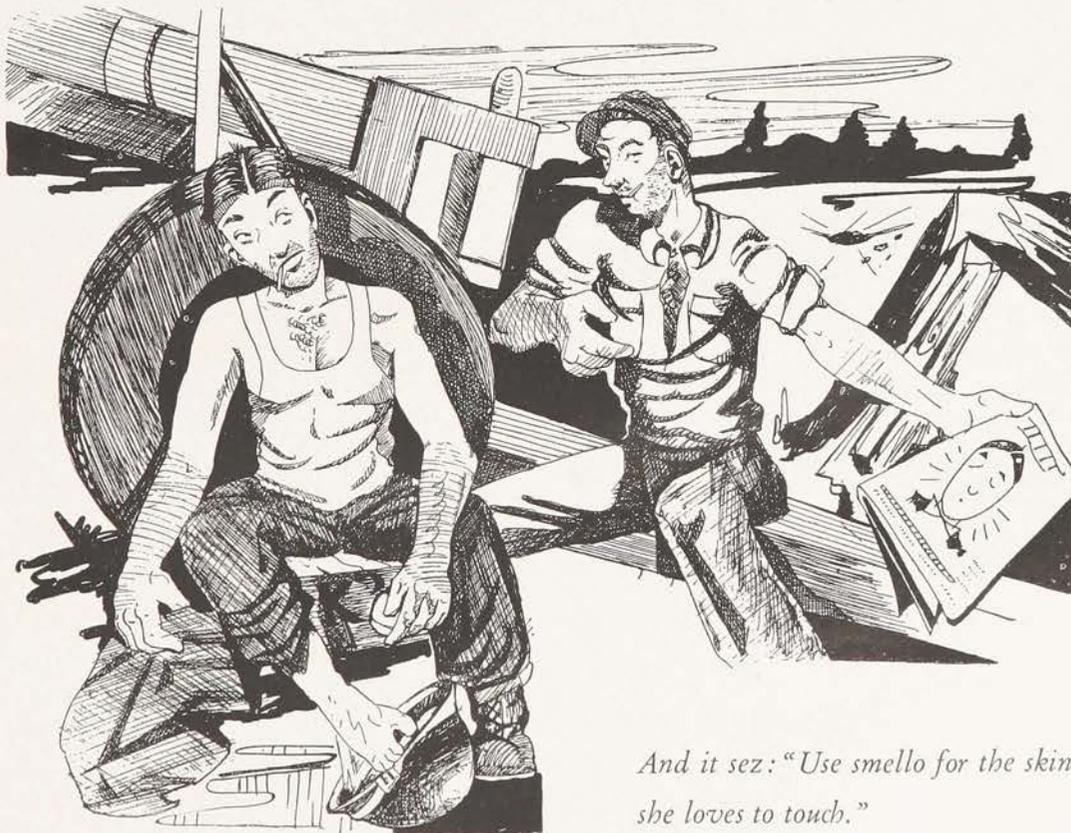
The next day it was rumored that our new position at St. Remey was a precarious one and had to be occupied at night — "THAT NIGHT!" Our chiefs of section went with the forward party to locate the gun sites, thus enabling them to guide their respective crews through the blackness. On their return, new rumors were released. "Mines, thousands of them!" "The enemy infantry will be flanking us." "The Jerries have the place zeroed in." Nerves were taut and a feeling akin to fear haunted us. However, at the last possible moment, our Commanding Officer, feeling that it was unsafe to move that night, delayed the march order until the following morning.

After an early chow, the preparations for the move were completed; we left for the new position. Our route took us through heavily wooded areas, past hastily discarded

enemy equipment, and doughboys digging-in. We went into the position extremely conscious of the fact that the area was heavily mined. Proof of this lay right before our eyes in the form of a mangled jeep that only a short time before had run over a teller mine. It was here that the seriousness of warfare was brought home to us. We experienced the inevitable, our first casualties. At the guns they were Kopec and Chappel; up forward, O'Brien and Columbo.

It was also in this position that we first experienced enemy artillery fire. It was, indeed, a new feeling that surpassed in excitement anything previous to our days in combat. Our joy in reading the first mail from home, which we had received that morning, was cut short by a spine chilling whine — once heard never forgotten. Even those who said that nothing could ever induce them to lay in their muddy foxholes, were immediately convinced by the "Whrrrrrr Krumph" of that "88" projectile. The shelling stopped as abruptly as it had begun, and curiosity caused us to peer from our holes like so many gophers. Nothing serious! We settled back to read about home. Home sweet home.

St. Remy was the place where all sections received their baptism in combat. Our gun batteries had concentration after concentration to fire. Our Service Battery was running the gauntlet bringing in supplies. Headquarters Battery was head-over heels in wire and



And it sez: "Use smello for the skin she loves to touch."



*Raon l'Etape typical
of the many French towns*

executive troubles, troubles that developed from our initial combat period. But we can't forget the F.O.'s, and here is their story . . .

Our forward observer party consisting of a radio operator-driver, an observer Sergeant, an observer Lieutenant, and a wire party of three men, had been expecting the call for three days, and therefore were partially prepared when the word finally came.

Our means of transportation was the well known Army workhorse, the jeep. This was to be our first trip forward, and because of inexperience, we loaded the jeep with everything but the kitchen sink. Bedrolls were

fastened to front fenders, and one behind the spare tire. The S. C. R. 610 was mounted in its proper place with the aerial tied to the left front fender. Between the seats in the front, we placed items like field telephones, batteries, and a twenty-power scope. In the back right was a case of K-rations, and an extra five-gallon can of water.

After a hasty breakfast, we maneuvered into the already overloaded jeep, and left to receive our briefing. Upon arrival the Officer reported to our Battalion C. P. to receive tactical instructions, while the radio operator went to message center for call signs and the pre-arranged code. We were to report to the 399th Infantry, who had replaced elements of the 45th Division, in the vicinity of St. Remy. The objective was the high ground in the area, and we were to support the Infantry with Artillery fire. With this general information, we started forward to the Infantry C.P.

Roads were slick and muddy from the previous rains. The rain and fog made vision poor. The necessity of being alert for mines and shell holes made driving more hazardous. Our nerves were tense, our thoughts filled with prayers, and our hearts with fear. During maneuvers, we had simulated these conditions, and had learned how to carry out our missions efficiently. Now we had to apply this knowledge, for this was the real thing. Before, at numerous service practices and on problems, we had listened to shells zooming overhead and accepted it as routine. But today we flinched from the report of our own guns, and the whine of the shells as they went towards some distant objective. We shivered at the thought that we were soon to be baptized by enemy fire. Our eyes probed the passing woods as we approached the front lines, for we were alert for any unusual activity.

St. Remy, typical of the many French towns through which we passed on the journey

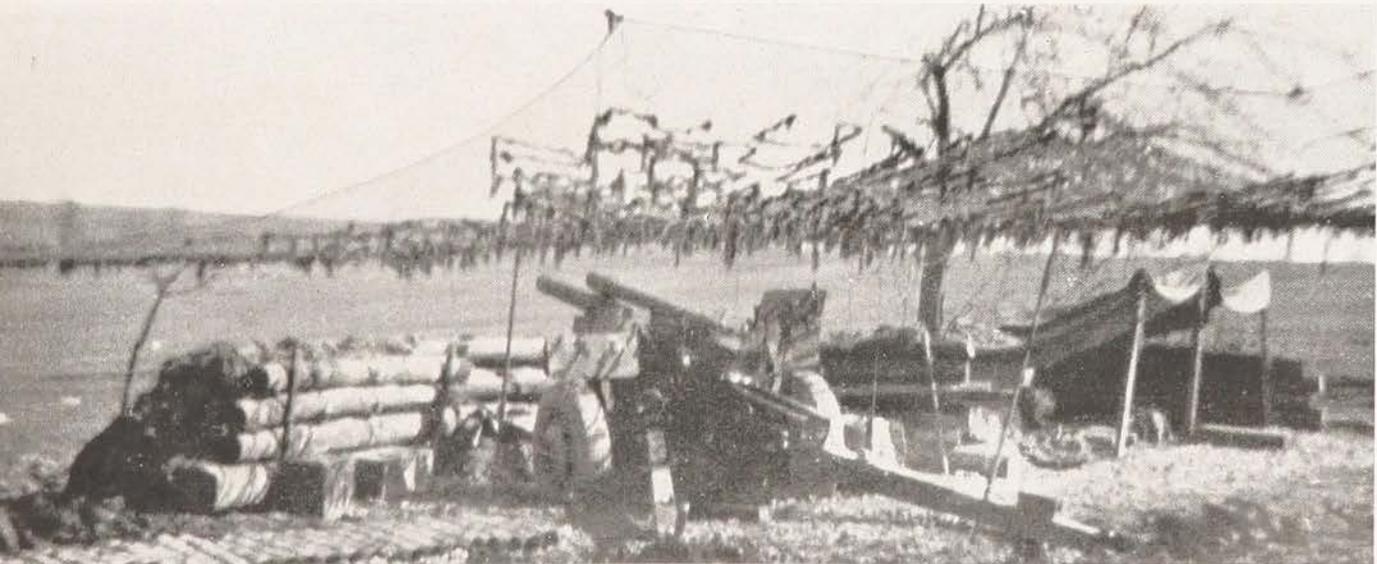
forward, bore the scars of war. The small town was a vital strong point of the Wehrmacht in the St. Die area, because of its surrounding high ground. There had been heavy Artillery barrages causing vast destruction of buildings and roads.

Entering the Regimental C.P., we were met by our liaison Officer who had been waiting for us. After being oriented as to the location of friendly and enemy lines, and the strategy of the coming operations, we reported to our assigned units. The greetings we received upon arrival at the companies gave us added incentive to do a good job for those who depended on us. The rivalry between Infantry and Artillery no longer existed. We were now on the same team with one objective — VICTORY!

We listened to a final briefing given by the Infantry C.O., and upon acknowledgement, we were ready for that vital last step up front. Unable to take the vehicle with us, we took whatever supplies and equipment were necessary for the mission and proceeded on foot. The radio was divided between two of us, each taking a section. Field glasses, maps, rations, and weapons constituted the balance of the load. The vehicle was left with the wire crew, who were to bring it forward when possible.

Rain added misery and disgust to the weight of the wet clothes, and considerably slowed the movement. The unit advanced in a column of platoons, with approximately ten yards between men and fifty yards between platoons. The lack of activity caused additional nervousness and restlessness, for the men didn't know what to expect, or when the unexpected was coming.

Towards evening the Company experienced the first actual contact with the enemy. As they passed through a small farming town, their exposure drew sniper fire from the



Take ten!

buildings. Being caught unaware, they had several casualties. These threats were removed, and march was resumed. The town was behind us when excited voices from the first platoon passed the word down that the Jerries were digging-in in a field about six hundred yards ahead. There was confusion as everyone fanned out to find protection.

All the men watched the enemy, drew a bead, but couldn't fire. It was the thought of shooting at a live target, a human being like themselves, that caused fear and hesitation. Not one of them wanted to be the first to fire. Suddenly, a quick thinking Officer fired his carbine into the air, and almost immediately, the area became alive with echoes from Garands, thirty calibre machine guns, carbines, and B.A.R.'s. They were in there pitching with everything they had.

Our party, in the meantime, had immediately gone forth in search of a point of observation, as this was a target of opportunity. We assembled the radio and made contact with Fire Direction Center, we told them to "stand by." With the target carefully plotted on the map, the mission, for which we had feverishly trained in the States, was sent over the air.

FIRE MISSION — COORDINATES 32.5-82.7 — ENEMY INFANTRY DIGGING IN — WILL ADJUST!

For the first time we noticed that we had additional company. The 898th A.A.A. had joined with us, to provide the necessary protection against aircraft. It was still raining!

After taking St. Remey, we pushed on to our newly assigned objective, Raon L'Etape, one of the keys to the Vosges. To accomplish our mission, it was necessary to use a circular route with the first stop Baccarat. It was in Baccarat that we experienced our first fatal casualty. He was T/5 Otis Jefferson of Baker Battery.

"Basic weapon and work horse of artillery!"







Enchenberg, France

Arriving at Bertrichamps, we broke the rich green sod of the Muerthe River valley to dig our new homes. However, the great sweeping meadows soon lost their beauty as our heavy trodding feet and overloaded vehicles twisted and squashed the grass exposing the brown, putty-like mud. The mud was becoming a part of us. Days had slipped by and our appearance was blending into the roughness of nature. We began to consider ourselves out of uniform with clean, sharply pressed O.D.'s. Our faces had forgotten the feel of razors, and our hands took on a yellow jaundice appearance. We liked to think of ourselves as Joe, the famous character created by Mauldin.

Raon L'Etape was a tough nut to crack as the Germans had control of the hills. Their observation was so complete that a man with the G.I.'s ran great physical hazards. The enemy, with bulldog tenacity refused to surrender the town, even after the doughboys had surrounded and occupied it. They left snipers to delay pursuit.



We dug in . . .

Colonel Clarke, our Battalion Commander, while forward with Colonel Zanier of the first Battalion was struck above the heart by a rifle bullet. We regretted the loss of Colonel Clarke, for by this, we lost not only a brilliant tactician, but also a man who had kept a continued protecting vigilance over us. Gloom disappeared when we learned that his wound was not fatal, as we had at first believed. Major Corry, well qualified, assumed command of the Battalion.

From this position we were to move to Raon L'Etape, but our Battalion was delayed because it took the Infantry two days to clear the area of snipers. Our position was located at the far end of town. With the King and Queen of Battle exerting a continuous and over powering pressure, the enemy forces must have finally realized that our strength was too great and started a swift retreat. However, they took time enough to give us a parting barrage in which some of our men were hit.

With Raon L'Etape and it's surrounding hills ours, we felt that we could really enjoy our Thanksgiving dinner. But midway through the meal "march order" was given, and we literally poured the food down our throats and hastily loaded our vehicles in what seemed like record time.

White Christmas



*Aerial view of Lemberg,
a strong point in the Maginot-line*

Our trucks started rolling, but fast. The enemy was giving ground by the tens of miles, and we were pursuing them on the heels of the hard driving Infantry. We buzzed through the towns of St. Blaise, Chassibas, and Blaine setting up temporary positions on the way whenever the commanders felt that the doughs might run into trouble. The Battalion with that unconquerable feeling halted at Oberhaslach, where many of us glimpsed the Kaiser Wilhelm's famous hunting lodge, which was used for a Battalion C.P. We learned that the 3rd Infantry Division, and the 14th Armored Division had beaten us to Strassburg, which meant the end of the Vosges campaign.



Every type of known Artillery was used against these obstacles, P-47's dived bombed without any noticeable effect.

Ground had been gained so rapidly that the rear echelons had been caught with their pins down. Further orders which we had been awaiting came that noon. Our combat partner was to help another outfit, while we retired for further Divisional orders, and so we retraced our steps to Moyennoutier.

Our stay there was brief, and we rode cold and shivering into Hartzwiller to reorganize and re-equip for better combat efficiency. As bewildered kitchen personnel tried to account for dwindling soap stocks, the men had once again taken on the appearance of well groomed and smooth shaven soldiers. Weapons and equipment were reconditioned to reach our usual standards. Maintenance crews had their hands full repairing trucks.



Our holiday came to an end when, conforming to the Army's policy of keeping us well informed, Officers called us together and gave us the latest "hot poop". They answered any and all questions pertaining to the possibilities and expectancies of the next move. From G-2, we learned that we could expect a more determined and better equipped foe in the future. But the Jerries fooled us, for at times our moves took on the appearance of a sight seeing tour, especially as we passed through Saarbourg, Shalbach, Lutzelstein, and Puberg. It had been a month and a half since we initially entered combat. We were old campaigners! We had learned to take what the Jerries could throw at us, just as we had learned to battle the weather. Even so, our uneasiness grew. We were suspicious of the speed with which we were gaining ground, and the thought of running into a trap only agitated this feeling. With this premonition, we entered a position at Sarreinsburg from which we fired into Lemberg, a strongpoint in the Maginot line.

Behind our fire, the Infantrymen were distinguishing themselves by their ability to cope with superior observation, difficult terrain, and the rigors of the weather. They had also run into something new, pillboxes bristling with automatic weapons. We were not surprised at the speed with which fire missions started to come in. The doughs were in a rough spot. They needed our support, and we gave it to them. Word was received that some of our troops were trapped in an open field, under unmerciful fire, on the outskirts of Lemberg. Casualties were heavy and escape impossible. They were crying for fire, fire, and more fire, and our F.D.C. was keeping the wires hot with fire missions. By dusk the fury of the battle had subsided, and our Infantry, under a protecting screen of smoke retreated slightly to reorganize. The day had proved costly, for there had been several fatal casualties, among which was Cpl Anthony Maffei of "B" Battery.



Over the telephone came another order

The Infantry captured Lemberg and pushed on toward Bitche. In order to continue effective support, we moved forward into Lemberg, which was in range of the heavy enemy weapons of the Maginot line. We had no sooner got our howitzers ready to fire when enemy shells started to fall around our position. Partially finished slit trenches offered us our only protection, and we continued these lying on our bellies. We tried to ease our fears by telling ourselves that the enemy was shooting blindly, and even though we returned their fire in double, our nerves were pretty well racked

at the end of the second day.

We prayed that the liaison planes would take to the air, for we had noticed time and time again that whenever they were up Jerry Artillery quieted down. On the third day after our entrance into this position, weather conditions permitted the answering of our prayers. This however only increased the nightmares of darkness, because the Germans tried



"Battery, Four Rounds!"

to make up for it at night. At the request of our Battalion Commander, a sound and flash outfit was used to locate the nuisance guns. A Corps T.O.T. joined in to wipe out this menace to our position.

Our security once again established and morale reaching a new high, we started to wreak vengeance with harrassing fires. Our puzzlement at the slowness of our advance was growing, and the stories that filtered back only made us more determined to erase all opposition. It was going to be a tough job. Even though we had neutralized the enemy Artillery, we faced a problem in the well made defense system of the Maginot Line. First there was "The Citadel" of Bitche, this high point commanded the grounds for miles around. Supporting this were several pillbox fortifications constructed of cement and steel wire meshing. These in turn were supplemented by smaller emplacements manned by two or three soldiers. These were indeed formidable obstacles.



Artificial moonlight

Our Infantry had suffered many casualties, and we were not immune, for another one of our F.O.'s had paid the extreme price. He was Sergeant Joseph Leigy of Charlie Battery. The fire from enemy installations was so intense, and calls for counter fire so numerous that it was impossible to answer all requests. In an issue of the "Stars and



Objective: College de Bitche, and the Citadel

Stripes," there appeared the story that the pillboxes of the Maginot line could be picked apart with a pencil. Their apology came later when their reporter witnessed the effect of a 240 mm Howitzer on a mushroom type pillbox which had become jammed on the ground level. Every type of known Artillery was used against these obstacles with only a few of them having any effect. The Air Corps was called in, and for days we watched P-47's dive bomb "The Citadel" and other fortifications without any noticeable effect.

We were softening Bitche for a final assault by our Infantry. Our Service Battery seemed to be mounted on a merry-go-round, stopping only long enough to drop off supplies and equipment.

The Corps T.O.T.'s often sounded like the rumble of thunder. On December 16th, we received the shocking news that the Germans had counter attacked in the Ardennes Forest sector. As we settled down that night, rumors were running wilder than ever. The next morning we awoke to find ourselves alone. The major part of our supporting Artillery had moved out to help stem the German push. Our thundering Artillery now sounded like an occasional drum beat.

Strategy was changed and our Division went on the defensive. Our team was to hold the central Bitche sector. Lines were thinned out to cover an area that was previously covered by two other Divisions. Our situation was a precarious one, and this made Christmas just another day. We appreciated the special efforts of our kitchen personnel and Battery Commanders for trying to make the best of a bad thing. The closely knit camaraderie in the Battalion was felt when the Batteries cooperated by sending volunteers to each other to man the guns, thus enabling each unit to enjoy their Christmas dinner as a whole. We didn't want to forget our foes on Christmas; so for a Christmas present we sent them sixty rounds of high explosive, via our howitzers.

The next week was routine until we began to experiment with a new fuze on the 105 mm ammunition. The puzzling action of the Pozit fuze was the source of much future conversation.

December 31st came and again we waited impatiently for twelve o'clock to come, so that we might welcome the New Year in by sending greetings to the enemy in the form of twenty rounds of 105 ammunition per Battery. Cannoneers fidgeted by their guns, anxious to get back to comparatively warm bed rolls. At last the order came — **Battery fire!** — and twenty missiles of death and destruction sped toward German positions. These were rapidly followed by forty-eight more to complete the New Years greetings. Now we could settle down to a nights rest.

But this was not to be the case. Suddenly over the section telephones came another order, "Battery four rounds!" And on completion of that, another four rounds. It was then we awoke to the realization that the Germans had also prepared a little New Years greeting for us. It was a counter attack launched at our lines south of Bitche. All during the early hours of the morning, we worked laying down heavy barrages that slowed the enemy's advance considerably, thus allowing our Infantry to reassemble and reestablish new defensive positions. Cannoneers wallowed in empty ammunition cases as they threw round after round at the attacking forces. While we were making preparations to move to more favorable battle positions, enemy aircraft strafed the Battalion gun positions causing a slight delay. Towards evening, the Germans infiltrated our lines. We were forced to displace to the rear, to the vicinity of Montbronn, where we continued to hammer away at the oncoming Wehrmacht throughout the night.

Communications were maintained over treacherous enemy observed terrain



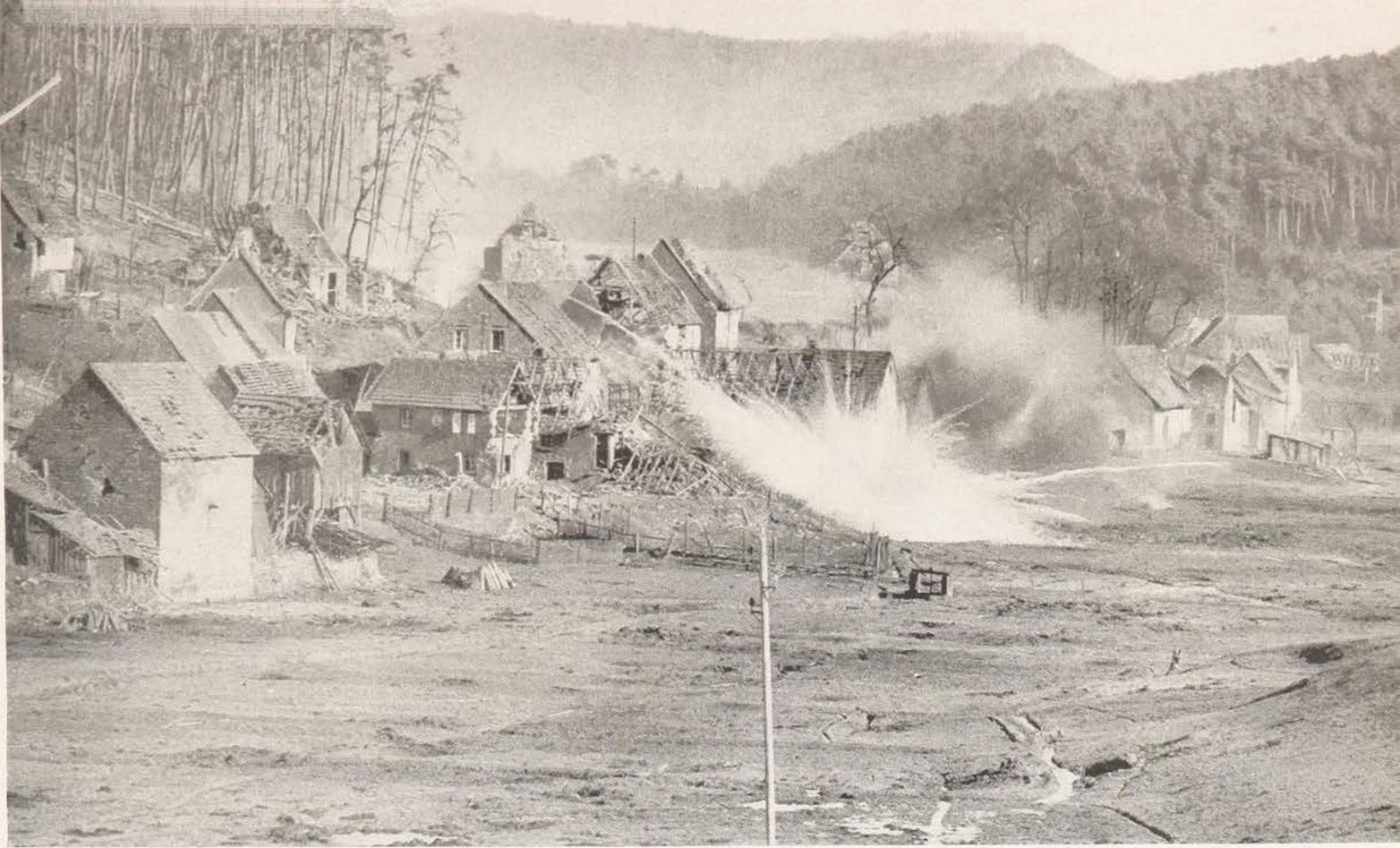
On the morning of January 3rd, heavy concentrations were laid down against personnel digging-in, Artillery Batteries, observation posts, and troop assembly areas. Interdictory fire was placed on road junctions with excellent results. Throughout the following day, counter attacks were hurled upon the Infantry by the enemy, but because of the Infantry's determination to hold their ground, the attacks were repeatedly thrown back. Under hazardous weather conditions and constant enemy barrages, we moved to the vicinity of Enchenberg. On the ninth of January, the Germans renewed their offensive against the second Battalion of the 399th. Again the effective fire of our Battalion helped route the enemy, and eliminate a threat to our security. Defensive positions were improved by both the Infantry and the Artillery, and further attempts by the Germans to crack our lines proved futile. Here the situation slowly became stable, and we established what was to become our winter line.

Up until now, outside of the month spent at Lemberg, it had been a continual rat race. Now, the static conditions allowed trucks to take us to the rear echelon for much needed showers and entertainment in the form of USO shows. Almost daily, movies were brought into Enchenberg which helped to relieve the monotony of the long winter days.

The snow which had started to fall in abundance two days after we reached this position, brought with it new problems. Guns which had before blended somewhat with the scenery, now stood out like "sore thumbs" against the blanket of white that covered the countryside. Tents, guns, and ammunition pits had to be camouflaged with white sheets. Jeeps used by our forward observers had to be coated with white paint, and the forward observers wore white parkas to lessen the chance of being seen. As the snow continued to fall day after day, the cannoneers beat paths from their dugouts to the guns. Transporting ammunition from the ammunition pits to the guns became a tedious job.

Tank Support





Reysviller!

On February 1st, we were still occupying our positions at Enchenberg. For the first time our forward observers witnessed patrol action under artificial moonlight. Back at the guns we watched the huge searchlights aim their beams at the clouds causing them to reflect over the front lines. At first, we expected these lights to draw heavy enemy Artillery fire, but we later learned that it was impossible for the enemy to pin down their location as long as they were well defiladed. Another type of warfare was applied while we were in this position. It was psychological warfare. Loud speakers were set up at many points along the line, and propaganda messages were broadcast to the Germans explaining the uselessness of the struggle. As part of this strategy, our Batteries fired shells containing propaganda leaflets and safe conduct passes into the enemy lines. On these were instructions written in German as to the procedure of surrender to us.



We crossed the Rhine



"but our Infantry moved continuously forward."

"A wireman's work never ends" — Out there day and night, the "Wire Gang" was always on the go, laying or repairing lines that had been damaged by shell fire, shrapnel, tanks, and other vehicles. Of course, it was their job to maintain communication, but the manner in which it was maintained could not be equalled or surpassed. Communication lines often ran as long as 5 and 6 miles, along highways, across mined fields, over rivers and streams, through swamps and ditches, along railroad tracks, over the roofs of houses, through open meadows, over treacherous enemy-observed terrain, and up heavily-wooded hillsides to the O.P.'s and Forward Observers. Lines were repaired with minimum loss of time, and our 399th doughfeet were never without the support of our guns.

"The Germans fought desperately to defend Heilbronn,"



During this period the Air corps continued to attack Bitche, dive-bombing and strafing incessantly. Occasionally German pilots in captured American planes would strafe our gun positions and rear installations. At first our machine gunners were in doubt as to whether or not they should fire on these planes, but after one or two strafings they decided to fire on any plane that dived on us regardless of make.

So it was only a dream



On the 18th of February, Able Battery left their position and moved to Ratzweiler for a weeks maintenance on their guns and equipment. Upon their return, they were followed by Baker and finally Charlie Battery. A stalemate continued to exist throughout February and the first half of March, most of the activity being confined to the Infantry. Our Battalion aided them with occasional fire missions while our Forward Observers kept us busy firing on targets of opportunity.

Spring came and with it the feeling that something big was about to happen. We knew we could not stay in one position forever, and it was now the kind of weather that would not hinder an advancing Army. At 0500 on the 15th of March, the 399th Infantry Regiment jumped off on the attack to take Reysviller, the town of Bitche, and Camp de Bitche. At "H" hour plus two the third Battalion supported by tanks, moved in to take the town of Reysviller. By 0900 the next morning, after overcoming stiff German resistance, other elements of the 399th Infantry occupied Bitche and Camp de Bitche. Our Battalion, contributing to this successful assault, received praise for the accuracy of its fire.

We then moved forward, first to Reyersviller, then almost immediately, to the vicinity of the College of Bitche. It was in this position that we were credited with eliminating several enemy tanks which had been pinning down our Infantry just outside of the camp.

The Infantry drove steadily on, and again we moved forward, this time to Hanviller. On this day, the 17th of March, forward elements of our Infantry crossed the border near Hilst, Germany. The next day we were relieved by elements of the 71st Infantry Division, and we went to an assembly area to await further orders.

At noon on the 22nd of March, our Battalion left its assembly area at Hanviller and proceeded to cross the border. By nightfall we reached the city of Neustadt where we bivouacked for the night. The following morning we went into position near Mutterstadt, where we fired normal barrages and harrasing missions. In order to keep up with our fast moving Infantry, we moved to a new position at Limburgerhof. The 399th Infantry was now establishing positions along the Rhine River, and were awaiting orders to cross.

On the 26th of March, the Division was again relieved by the 71st and was assigned to the Sixth Corps Reserve. Our Battalion, however, remained active as supporting Artillery for the 71st Division Artillery. Upon being officially relieved on the evening of March 27th, we rejoined the Division Corps Reserve. On the last day of the month, our Battalion moved from Limburgerhof, and crossed the Rhine at Mannheim. After establishing a position at Rahrhof, we again found the enemy retreating so fast that it necessitated our movement to Bruhl, where we fired several missions.

The first day of April found us in the midst of a heated "rat race." We moved steadily forward, behind our swiftly moving Infantry, and occupied positions at Wiesloch, Sinsheim, Gemmingen, and Mossenbach. We remained at Mossenbach until the 7th of April, at which time we moved forward to Grossgartach. It was from this position that we were able to place accurate fire on Heilbronn, which was just across the Neckar River. For

Komrad!





Gotta light Joe?

several days, during the battle for Heilbronn, missions were numerous, and targets plentiful. One of the main targets was the German military garrison of Heilbronn, and constant fire was placed on this strong point to reduce the stubborn German resistance. The close coordination between the Air and Ground forces was once again demonstrated as we fired several smoke missions, using colored smoke to enable the flight leaders to pick out their targets.

The Germans fought desperately to defend Heilbronn, but our Infantry moved continuously forward, and brought the fighting into the town. The enemy had to be eliminated by house to house and street fighting. The Jerries in a last desperate effort to hold Heilbronn, a key point to the German defenses in this sector, recruited schoolboys as saboteurs and snipers, but our overwhelming forces and effective concentrated Artillery fire proved too much for the Germans, and they turned and fled.

With the complete capture of the "Bastion of Heilbronn", we continued on after the routed enemy towards Sontheim. We fired a seven hundred round preparation, after which our Infantry took the town and captured many prisoners.

The Infantry continued their move towards Flein and Talheim. We encountered bitter resistance in Talheim, where the Jerries fired numerous barrages of "Screaming Meemies", "88's", and mortars at our troops. Following the capture of these two towns, we moved to new positions south of Oberheinreit, and from there to Vohenlone. On April 20th, we left Vohenlone and remained on the road all day, following the advancing Infantry. That evening our Batteries occupied positions south of Backnang, following its capture by our Infantry. The next day we drove on to Stuttgart, by taking Hertmannsweiler, Winnenden, Korb, Waiblingen, and Rommelshausen. In seizing the town of Waldenbronn, our Infantry ran into difficulty when it encountered a heavy rain of German Artillery. After a slight delay, resistance was scattered and we moved on.

Our Battalion left Rommelshausen on the morning of April 22nd. We were halted on the road and were told to "hold everything". As we moved into Waldenbronn, we found out that orders had been changed, and we were to be in the Seventh Army reserve on an inactive status. This news was greeted with cheers by all of us, for this was the first time since November 1st, that the outfit had been officially relieved of combat duties.

On the 26th, we moved to Stuttgart where we received notice that we were to take up temporary occupational duties. Four days later we moved to Albershausen, where we were to take up our duties in that status. On the 5th of May 1945, while in Albershausen, the following message was transmitted to all units of our Battalion

"EFFECTIVE AT ONCE. 100th INFANTRY DIVISION TROOPS WILL NOT FIRE UPON ENEMY TROOPS UNLESS FIRED UPON OR UNLESS NECESSARY FOR POLICE DUTY. PEACE NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN HEADQUARTERS SEVENTH ARMY AND GERMAN FORCES OPPOSING SEVENTH ARMY REGARDING UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER BECOMES EFFECTIVE 1200 6th OF MAY 1945. THIS ORDER EFFECTS SEVENTH ARMY TROOPS ONLY. THIS INFORMATION IS NOW BEING ANNOUNCE OVER SEVENTH ARMY RADIO AT 15 MINUTE INTERVALS."

Our fighting in Europe was at an end, and we celebrated our victory over the Germans with a little beer, cognac, and schnaps. However, our celebrations were short lived, as the news of victory was followed with training schedules. The mornings were composed of calisthenics, drill, and hikes for reconditioning. The afternoons varied, depending on the information received from the Intelligence Department. The topic for discussion at our Orientation classes changed from the European to the Pacific Theatre, and from the German soldier to the Jap. Although we were veterans of seven months of hard fighting from the Vosges through the Rhineland, conditions such as, terrain and climate were adverse in the Pacific, and stress was placed on a new foe, malarial. This training plus our occupational duties, of guard and patrol, kept us very busy, and the days passed quickly.

From Albershausen, Battalion Headquarters moved to Weissenstein, whereas the Batteries occupied neighboring towns. Able moved to Essingen, Baker occupied Heubach, Charlie settled in Oberbettringen, and Service went to Donzdorf. In addition to our schedule, we were assigned additional duties to aid in the establishment of Military Government in this area.

With the organization of U.S. Occupational Territory in Germany, our Division was assigned an area seventy miles long and forty miles wide; consequently we moved to the vicinity of Stuttgart. This time our Battalion Headquarters was set up in Waiblingen, Able in Korb, Baker in Winnenden, Charlie in Schwaikheim, and Service in Endersbach. Although it was still unofficial, all reason indicated that in the near future we were to be redeployed to the Pacific by way of the States. We had all expected to be shipped to the Pacific, but the phrase "by way of the States", lifted morale a hundred percent.



We remained in this area until the end of May, at which time we moved to "Camp Altes Lager", near Munsingen. Formerly this camp had been a German Artillery O.C.S., and we benefitted our training by using the large Artillery ranges in the vicinity of the Lager.

We pitched tents Army style, and there were the usual details of digging sumps and latrines. In an effort to make camp life more desirable, we enlisted the aid of a generator to light up our area, and supply our radios with power.

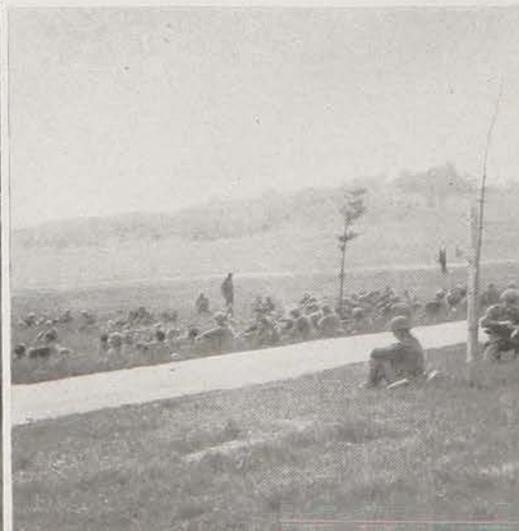
Recently commissioned Officers, and many non commissioned Officers sharpened their "firing eye", during our stay at Munsingen. After four days of firing, we expended the ammunition allotted to us, and on the 16th of June left Munsingen. We were then assigned to the area of Schwabish Gmund, which was formerly occupied by the 373rd Field Artillery Battalion.

Our stay at Gmund was fairly pleasant. Headquarters and Baker Batteries were set up in a large school house in the town itself, whereas Able, Charlie, and Service were either in the outskirts of Gmund or a neighboring town. Baker established a Road Patrol, which included approximately twenty-eight towns under their jurisdiction, while Charlie, with aid from the other Batteries, had the responsibility of guarding the Displaced Person Camps in the area. Many humorous incidents will always be remembered by those who stood guard around the Lager, for it highlighted our stay in Gmund.

Being a fairly large town, Gmund was the center for social activity. We saw many U.S.O. and Allied War shows in the large Gmund Auditorium, and we became regular patrons of the Sixth Corps Red Cross Club, where we got our fill of coffee and doughnuts.

The mail clerks from the various Batteries will never forget Gmund, because shortly after our arrival, Higher Headquarters modified the non-fraternization laws, thus enabling us to purchase and send home non-rationed articles. Nearly all of us took advantage of this and purchased various items. Shortly before leaving Gmund our Battalion lost several "Old Timers" and "High Pointers", who joined the 36th Division for redeployment. Our stay was climaxed by a large Battalion party, during which we all let our hair down and had a good time.

On the morning of July 7th, our convoy again started forth, this time for an area previously occupied by the French Colonial Troops. Headquarters established themselves

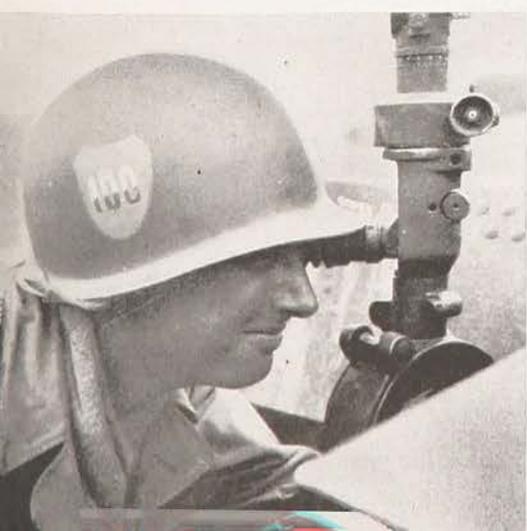




in Sindelfingen along with "A" Battery, while Baker, Charlie, and Service went to Maichingen, Magstadt, and Darmsheim respectively.

Whether it was because they feared and respected us, or because they were glad to see us take over, will never be known, but the people in those towns abided by our every law, and we settled down to making life comfortable.

Again in this area as in others, we immediately undertook the task of organizing our towns, under American Military Government in Böblingen. We stripped the area of all periodicals and articles concerning "Nazism and the Hitler Gang", and proceeded to investigate any indications of Nazi movement. Schools for children under twelve were established under the guidance of the Military Government, and business was reorganized and resumed. In a short time things were running normally, and we returned to the usual routine of guard and training.



ON AUGUST 11th, 1945 THE FOLLOWING ORDERS WERE RECEIVED FROM HEADQUARTERS SEVENTH ARMY;

COMMANDING GENERAL 100th INFANTRY DIVISION

1. AS OF 10 AUGUST THE 100th INFANTRY DIVISION AND THE 100th CIC DETACHMENT ARE ALERTED FOR EARLY MOVEMENT FROM THE ARMY AREA.
2. THIS UNIT IS BEING REDEPLOYED INDIRECT FOR SHIPMENT IN SEPTEMBER THE READINESS DATE IS 10 SEPTEMBER 1945.
3. THE AVAILABILITY DATE IS 27 AUGUST 1945 AND UNIT WILL BE PREPARED FOR MOVEMENT FROM UNIT STATION WITHIN 72 HOURS AFTER RECEIPT OF MOVEMENT ORDERS FROM THIS HEADQUARTERS.
4. PERSONNEL WILL BE ADVISED TO DISPOSE OF EXCESS PERSONAL FUNDS, TROPHIES, AND OTHER SIMILAR ITEMS, THROUGH HOME STATION APO'S OR PERSONAL TRANSFER ACCOUNTS, AS STAGING AREA POSTAL AND FINANCIAL SERVICE FACILITIES ARE LIMITED.
5. FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS WILL BE ISSUED UPON RECEIPT OF ORDERS FROM HIGHER HEADQUARTERS.



The news that we had been expecting since V.E. day had finally arrived, and although we were Pacific bound, we were going home. Just the thought of going home, injected new life into us, and we all pitched in and worked twice as hard. Equipment was cleaned,

checked, and turned in. Inspections of personal equipment were being held throughout the Battalion, and new items were requisitioned to replace lost and torn ones. The clerks were busy with final inspections of records, and in nothing flat we were all set and waiting for further orders. Then suddenly came the news that the world had been waiting for.

+ VJ-DAY +

17th AUGUST 1945.

THE TREACHEROUS ATTACK OF THE JAPANESE ON DECEMBER 7th 1941 HAS BEEN AVENGED BY COMPLETE DEFEAT. FOR THIS WE ARE GRATEFUL TO OUR COMRADES IN THE PACIFIC AREAS. THEIR DEEDS OF HEROISM WILL LIVE THROUGH THE AGES, SIDE BY SIDE WITH YOUR OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENTS.

IN THE PACIFIC AS WELL AS IN EUROPE WE WRAPPED IN SHROUDS OUR HERO DEAD; AND BLED THE HEARTS OF LOVED ONES BY SEPERATION. OUT OF THESE SACRIFICES MUST LIVE THE PRINCIPALS FOR WHICH MEN SUFFERED AND DIED. OUR RESPONSIBILITY IS NOT ONLY INDIVIDUAL, BUT NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL. WE ARE OUR BROTHERS KEEPER. OUR PRAYERS FOR PEACE HAVE BEEN ANSWERD AND NOW WE MAY MEASURE UP TO OUR PRIVILEGE OF LEADING THE WORLD INTO A PROGRAM THAT WILL BLESS THE NATIONS OF THE EARTH TOWARD GREATER MATERIAL PROSPERITY AND A DEEPER SPIRITUAL GRATITUDE TO GOD.

W. A. BURRESS
MAJ. GEN. U.S. ARMY
COMMANDING

The most bloody war in the history of mankind had finally been brought to an end, and now more than ever our thoughts turned to the "States" and home. We were happy and thankful that it was all over even though we feared that our sailing orders would now be changed. Hoping against hope that we would leave before something would happen to prevent it, our "castles in the air" crumbled, upon receipt of orders cancelling our move.

"We best honor their memory.... by striving for peace, that the terror of the days of war will be with us no more."

Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

OTIS H. JEFFERSON

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ANTHONY J. MAFFEI

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JOSEPH A. LIEGEY

*

JOHN HOLLIDAY

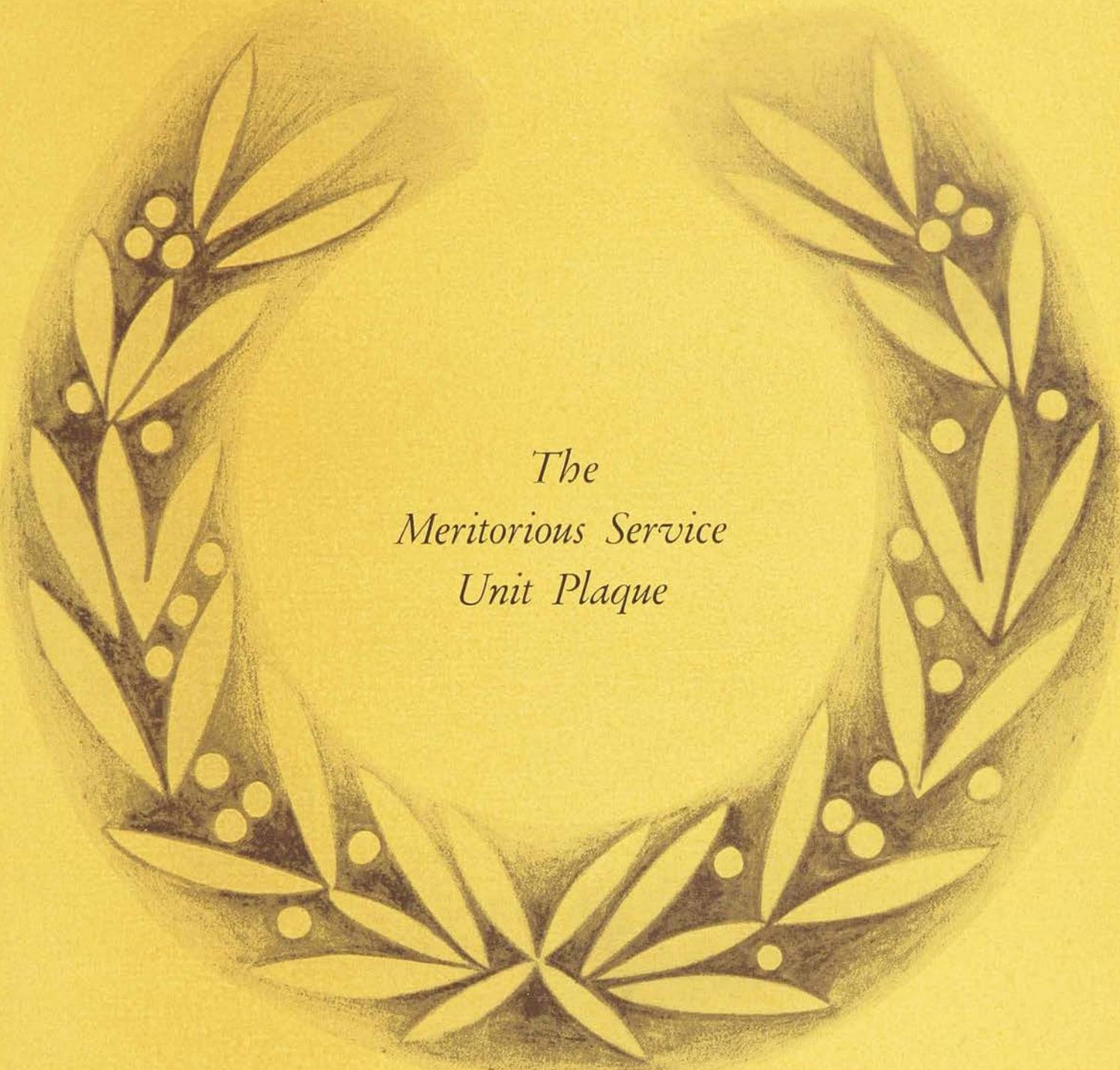
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NORTON I. ALEXANDER



*T*he scarlett is for the Field Artillery, the Bellshaped pointed divisions of the shield represent the fire of the organization. In ancient times boiling pitch was often poured down upon the enemy, therefore, the gutte de poix represents the hail of fire showered upon all opposition, and is also representative of the ability of the battalion to function during the night as well as during the day.

Motto: Fortis atque Fidelis — Brave and Faithful.



*The
Meritorious Service
Unit Plaque*

By direction of the President, and under the provisions of Section 1, Circular number 345, War Department, 23 August 1944, the Meritorious Service Unit Plaque is awarded to

Service Battery

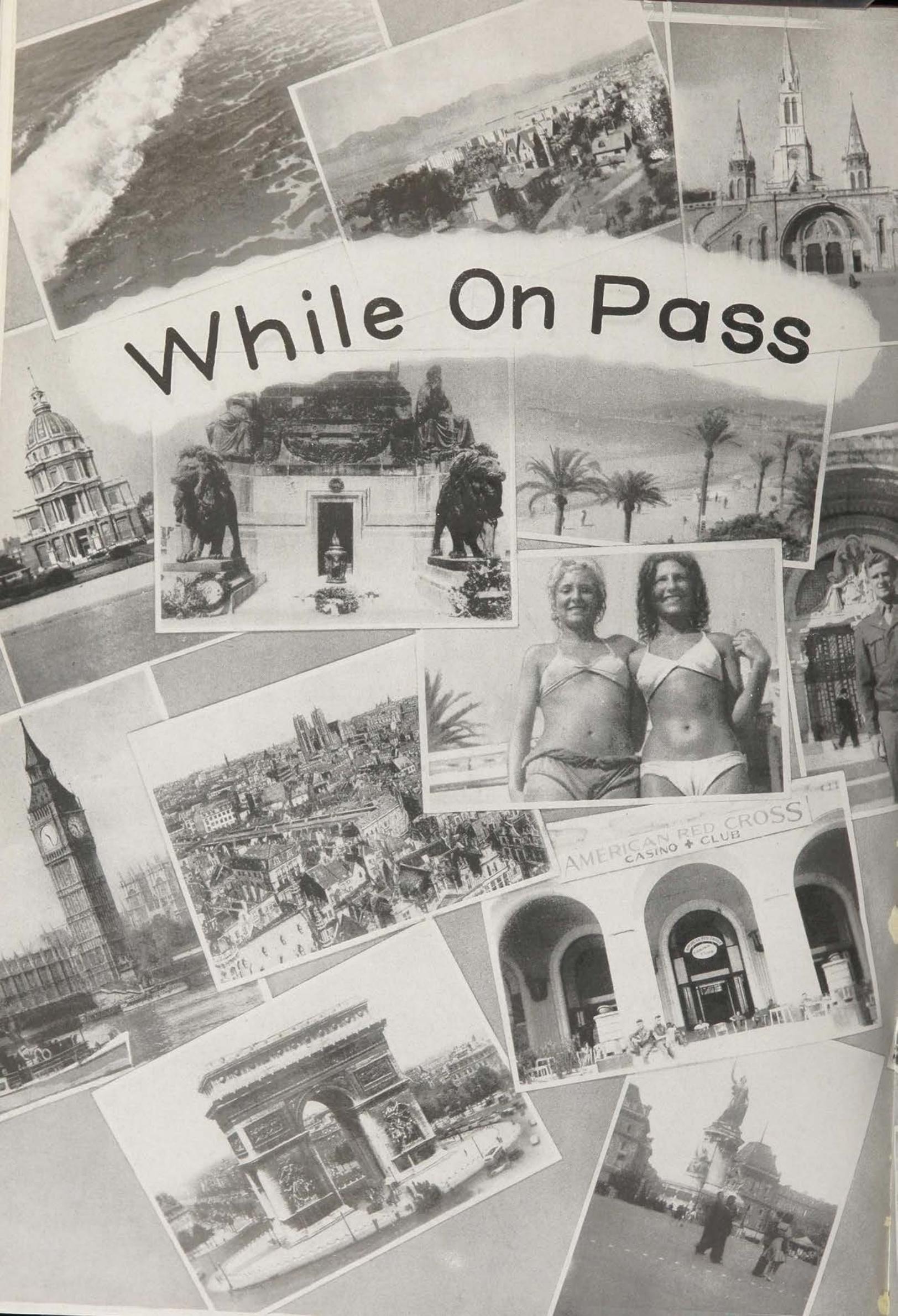
925th Field Artillery Battalion, for superior performance of duty and the achievement of a high standard of discipline during the period from 20 October 1944 to 28 March 1945.

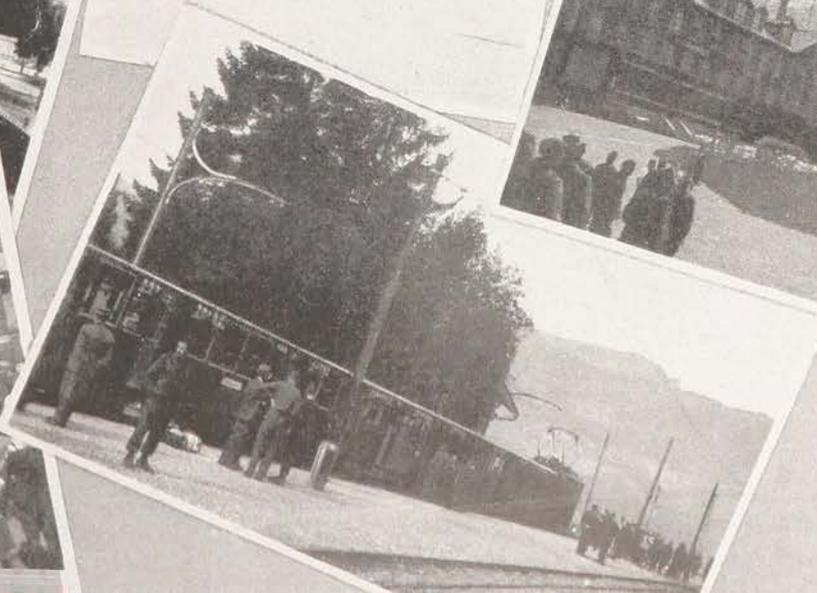
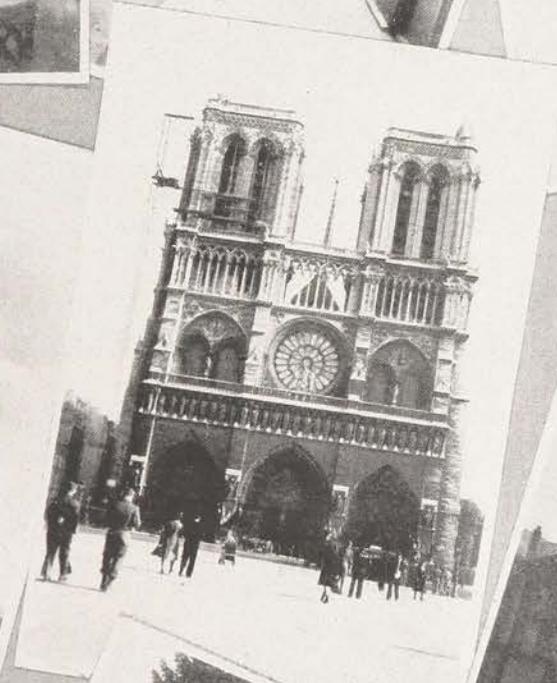
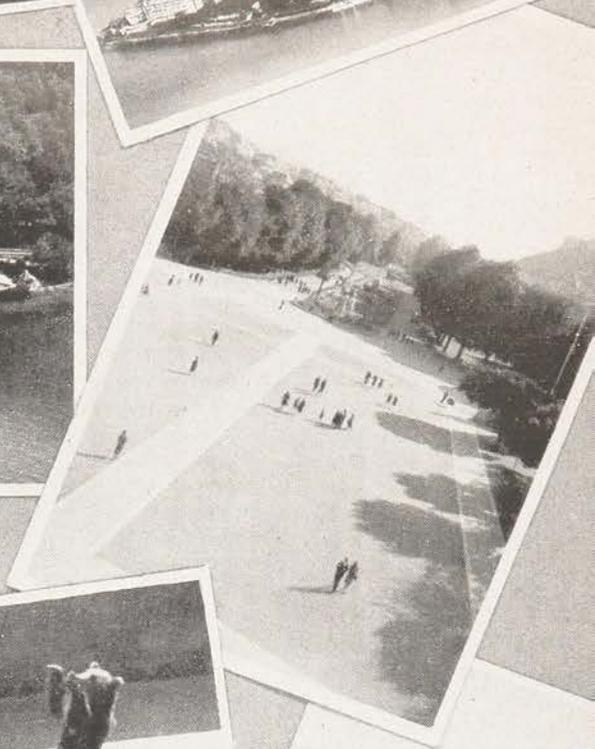
By direction of the President, and under the provisions of Section 1, Circular number 345, War Department, 23 August 1944, the Meritorious Service Unit Plaque is awarded to

Headquarters Battery

925th Field Artillery Battalion, for superior performance of duty and the achievement of a high standard of discipline during the period, from November 1944 to 23 April 1945.

While On Pass





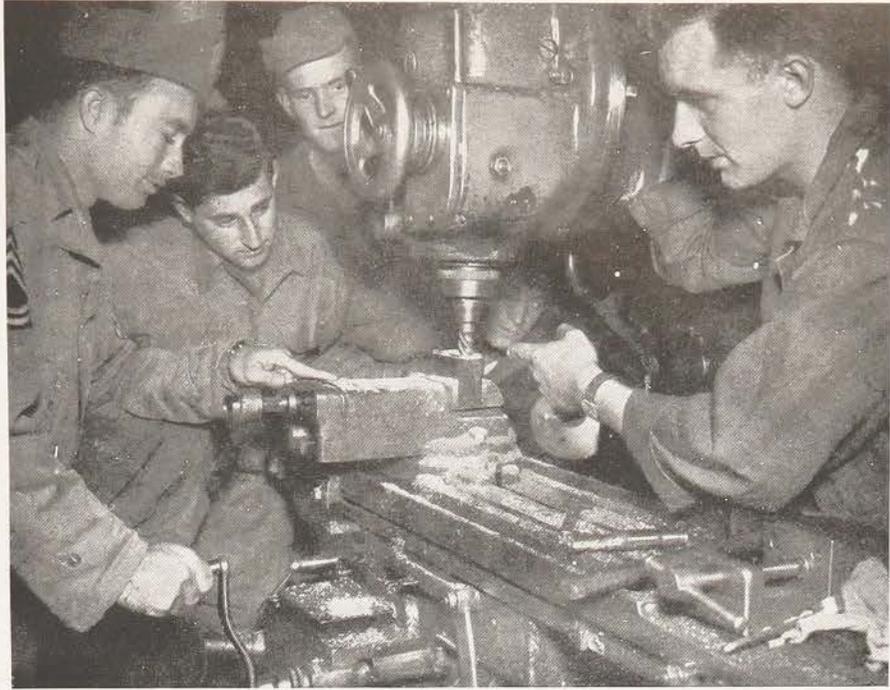
*Gen. Buechler
attending class
on chemistry*



FRINGE UNIVERSITY



*Capt. Dahlberg's
typing class*



The most popular class, Machine Shop.

Many a long face was seen during the next week, and it was noticeable that there was a decided lack of interest in anything we undertook. We needed something to take our minds off of our unhappy predicament, and the inauguration of an Information and Education Program seemed just the thing to fill the bill. Almost immediately the program got into full swing. It was a common sight to see men who had evidently been out of school for years entering "Fringe University" with an armful of books. They were gaining knowledge in subjects of their own choice, and younger members of the Battalion were getting the opportunity to brush up on the subjects they would need to enter college if they so decided.

Not all of the courses were classwork. Those who were more proficient with their hands, had at their disposal the machines and woodshops of Sindelfingen. One of the crowning features of the I and E program was the Journalism Class which produced a weekly Battalion paper comparable to, if not surpassing the best unit papers in the European Theatre of Operations.

As the days passed, more and more of our high point comrades left the 100th Division to go home. We began to check on the critical point brackets and try to arrive at a possible going home date. The brackets were being slowly lowered, but only time would tell the full story. And so in these last days, we continued to do the thing we had been doing ever since our induction into the Army -

"Sweat it out" . . .



Our pilots, and their "cub"

AIR OBSERVATION

From in our foxholes we could hear the steady unfaltering buzz of the seemingly ineffective "Piper Cubs", going out in search of enemy artillery which had been causing us a great deal of trouble and annoyance. Often the men of the various "gun sections", shouted encouraging words to the "Cub" pilots as they struggled into the wind, to find the muzzle of an 88, or to locate a hidden 170 howitzer. This little plane soon commanded the respect of Generals, as well as the Privates.

Lt. Helms, (the first to fly for the 100th Division overseas), and Lt. Williams were the men that made the "Cubs" show their value to us in combat. They out-manuevered the ME 109, dodged flak, and battled adversed weather conditions, while they directed our artillery fire effectively upon the enemy.

Yes, they were the men behind the stick that guided the planes to and from the front, but lets not forget the men who had to work continuously to keep the planes in the air. They were right there patching the holes made by flak, changing oil, over-hauling engines, and the many other things that contribute to a smooth flying plane. That was the primary duty of the mechanics, Sherrets, Keller, Casper, and Idell.

Due to the heavily wooded areas in the Vosges, the demand for Air Liaison was terrific. The pilots, and observers had to double their flights in order to fullfill the necessary missions. To help relieve this situation Lt. Mann, and Cpls. Nager and Cabe came to the Air Liaison section as observers, and radio operators respectively.

Observing was not all that was required by the Air section. They guided motor marches

through the Saar River Valley, and through Germany. Ironically enough they also found a big job in guiding German Prisoners of War to P. W. cages, during the closing stages of combat.

They had earned their reputation in combat, and could justly feel proud of the part they had played in bringing the war to an end.



On the line . . .

OUR MEDICS

Their purpose was to give aid and comfort to the sick and wounded, and they carried out this work to the last full measure of devotion.

During the first few days of combat S/Sgt Jim Garrison, a veteran of Pacific warfare, threw the books away, and gave his men the real lowdown on the job of a medic. From then on there would be no more dry runs. The medics attached to the various Batteries would at times have to make their own split second decisions in treating a casualty before the man reached the aid station. They would have to be emotionally hard if they were to do their best work. At the same time they would have to apply a certain amount of psychology to patients whose imaginations were out of proportion to the actualities.

The first casualties were a test and also a proof that our medics were equal to the task. It was always a consolation to have a medic living right with us at the gun positions, for we felt that if something should happen to warrant it, we would receive immediate attention. The work for a medic at the aid station was not through when the men of his own Battalion had been attended to. On many occasions they would go forward to help out Infantry medics who were hard pressed.

During our stay at Enchenberg, Capt Berger the 925th Battalion medical officer, and his medics, received a letter of commendation from Colonel Corry for turning the Battalion aid station into a Battalion rest center. This action enabled us to be treated for minor ailments right on the spot, and made evacuation unnecessary, thus lessening the need for replacements.

The medics contributed as much to the successful mission of the Battalion as did any other section, and will never be forgotten by the comrades they have aided.



Capt. Berger operating

The Battalion Rest Center



SONS OF BITCHE

In order to commemorate the historic battle for Bitche and to provide a social organization for the men who took part in this campaign, David M. Swift organized what was to become the society of the Sons of Bitche. Inclusive dates for eligibility in the Society were determined as from 14 December 1944 to 11 March 1945, marking the opening and closing dates of the battle for that town. During combat a hilarious show called "Sons of Bitche" was put on several times and met with much success and popularity. A final performance was given in July 1945.



The Grand Exalted Biggest Son of Bitche

Upon the invitation of Grand Exalted Biggist Son of Bitche David M. Swift, the Batteries of this Battalion organized themselves into Sub-chapters, and then as a chapter in the Battalion during August 1945.

The first meeting of the 925th Field Artillery Battalion Chapter was held on Friday 10 August 1945. Those attending the meeting were the elected officers of the Sub-chapters — a total of 10 men — to be called the Board of Directors. Members of the Board were: Gordon M. Gibbs, Robert H. Hink, Thomas C. Bobbitt, Charles H. Heise, William P. Drayer, Edgar Sackett, Anthony Kraisky, Elmer A. Buelow, Lloyd Newman, and Harold A. Hofsass. From these men, the following were elected as officers of the Battalion Chapter: Gordon M. Gibbs — President, Thomas C. Bobbitt — Treasurer, and Elmer A. Buelow — Secretary.

The board decided upon the name of the town of Enchenberg as the chapter's name inasmuch as the Battalion had its battle position in the town's vicinity during a large share of the time spent in the struggle for Bitche.

On 15 August 1945, following the performance of a Battalion stage show "Homeward Bound", the Enchenberg Chapter was formally inducted into the Society by the token induction of one "Son" Ferdinand Del Rio, by Lt. Colonel Robert L. Cardell, Divisional

Artillery Executive. It was at that time that the Charter was presented to the Chapter.

Since that time a constitution has been drawn up by the Society of the "Sons of Bitche" and it has become an exclusive organization in the later formed Century Association.



BATTALION SPORTS

Throughout the Battalion, the athletic program was always a major part of the training schedule. Such activities as softball, football, and volleyball enstilled among us a keen sense of competition and in an indirect way taught us that much more can be accomplished in both work and play when men work together as a team.

Back in the days of basic training and the pre-maneuver period we didn't have much time for any type of organized athletics. We were pretty busy learning our respective jobs and the teamwork that was and would be necessary for us to fulfill our mission in the days of combat. However, there were times during the free hours when the men chose up sides for a little softball or a game of touch football. Even up in "them

thar Tennessee hills" some of the men would walk to a nearby pasture for a game of football during the few days rest between operations.

Basic and maneuvers safely tucked away and just the polishing up to be done, we had more time for sports. The two baseball diamonds behind the messhalls at Ft. Bragg were used afternoon and evening for games between different batteries, or different sections within the Batteries. However, the alert for the trip overseas came and we didn't have time for any football that year. We were too busy packing all our equipment and moving to the staging area, and then to the port of embarkation.

Probably the most predominant sport during those hectic two weeks at sea was that of "little gallop in dominoes". Wherever you walked you would see a group of men gathered, playing the most popular game in the Army.

During combat we didn't have much time for athletic activity. Every day we were on the move to some new positions. But during the long months in Enchenberg, with the "Jerries" only two miles away, a few of the men would, if conditions permitted, play volleyball or football.

At the War's end, we engaged in the largest and best organized athletic program this Battalion had ever had. We will always remember the athletic field we had in the small town of Sindelfingen. Softball, football, volleyball, golf, and horseshoes, are some of the sports that took place there. The most popular of these sports were softball, football, and volleyball. Service Battery's team wound up as Battalion champions in softball, and in the playoffs, tied for first place in the Division Artillery championship tournament. Baker's volleyball team advanced through the Battalion, Division Artillery, and up to the Division finals before they were beaten.

Yes, the good times we had and the sports we played during our stay in the Army will never be forgotten. Remembered too will be some of the outstanding players such as, Colonel Corry, Captain Weaver, Lieutenant Livingston, Leigey, Krebbs, Little, Crowley, Sutton, and last but not least, old Jim Hennessy who played the game the way it should be played, hard and clean.



HISTORICAL STAFF

*
George W. Wolf

*
Allan E. Kuebler

*
Howard M. Alboum

*
Charles A. Butler

*
Adolf Herbst
Henry H. Chase
Leslie Weinstein

*
Pub. Officer Myles H. Geer



Published by and for the men of the 925th Field Artillery Battalion

THE WEEKLY REVIEW

An unofficial weekly published during our occupation period

12 Issues

Sindelfingen, Germany

Sept. 1, 1945—Nov. 17, 1945

EDITORIAL

STAFF George J. Aziz • Gordon M. Gibbs • Raymond E. Gilyard • Paul Katz • Jack P. Mason • Robert J. Mazzara • Charles J. Miller • Leonard Moston • Lloyd C. Newman • Jerome Seligsohn • Harry C. Staley **PHOTOGRAPHY** Allan E. Kuebler **SPORTS** Robert H. Hink
Warren L. Crowley **CARTOONIST** Howard M. Alboum **ADVISORS** Captain Carl G. Dahlberg • 1st Lt. Myles H. Geer

The Weekly Review, a Battalion Newspaper published for and by the men of the 925th, was an outstanding feature of the Information and Education Program which was in progress during our "Sweating it out" period. Printed in Sindelfingen, Germany, by one of the oldest publishing houses in the Wurtemberg Province, the paper covered Division and Battalion events, World News, and featured an excellent sports page. Its cartoons and photographs were considered among the best in the entire division.

Overcoming many obstacles that were common to all G.I. publications printed on the continent, the principal ones being that the printers, linotypists, and compositors could neither read nor write English, the Review never once failed to meet its Saturday afternoon deadline.

Combining a daring and provocative editorial policy with a complete and concise news coverage, the paper became one of the leading weeklies in the Division. The New York Post and the Port Chester Daily Item were only two of the many American newspapers which reprinted articles and editorials from our Battalion publication.

THE WEEKLY REVIEW
PUBLISHED BY THE 925th FA BATTALION
SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 1945
SINDELFINGEN, GERMANY

Division Celebrates Anniversary With Review, Grid Game

Under a spectacular display of band accompaniment, the Anniversary Review, which was held at the Division Club, was a most successful affair.

From 8:30 p.m. until 11:00 p.m. the review was held at the Division Club. The review was held at the Division Club, which was the main attraction of the evening.

The review was held at the Division Club, which was the main attraction of the evening.

Academy Award Winner Of 1927 Found In Stuttgart

When the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences announced that the Academy Award for Best Actor had been won by Paul Robeson for his performance in "Body and Soul" in 1945, it was a great honor for the actor.

Paul Robeson, who was born in 1898, was a famous actor and singer. He was the first African American to win the Academy Award for Best Actor.

56-59 Group Will Remain With Division; Below To Transfer From Battalion

The 56-59 Group will remain with the Division, while the 56-59 Group will transfer from the Battalion.

Century Div. Marks Its 3rd Anniversary

The Century Division celebrated its third anniversary on November 10, 1945.

Cluster, Bronze Stars Awarded

Cluster and Bronze Stars were awarded to several members of the Division.

INDEX

- Academy Award Winner
- Cluster, Bronze Stars Awarded
- Century Div. Marks Its 3rd Anniversary
- 56-59 Group Will Remain With Division
- Division Celebrates Anniversary
- Alas! All is Forgotten



Alsations: Mamma and Pappa



And so it was

Pictures at Random

*



Lt. Caruso



Sign Post



At the start of 10 mile"s



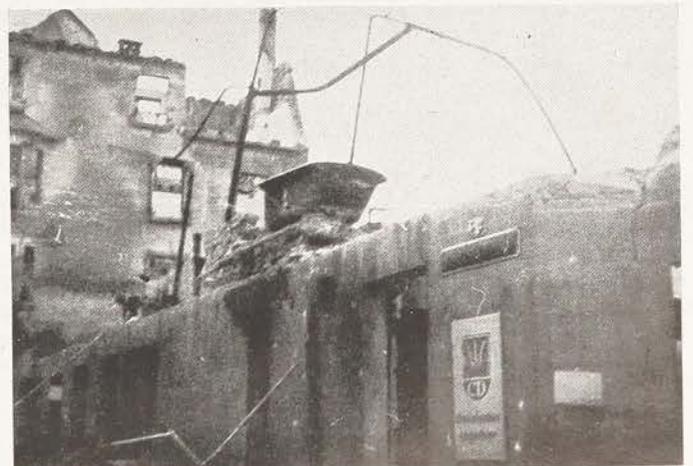
"We surrender dear!"



Passing in Review. N.Y.C. 1944



Beast of burden, the Frauline



A modern improvement, "Air Conditioning"



Wanna haircut, Willie



Christmas, 1944...



Dip that messkit



A lot of Bull



"At Ease!"

*
DECORATIONS
+
ROSTER
*



LEGION OF MERIT

Weaver, Roy R.



SILVER STAR

Bartscher, William J.
Clarke, Edgar A.
Schwartz, Warren W.



PURPLE HEART

Clarke, Edgar A.
Corry, Ted H.
Dineen, William C.
Eddy, Milton A.
Fisher, Edwin H.
Geer, Myles H.
Phillips, Miles B.
Tison, Herbert R.

Chappell, Henry J.
Columbo, John C.
Facchin, Dan M.
Fatata, James
Garrison, James E. Jr.
Hall, Arthur R.
Helmicki, Stanley J.
Hucko, Joseph
Hulmes, William J.
Jordan, William V.
Kelley, John C.
Kirsch, Edgar C. Jr.
Kopec, Charles J.
Miller, William J.
Minecci, Vincent
Naples, John
O'Brien, Edward G.
Padlowski, Oscar
Pazera, Chester
Rapp, Row W.
Russell, Ebenezer
Schumacker, Otto R.
Simmons, Frederick W.
Thompson, Lloyd F.
Tuma, George
Zutter, Kazmar



AIR MEDAL

Geer, Myles H.
Helmes, Kenneth R. (2 Cl.)
Mann, Rolland H. (2 Cl.)
Nager, Sidney (2 Cl.)
Williamson, Horace P. (3 Cl.)



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Hale, Martin
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Dziergowski, Walter W.
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Dahlberg, Carl G.
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Duffy, Francis L.
Dziegiel, Adolph C.
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Eddy, Milton A.
Egeressy, John J. Jr.
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Gilman, Norbert E.
Glazier, Edwin C.
Goldman, Andre D.
Greela, Victor C.
Griffin, Norman D.

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Hale, Martin
Handfield, Henry W.
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Kelley, John E.
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Ziegele, Wallace
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HAS OCCURRED IN THE
REDEPLOYMENT SITUATION. AND...

