

## **"THE ROCHESTER RAID"**

In late December, 1944 the 100th Division was at a standstill after the first attack on Bitche was halted.

The "Brass" knew that the area was ripe for a counterattack but was unaware that the Germans were about to launch "Operation Nord Wind."

Our lines were stretched to the breaking point after Patton had turned north to help contain the "Bulge" in the Ardennes. The 2nd Battalion, 398th Inf. was on line between Bitche and Petit Rederching. There were reports of enemy action to our front and Battalion was interested in knowing what was going on out there.

Lt. Bob Rush of "G" Company, who had received his battle field commission on December 18th, was summoned to the Battalion CP and ordered to lead a combat patrol about a mile behind the lines in the area of Dollenbach to determine what strength was in the area and to raise as much havoc as possible. The code name for this operation was "Rochester."

The plan was to raid Dollenbach with "G" Company's first platoon of 26 men. The platoon was way under strength so Rush had to rely on volunteers from the rest of the Company in order to fill the ranks. The plans for the raid were fairly simple but had to be executed with perfect teamwork. Rush divided the group into teams, each with its own objectives. There were ten two-man teams and two three-man teams. (See list of teams on page 3) A session with the men involved was held in Hottviller and Rush laid out the plan and explained each team's objective.

The patrol was to leave the lines through "F" Company directly across from Dollenbach, swing down the hill to the right and hopefully find a way through the enemy lines to approach the town from the east or "through the back door."

Fortunately December 30 was a very dark night allowing the group to proceed without detection as long as they kept silent. As they approached where it was thought the German positions were, the scouts whispered back that they could hear voices. The platoon reversed its path and swung further to the right in hopes of finding a clear way through. When they turned again they were fortunate to find no enemy and they slipped through undetected. Later it was surmised that the jerries, in that area, were back getting chow.

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Shortly they were in position about 100 yards outside of the east edge of town. Team number 2, whose job was to guard the entry, took its position on both sides of the road and the other teams then started down the street to take their positions at buildings previously designated by Lt. Rush.

After the last of the teams had gone by, team 2 headed through the town to take its place at the other side to protect the withdrawal.

The signal for the raiders to start action by firing into the buildings, throwing grenades and doing all the damage they could was for Rush to fire his rifle but, before everyone was quite ready someone fired a shot and all hell broke loose.

Lt. Rush's later report told of a chow line being fired into, grenades being tossed into houses and everyone doing his job as efficiently as possible. His estimate was that perhaps 12 enemy were killed and many more wounded.

As soon as each member of the patrol emptied his weapon and threw his grenades, he started to get out of town as fast as possible. Nearly everyone was out in perhaps 10 to 15 minutes.

Team 2 could not complete its job of trying to determine if everyone was safely out as they streamed by in such a hurry there was no way to keep an accurate count. After returning directly to the "F" Company positions it was determined that only two men were not present. They had been held up by enemy fire. A short time later they too returned to the "F" Company lines.

It was a very successful raid that was carried out with no "G" Company casualties.

Note: See "Stars And Stripes" article and Bob Rush's notes and list of those involved that was in the "G" Company News Letter.



# DOLLENBACH RAID

DECEMBER 30, 1944





**THE HOUSE WHERE THE KRAUT HOLLARED "HALTE"**



**LOOKS LIKE WW II BUT NOW IT IS A SCHNAPPS DISTILLARY**

# DOLLENBACH RAID

DECEMBER 30, 1944



THE GHOSTS RETURN TO RAID DOLLENBACH AGAIN