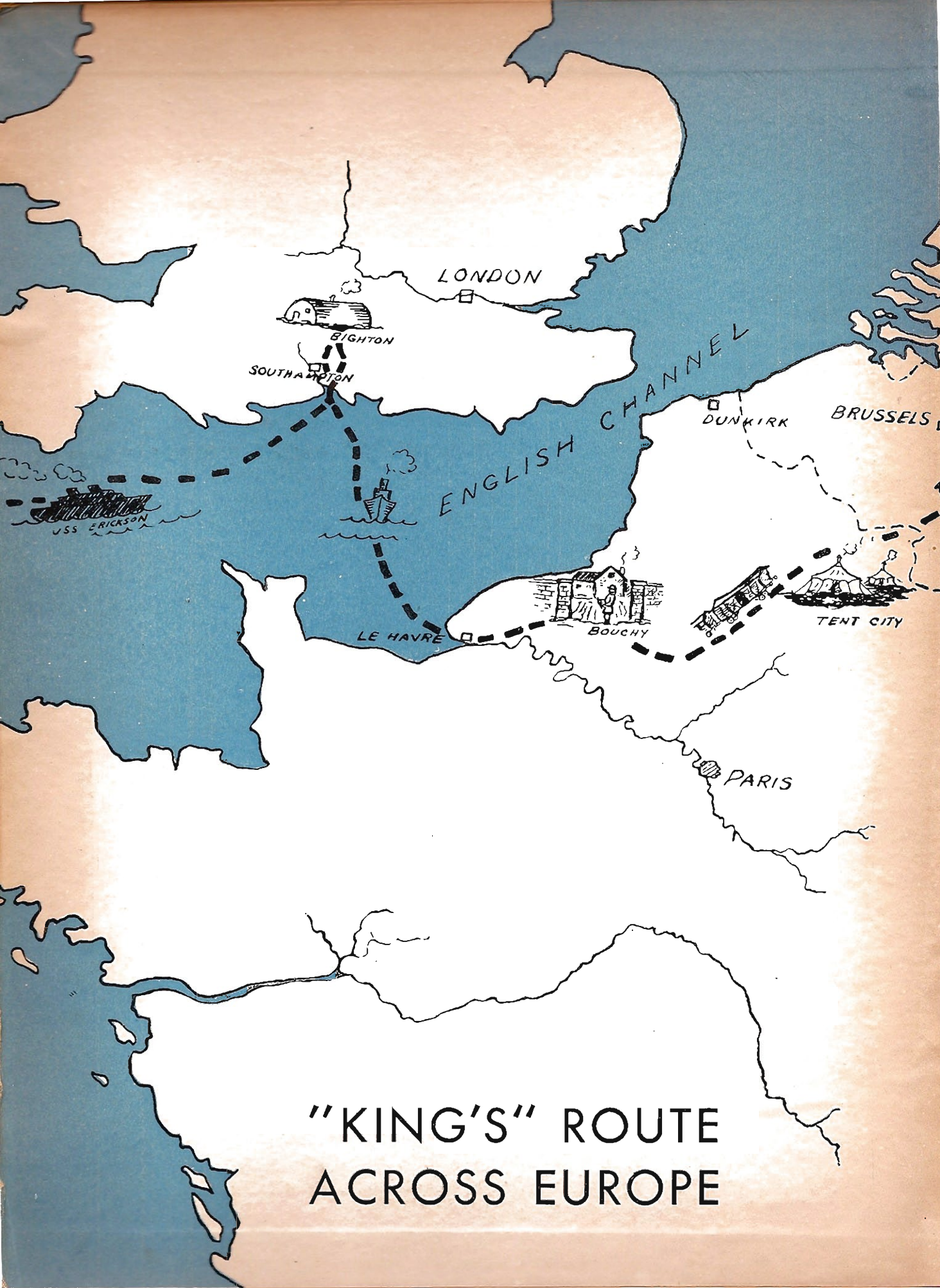
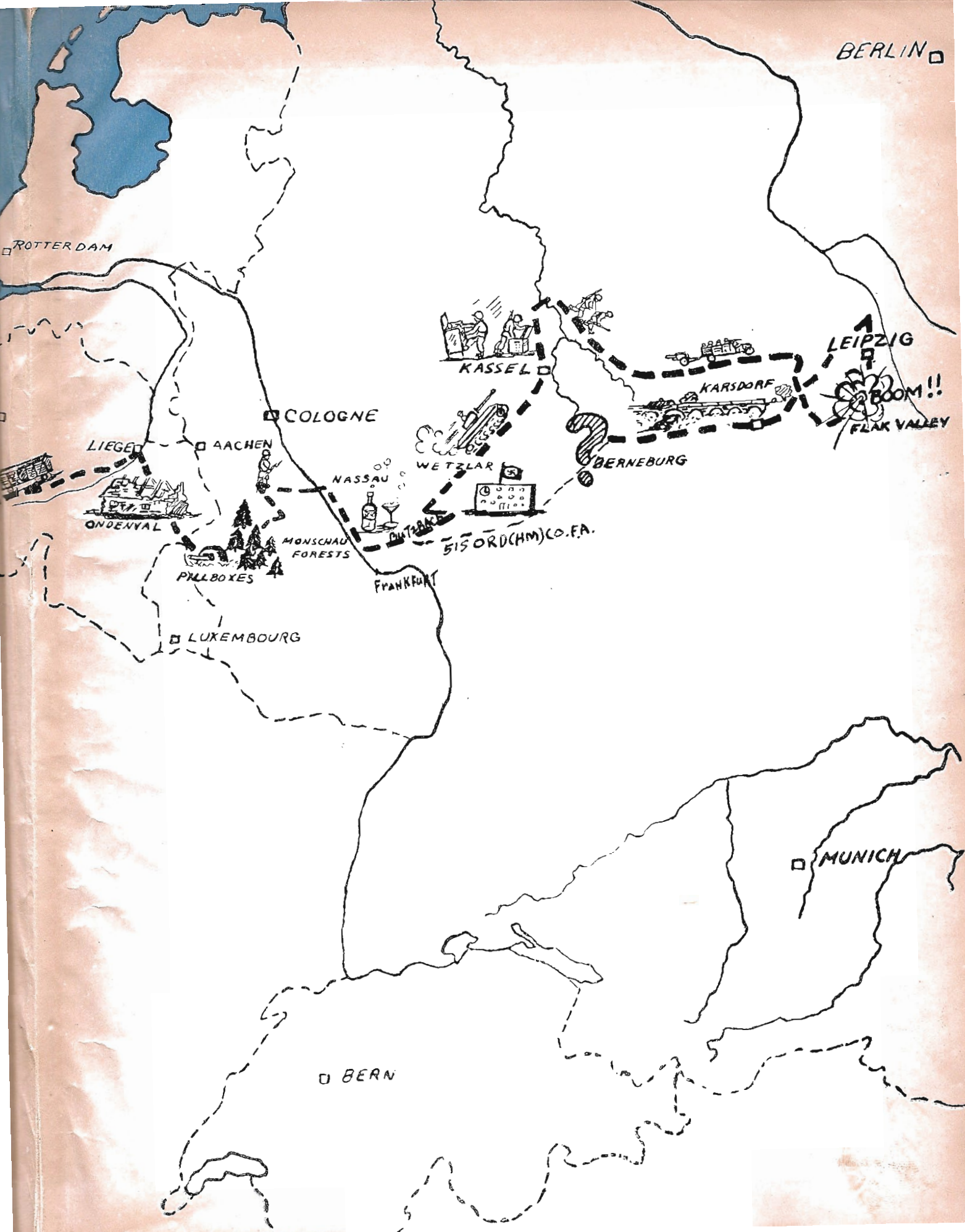




271st INFANTRY



"KING'S" ROUTE ACROSS EUROPE



CO. K
OUR STORY



BY
THE MEN
OF
TRESPASS BLUE KING

JULY 1945

From the CO.

An Infantry Rifle Company is the most important unit in the Army. To stay and fight with one, takes extra courage and stamina, of which every man in Company K had plenty to spare.

We, the ones who fought and lived, respectfully dedicate this History to those of this Company who fought and died.

I am grateful to have been accepted as the Commander of the finest Company I have ever been associated with, Company K, 271st Infantry.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Herbert R. Pickett". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "H" and "P".

HERBERT R. PICKETT,
Capt., 271st Inf.,
Commanding.

Introduction

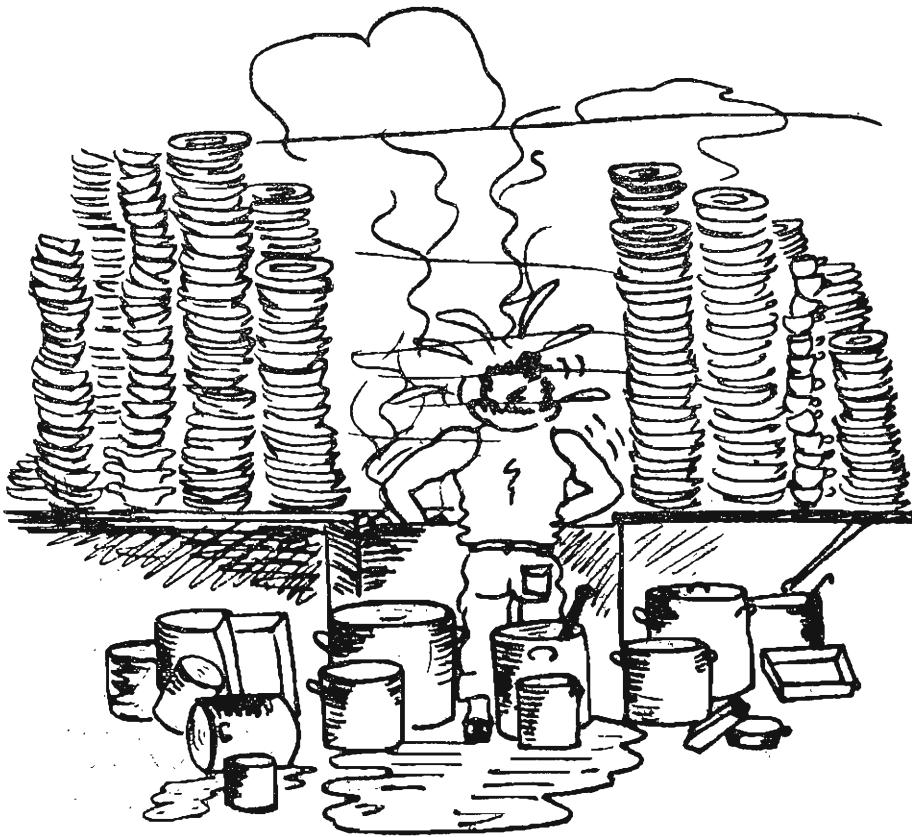
This is the story of the men who are and were K Company. Their life as members of a line outfit was far from pleasant. Most of us have been around long enough to know that the infantry doesn't have the softest bed in the army. To picture it otherwise is to veer from the truth. Therefore, in this book we have attempted to record our lives in K Company and the attitudes we had toward events as they were happening.

To do this, we have attempted to include all the bitches as well as all the highlights we could recall. However, in spite of our bitching, we ask you to remember as we do, the genuine sorrow felt by the men who have had to leave the Company and the fact that they felt this way despite all the chicken they went through.

We'll Remember Camp Shelby

K Company was born in Camp Shelby, Miss. on May 15, 1943. In the past two years it has changed completely several times. It has had at least 10 C. O's and 4 complete turnovers in men. A few men have stayed with the Company throughout its existence. Their memory of Shelby may be blunted by recent events, but it will surely never be destroyed. For the rest of us who joined the Company but lately the days at Shelby are surprisingly like the days in basic or in the States in other camps. If phrases like B-4 and Hattiesburg mean nothing to you, then close your eyes and pretend we're talking about Camp Wheeler, area G-North, and Macon, or Gordon, Maxey or whatever one you were exposed to.

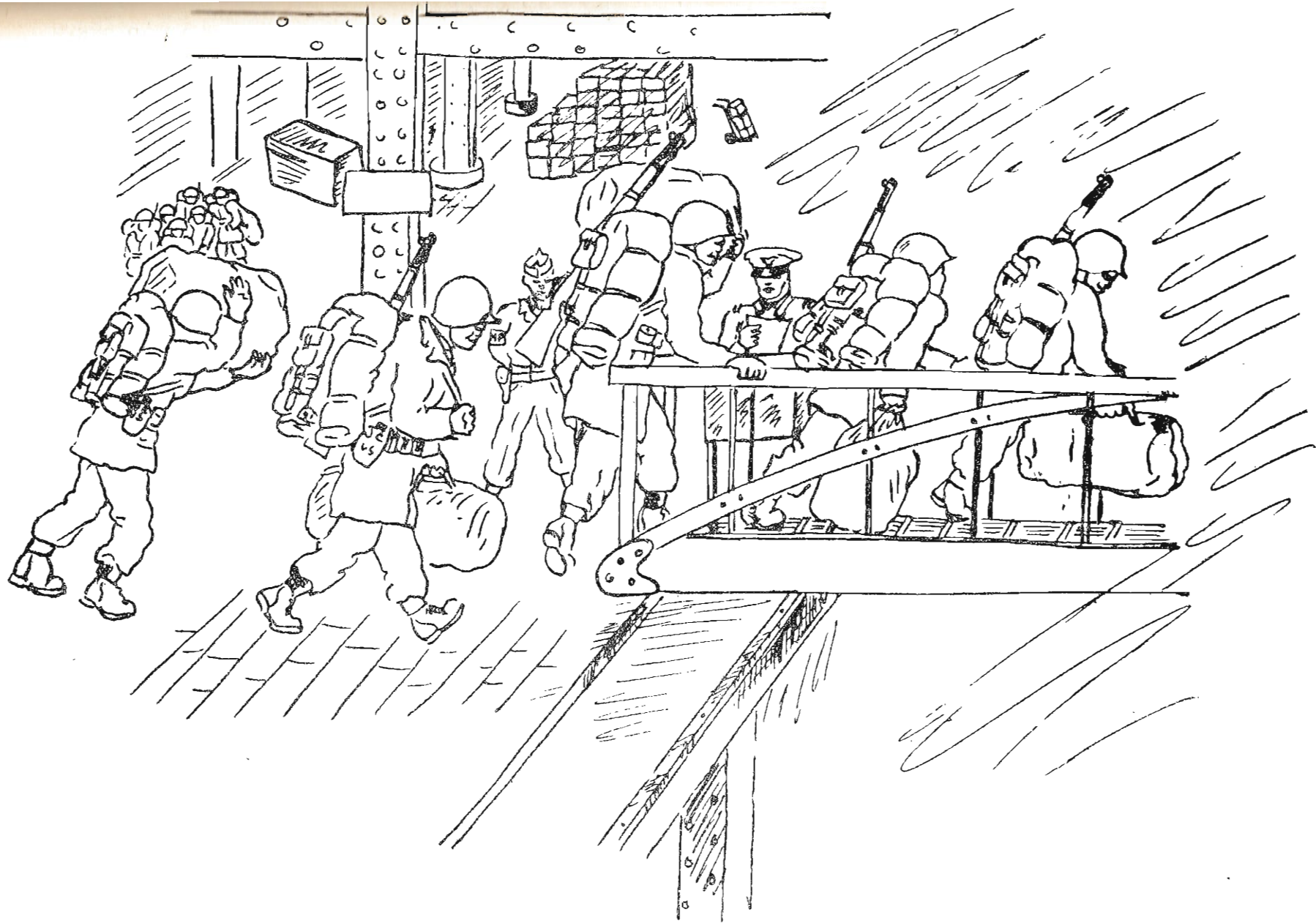
In those days we sang a song "We'll Remember Camp Shelby" to the tune of "We'll Remember Pearl Harbor." When we sang it we thought of eggs at the back



door and the mad dash to the mess hall, throwing our helmet liners into the huts. We thought of the Service Clubs where we could get ice cream and doughnuts and where there were dances on Friday nights; of PX 24 where we could buy cigarettes and candy by the box, and flirt with the PX girls or cuss if someone else held up the line by beating our time; of the theaters where we saw shows every night and where we learned how easy it was to buck a long line if you knew a lot of the "boys". We thought of all the clip joints in Hattiesburg and how bad it was that we couldn't buy a decent drink in town, or do anything but see a movie, have a couple beers,

1000 - 1030 --- "HAND TO HAND"





and go back to camp; of the more pleasant time we could have in New Orleans with its restaurants and French quarter, or Biloxi, Gulfport, or even in Laurel. We'll even remember that ridiculously small town called Brooklyn (Mississippi - - of course).

But most of all, we'll remember that Shelby stood for chicken. We did plenty of bitching about standing retreat every night and police call even on Sundays — about the green looey we got fresh from Benning — about the parades and inspections we were forever standing — about the training program because we heard the same old thing day after day and were tired of it — about the ways they had of varying the schedule with night problems and hikes — about KP and the "informal" guard mount — about hand to hand combat and bayonet drill — about the orders that were always coming down from the brass.

We will also remember K Company as "Killer K" or "Flanking K". We called ourselves that because we usually got the most rugged assignments. It was K Company that policed the service club. It was K Company that ploughed through the swamps and rivers to flank whole battalions when we were on maneuvers. It was K Company that walked if anybody walked. It was K Company that missed dhow if anybody went hungry, and it was K that was the last to get a bivouac area. Even on the trip to France, it was K Company that drew the task of unloading all the duffle bags from the ship at Le Havre.

There were many times when we got puffed off and said we'd just as soon go overseas and quit living the Shelby life. But it didn't look as if we ever would unless we went individually. The army seemed to be using the 69th as a replacement pool or advanced IRTC. Although plenty of men left for overseas it seemed as if K Company would still be there to close the camp after the war.

At least that was the situation until the summer of '44. There were rumors - - at first wild and varied but as time went on they became narrowed down. A few dared guess the time we would leave. To most of us the ETO was an odds on favorite. We heard talk of new equipment and clothes, white helmets (for occupation) and of the various POE's. Finally actions appeared to confirm the rumors. We went on thirty day maneuvers into the Mississippi swamps to alternately freeze and sweat till middle October. We got classes on censorship and on the German soldier. We turned in our weapons for endless ordnance inspections. We policed up the area. We didn't get white helmets. We were issued new weapons soaked in cosmoline. We crated our equipment and tried to get our personal affairs in order. Some of us even made wills.

Then the great day came. After a lot of rumors had petered out, there came a rumor that actually was true. The order was given to leave. After policing up the Company area at least six times and B-4 at least once, we put on our packs and marched to the firebreak for the last time. It was the night of October 31 when we loaded onto trucks that for once were not too crowded. Then we went to the railroad station where we found the first of a series of bands that were to bid us good-bye and welcome us during our travels.

The train wasn't bad. It was an army sleeper with three-decker bunks that were pretty comfortable. During the day the compartments were big enough for a

good sized blackjack game. Chow was surprisingly good and what with all the paper plates, KP meant just serving chow, so it was a good deal. A lot of us were sure that we were headed for Camp Kilmer, N. J., and that sounded good because New York and Philadelphia were so close. Our big worry was over passes. We knew that there was a good chance we would not stay long enough to get out of camp.

As we entered New Jersey the card games broke up and it became difficult to sit still long enough to read a book. The months at Shelby accentuated our curiosity over the new camp. Well, for once we were more than satisfied. Kilmer was like the movie conception of an army camp. Its big barracks (two housed the whole Company), its consolidated mess halls, its huge and well stocked PX's all added up to a very pleasant camp. But what we enjoyed most were the big cities that were so near. Times Square was one hour away and it was the same to Philly. We had ten days there and most of us had three or four passes. And what passes—some of the boys are still talking about them.

But like all good things, our stay here had to come to an end. The boat drills, lectures on life boats, talks on security, and practice in boarding trains, all led to the moment when we would leave for our ship. Finally, on November 14, the moment came. As usual the trip was by night. None of us were ashamed to admit a nostalgic thought or two as we passed familiar places on the way to the harbor. Arriving at New York, we once more put on our packs, picked up our duffle bags, and boarded the ferry. The ferry took us to the dock area. We climbed a series of spiral stairs to the docks themselves where coffee and doughnuts awaited us.

The Atlantic

The Red Cross girls finished passing out coffee and doughnuts and we, the men of K Company, marched up to the gangplank, proved to the Transportation Corps Officers that we knew our first names and middle initials, and then, with a final "The 69th will never go overseas", we staggered across the gangplank onto the boat.

It's hard to remember what we thought that moment. Most of us were still dazed by New York and Philly. We didn't know where we were going — we didn't know how. We didn't know the size of the ship or its name. Some of us were optimistic about the Army of Occupation — some weren't. Everyone was news-hungry and rumor-fed. There were a few enterprising individuals who tried to find the answers to our questions from the ship's crew. Thus less than an hour after we got our bunks, we knew that our new home was the "Erickson", a sister ship of the "Gripsholm", that she made trips to both England and France, that Cherbourg and Le Havre were cleared and that Antwerp might already be in use.

For most of us the trip was a novelty but the army was careful to maintain many of the traditional aspects of army life a la Shelby. We still had to sweat out lines — for chow, for movies (when and if), to shave, even to get in and out of our sardine can. The duty roster was not packed away in a box. Some of us pulled KP, dumped garbage, and as usual, we all policed up the area.

We even had a training schedule, complete with talks on field sanitation, military courtesy and discipline, and language classes. Another important event each day was the inspection of the ship. A considerable portion of each day was dedicated to preparation for this inspection. For the hour before it, we were herded from one deck to another. Everywhere GI's were asking guards,

"Where do we go from here?"

And the guards were answering,

"Beats the Hell out of me, but

you can't stay here. We're cleaning up."

The prohibition extended to all decks, our quarters and even the ship sanitary facilities (latrines to you muggs). Finally the inspectors began to look over the ship. There were so many officers in the "daisy chain" that the captains in the rear hardly knew what was going on in front. The whole process was pretty difficult at the time, but we will all remember it with a chuckle. Anyway we usually got "excellent" on our quarters.

All in all, we soon discovered that army life on board ship was no different from army life anywhere else. Although many of us believed that we were getting away from chicken when we shipped overseas, we soon learned that was wrong; and in a way, our boat trip served to introduce us to life in the ETO. We learned the hard way that courts-martial could be used for something other than punishing AWOL, desertion etc. The courts-martial room, which by accident or choice was also the enlisted men's lounge, was in considerable use, but not as a lounge.

While the problems of army life remained with us, we also discovered new problems which came from living on a ship. The first thing we noticed was that there were too many people on board the ship. We didn't go aboard, we were packed aboard. Bunks were four high; alleyways were impassible for more than one man at a time. Even when the decks were open, it was difficult to find a place to play a few hands of seven card stud. And incidentally, remember that no-gambling rule. I suppose that order is given more and followed less than anything the army has ever tried. We soon discovered that matches served well as chips, and there was even a big Acey Deucey game below the bridge. Those big huddles we saw on deck didn't cover someone dressing but a cold cash crap game. Till all hours of the night there were blackjack games and nickel ante poker. Most of us had spent our money that last night in the States, but what little we still had began to circulate madly.

When we first boarded the ship, we were told to shave daily. The next morning we made a big discovery - salt water won't lather. Things were pretty rough till we found that clear hot water ran for a couple of hours each day. This meant, of course, that we had to stand in line to shave. As for showers we were limited entirely to salt water and even those who indulged regularly were pretty dirty when we hit port.

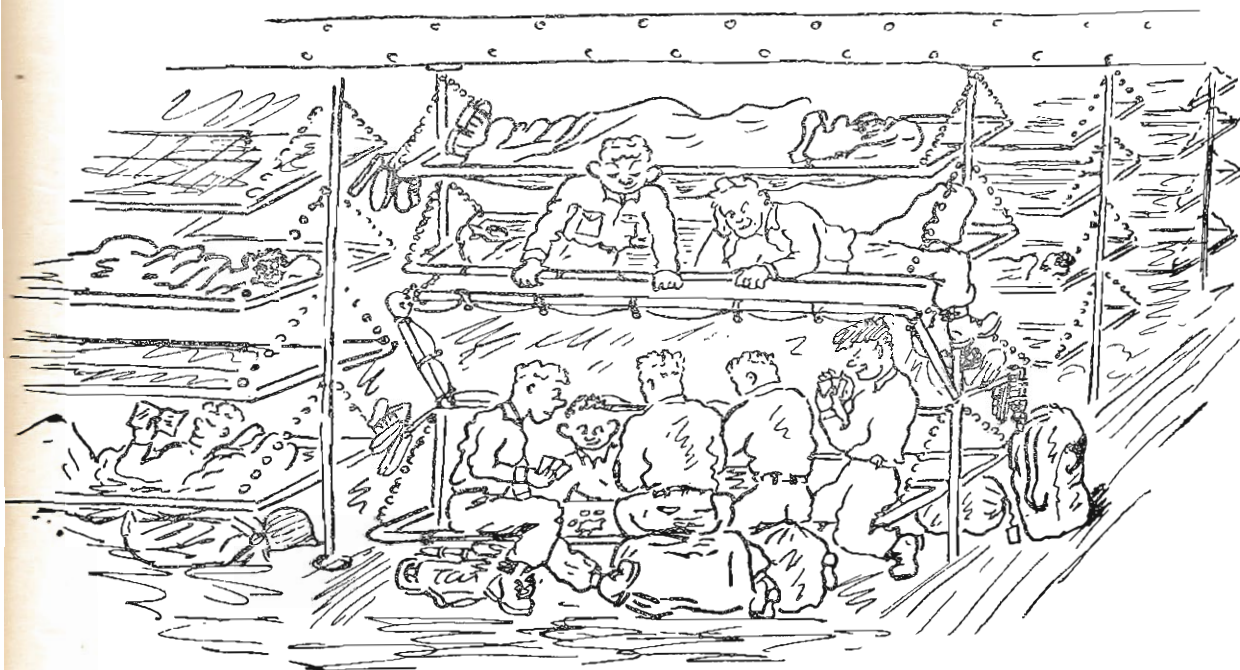
Then there was the chow. The ship was so crowded that we had to be satisfied with two meals a day. It was a good thing we got coffee or soup to relieve that empty feeling around noon. Sometimes the meals were good, sometimes not so good.

Considering everything the chow situation was OK. On Thanksgiving we were still on the high seas, so we ate Thanksgiving dinner out of our mess buckets. Anyway, they say the food gets mixed up inside, so what the hell.

We also managed to get all the PX rations we wanted. We could buy plenty of cigarettes, and Hershey almonds and Mars bars came by the box. We were to remember this experience many times in the following months as cigarettes, candy and toilet articles became scarce. What we worried about then was finding a place to smoke. Blackout was declared early because of the danger of submarines; we never could smoke in our quarters; even the head was forbidden. Somehow we weathered it, by means which we made up as we went along. If we talk about them too much, perhaps, they won't work again.

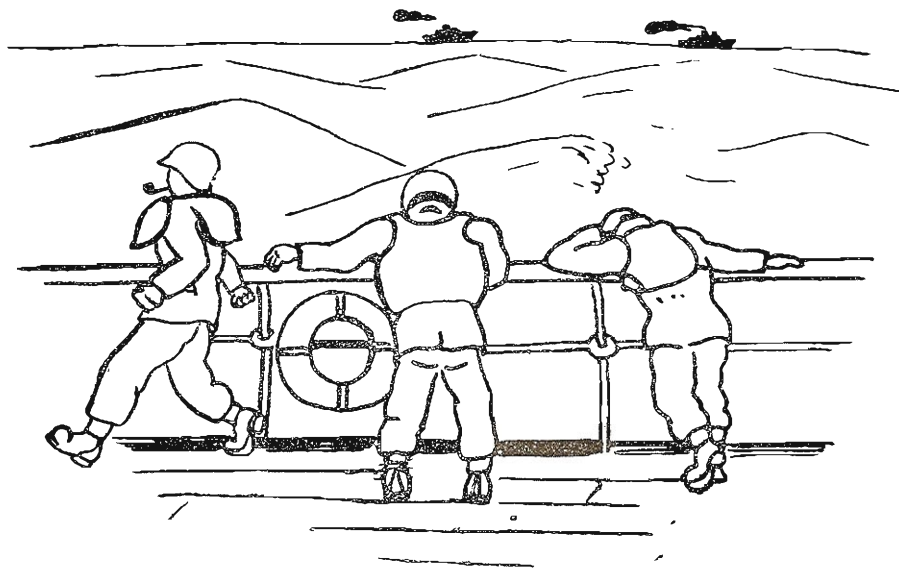
Another major inconvenience we suffered was seasickness. Most of us were rookies and when we hit rougher waters we had to use the GI cans and the boat-rails. The few who had made other trips kept saying, "This ain't nothin'" and seemed to have quite a time out of our discomfort; but until we got our sea legs it was bad enough. As it was we missed plenty of meals, plenty of classes and details, and a few periods of PT. It was especially hard to stand on the deck during the daily boat drill which came promptly at 2:30. All the drill amounted to was everybody falling out onto the deck and standing there. That's all we did. While we stood there, the boat swayed and moved till everyone was afraid that some green-faced Joe near him would puke. Most of all we were afraid that green-faced Joe would be ourselves.

Finally it was announced that we were going to Southampton, England. That was OK with us. At least we figured that if we were going to England first, the



chances of the war's being over before we would be committed, were that much better. The news from the fronts was pretty good. The Russians were getting ready for the Warsaw offensive. The American First, Third, and Ninth Armies were battering into the Siegfried line. Everyone at home talked of peace by Christmas. Even the more pessimistic of us thought hopefully of the possibility. That was before the Bulge.

But we thought more about what awaited us in England. We had heard about the tough training that once went on in the little Island. We listened to classes on Southampton, London, and the funny English money system. We were issued three K rations, and from this fact we immediately tried to guess where we were going. A few poor NCO's were trying to recover all the red safety lights, and we were being threatened with all sorts of punishment if they were not all collected. Some of us were eating K rations in hidden corners of the boat. Others were afraid we might actually need them. Amidst all the confusion, the coast of England came into view. Some of the sailors pointed out the Isle of Wight. But we didn't get to see the famous White Cliffs of Dover, just as we hadn't said goodbye to the Statue of Liberty.



When we sailed into Southampton Harbor, there were no bands playing, no crowds waving. Everyone on the docks acted as if the whole thing was commonplace and happened everyday. True, every now and then an Englishman would ride by the docks on a bicycle and give us a curious glance. Even the army didn't seem to make any fuss. We were there — so what. Finally, the port commander gave us a welcoming speech just like a million others we had heard. The noticeable thing about it was his British accent and we wondered if everybody here talked that bad.

We finally had cleaned up the boat for the last time; no more would we swing those big hoses across the deck or throw garbage over the side. Then the order came to wait. We waited. Then the order came to disembark; so we picked up our

packs and duffle bags and started off the ship. We moved down the gangplank, onto the dock and into a big warehouse where a Red Cross Clubmobile was set up. It was the night of November 26, 1944; the Red Cross girls began to serve doughnuts and coffee and other men of K Company were in England.

England

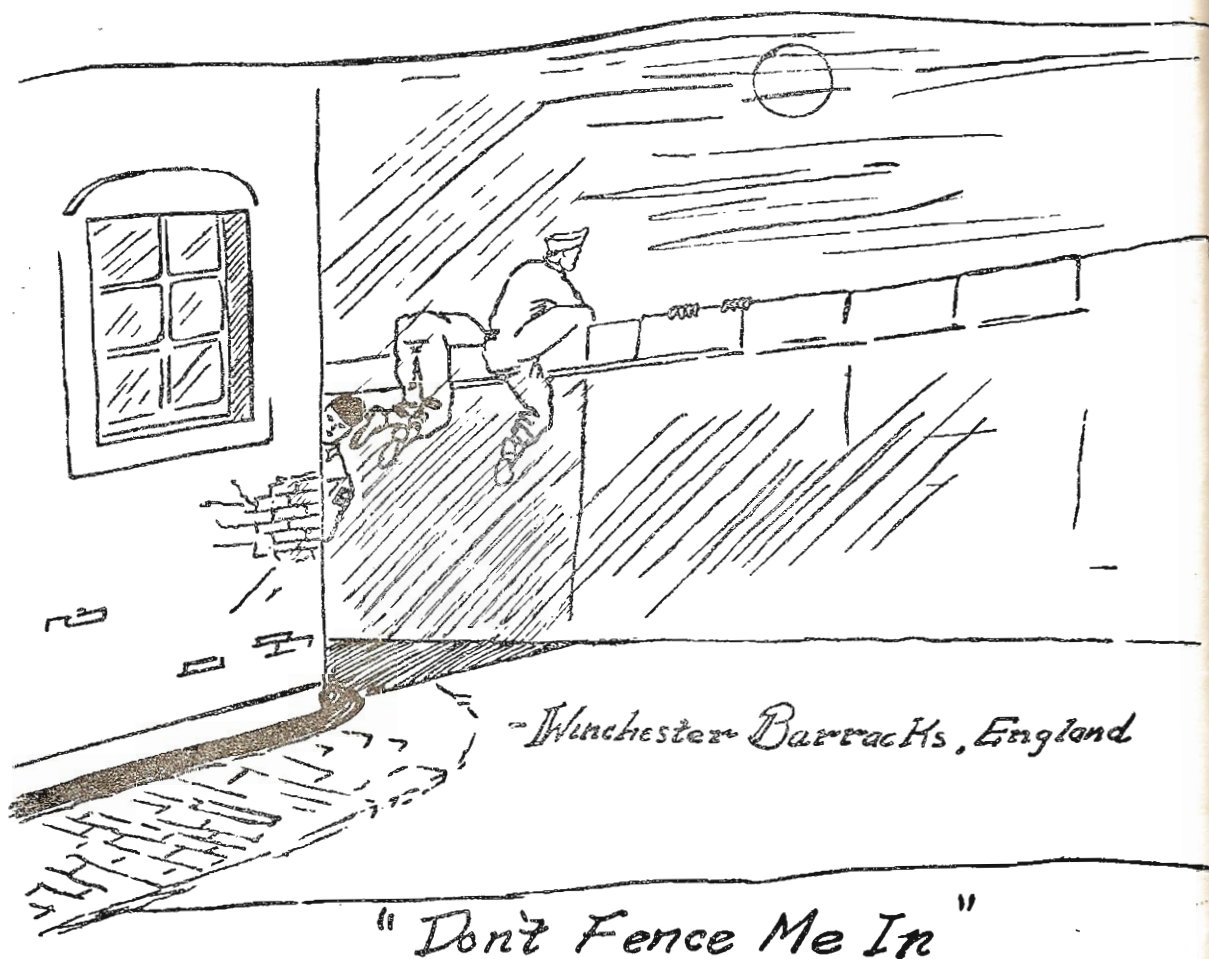
As we stood there on the dock waiting for something to happen, thoughts kept crowding in on the scene. We compared the rolling English countryside we had seen from the boat to the endless De Soto National Forest in Mississippi. If we dug as many foxholes in England as we did in Mississippi there just wouldn't "Always be an England". It would all be piled up in paradises and parapets. Would Southampton or London compare favorably to New Orleans, or New York on that hoped for three day pass? Who could forget those passes from Kilmer, Times Square on election night or that skating rink in Philly? Well, nothing to do but shrug it off and look ahead. Finally a train - our train as it developed - pulled up beside us. When we boarded it, we discovered it was just like the trains in the English movies we had seen. The coaches were divided into compartments where six or eight people could sit comfortably, that is, unless each had a full field pack and a full duffle bag with him. And naturally that's what we were hauling, so each compartment, as well as the hall that ran along the side of the coach, was packed solid with humanity. We were lucky the ride on the train was short. The novelty of the ride had just worn off, and our legs had almost come off, when we stopped and lined up in the dark street in front of the station. The town was Winchester; our new home, Winchester Barracks, steeped in tradition, a splendid example of some type of architecture or other. Most of us would have settled for a little less tradition and a little more length on the beds, or a fire from which you could feel a little more heat. Somebody said there were A.T.S. girls or Wrens stationed in one of the buildings on the post, but of course, K Company wasn't much interested in that. Somebody said there was a hole in the high brick wall, but that wasn't of much interest either. Captain Sloss called us in one evening to "zero us in" on social behavior in England. "El Toro" told us not to get excited about the English girls, and don't tell them you'll take them to America! They'll soon take you up. Queer people, these foreigners! The boys soon got on to the ropes, though, and Winchester will remember how adept we were in night patrolling even in a blackout.

About the time we got Winchester Barracks spic and span and almost liveable (when you consider the extracurricular activities) we got word that a move was imminent. On the fourth of December we climbed off the trucks at Bighton Manor, an old estate with Nissen huts scattered around the grounds. The manor served us very well as a "base of operations", again a great many of which were "extra curricular". There was quite a lot of training, marches, and checking up during that period of getting ready and keeping ready; but we will remember mostly the dances

at Ropely, the pubs in New Alresford, and the mud. We could wear combat boots to New Alresford but not to Bighton, unless we were going through to some other place. Or was it vice-versa? And those trench-foot massages for fifteen minutes each day! That English jitterbugging they called the Hokey-Pokey had the boys going for awhile, but enough bitters under the belt made the feat possible. It was hard to figure out just how everyone got to those dances.

The London passes came through eventually and the wonders of Picadilly became familiar to most of us. The depth of the underground amazed us all. Thank goodness for those escalators! On the sidewalks around Rainbow Corners we found the real meaning of the word "commando". What a thrill it was to find a gal in London, bowl her over (you thought) with your "line", have her come to Waterloo Station to bid you farewell; then watch her go off, meet an incoming train full of G. I.'s and latch on to another O. D. clad arm. It deflated the ego a little.

Just before that mad-house childrens party we had in the old manor house at Christmas, came the blow that hit us all pretty hard. On December 25th, K Company lost 87 men who went as replacements to outfits fighting in France at the





HIKE'S THROUGH NEW ALRESFORD



Brighton Honeybuckets

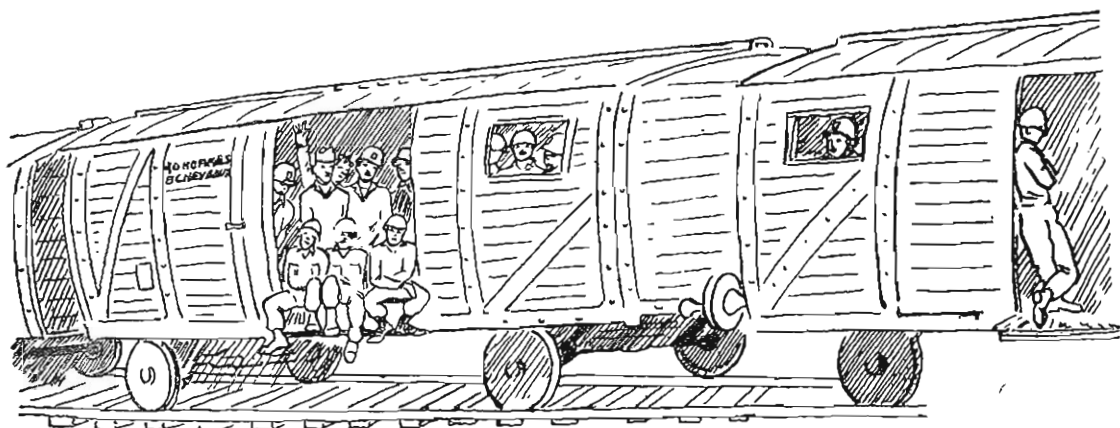
time of the "Bulge". We knew just about where they were destined to go. They knew, too. We had trained, eaten, slept and played together for a long time. It was like losing a right arm to say goodbye to those men. Nevertheless we had to go on preparing for the days when we ourselves would leave. The Company was so understrength buck sergeants were pulling KP and guard. Finally the rumor started to make the rounds that we were going to move. About the same time we started to have practice alerts. When these took place we would have to roll our humps, stuff what we could in our duffle bags, and throw everything else away. Remember the time we tried to make that two blanket roll. Those were the funniest we ever saw. Finally they decided on the horseshoe type roll that we could have told them about in the first place. Then, after a million dry-runs, we had an alert that was the real thing. We got up at four in the morning, breakfasted on a C-ration and black coffee, and loaded on the trucks about six. The trucks took us to Winchester, where we began the second leg of the trip to Southampton in those funny English trains.

When we first came to England the train had called for us at the docks, but now for some unknown reason the train couldn't go that far, and it was in England that we were once more reminded that we were in the Infantry, as we walked the two miles to the docks with our packs knifing our shoulders, and wearing our overshoes. At the end of the march the "Langeby Castle" was waiting. The "Castle" was a Limey boat, but from what we heard of other Limey boats, not too bad. Just a month before it had been scheduled to make a trip with another outfit, but had been put in drydock. The ship that went in her place was sunk.

The trip across the Channel wasn't bad — at least not bad enough to warrant all the seasickness pills we had. We crossed at night while everyone was asleep. The next morning, on January 21, 1945, we sighted the coast of France to begin a new phase in our travels.

Somewhere in France

Le Havre, from the water, looked rather inviting. We had plenty of time for gazing, since we sat in the harbor for two days doing absolutely nothing. One night, after K Company had acted as luggage porters for the regiment, we disembarked to landing craft and headed for the beach. We sweated and cursed, carrying those duffle bags up that long beach. As heavy as some of those bags were, some people must have brought their dancing partners from Ropley. As we trudged through Le Havre (or what was left of it), we kept hearing the train station was only two kilometers away. After walking through the ruins for about an hour we were convinced this was only a rumor.



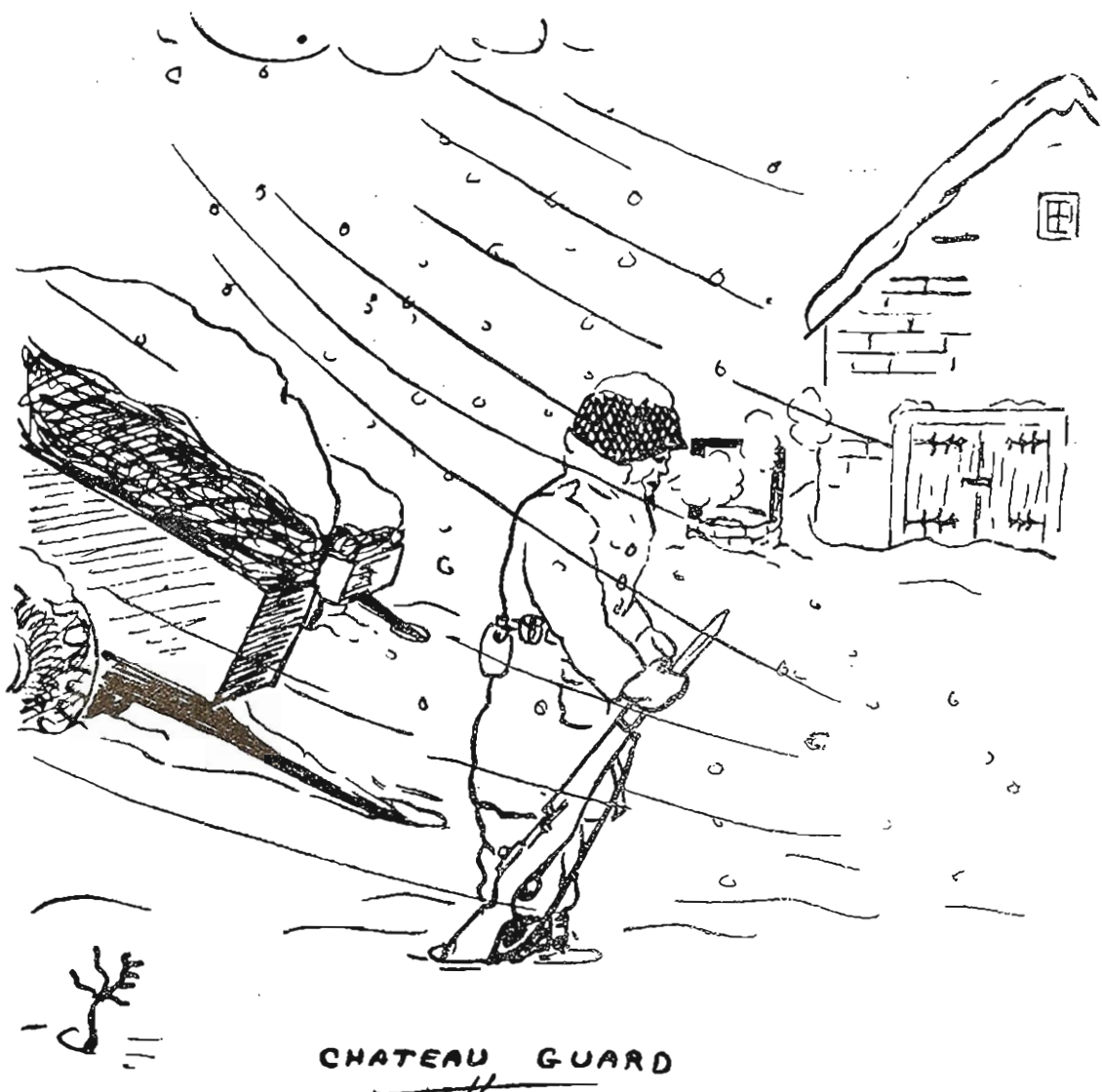
You've heard about those "40 and 8's". Well, we didn't mind those forty men so much, but the eight horses surely made things crowded. After riding all night and wondering if these square wheels were still on the tracks, we disengaged ourselves from the sprawling humanity and prepared to eat. At a given signal from the car commanders, we opened K rations by the numbers. Cigarettes — the medium of exchange in France — were bartered for so-called wine.

Finally we arrived at what we thought was Siberia but which turned out to be Bouchy, France. We had our first view of French pulchritude — 5 ft. 5 blond — bust 37 — waist 26 — hips 35 — --. After losing half the motor convoy en route from Bouchy we arrived at a chateau. It must have sounded quite romantic at home to hear we were living in a chateau in France. It might have been quite luxurious if we had been there two or three hundred years earlier. Who will forget the open

air latrines and Mme. Angelique's cheery "bon jour" as she caught you in that embarrassing position? Remember beaucoup guard duty — the paratroop scares — the combination cognac, souvenir, perfume shop — football and close order drill in the knee deep snow — showers and "bathless" McGinty.

Putting all our worldly possessions on our back, we again took off for "destination unknown" — which later turned out to be Tent City. This was near Pierrepont. Who will forget that march from the station — marked clearly by discarded C rations, overshoes, overcoats, and maybe a few bodies. Before leaving the train, K Company lived up to its reputation by thoroughly policing up the area.

It was nice, living in those sixteen-man tents; and then the rains came! What had been a Company street became a canal. The two towns nearby held latent possibilities; they were soon exploited by the Company, meaning we drank all the

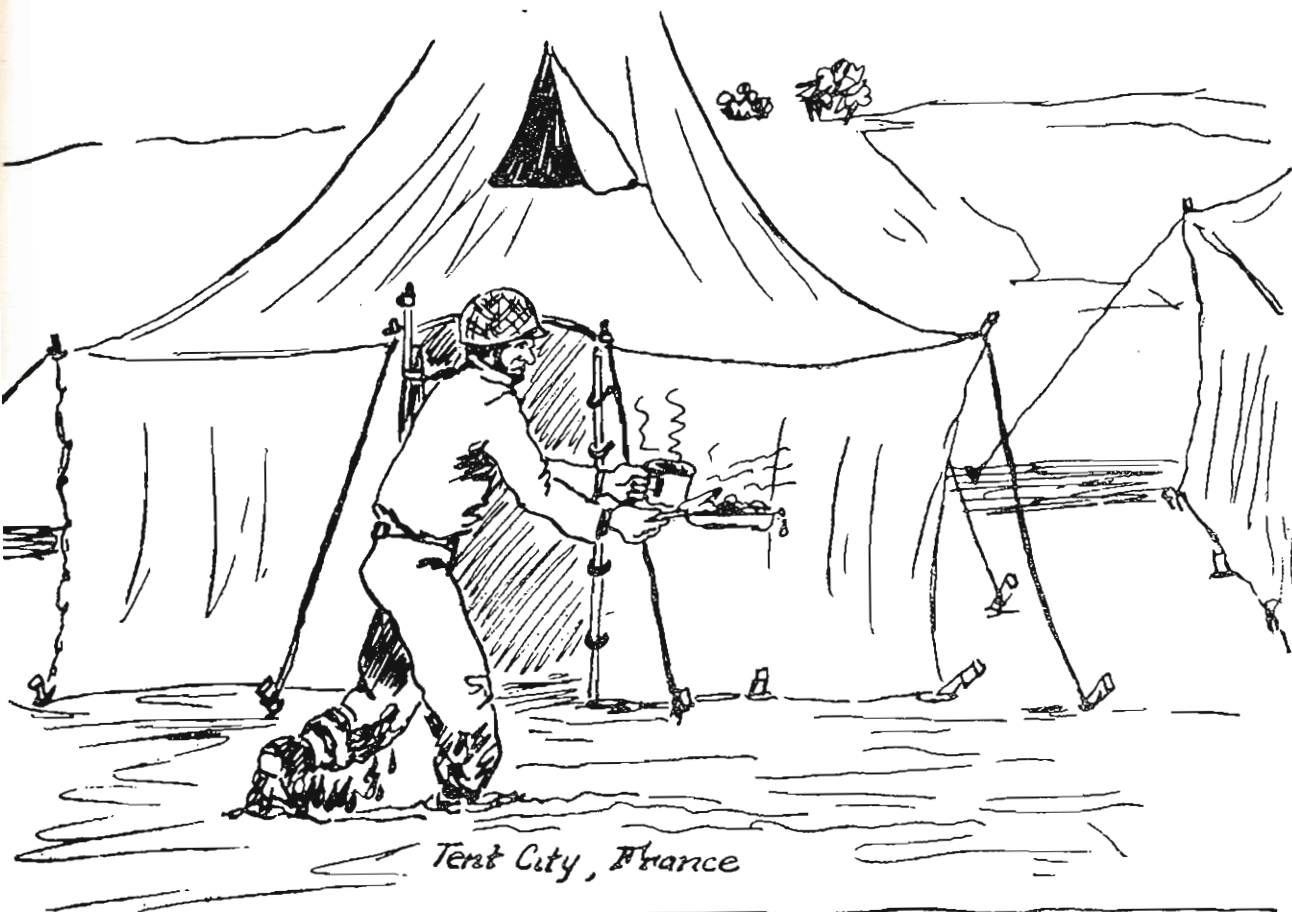


wine we could find. Most of our free time was spent in obtaining fuel -- namely, those 25 dollar French trees. The two or three sticks allotted per day by Battalion weren't enough to keep us in the comfort to which we had been accustomed.

At Tent City we welcomed our first replacements. During the following months in combat, we learned how lucky we were to get them all. These new men joined us in time for our move to Belgium.

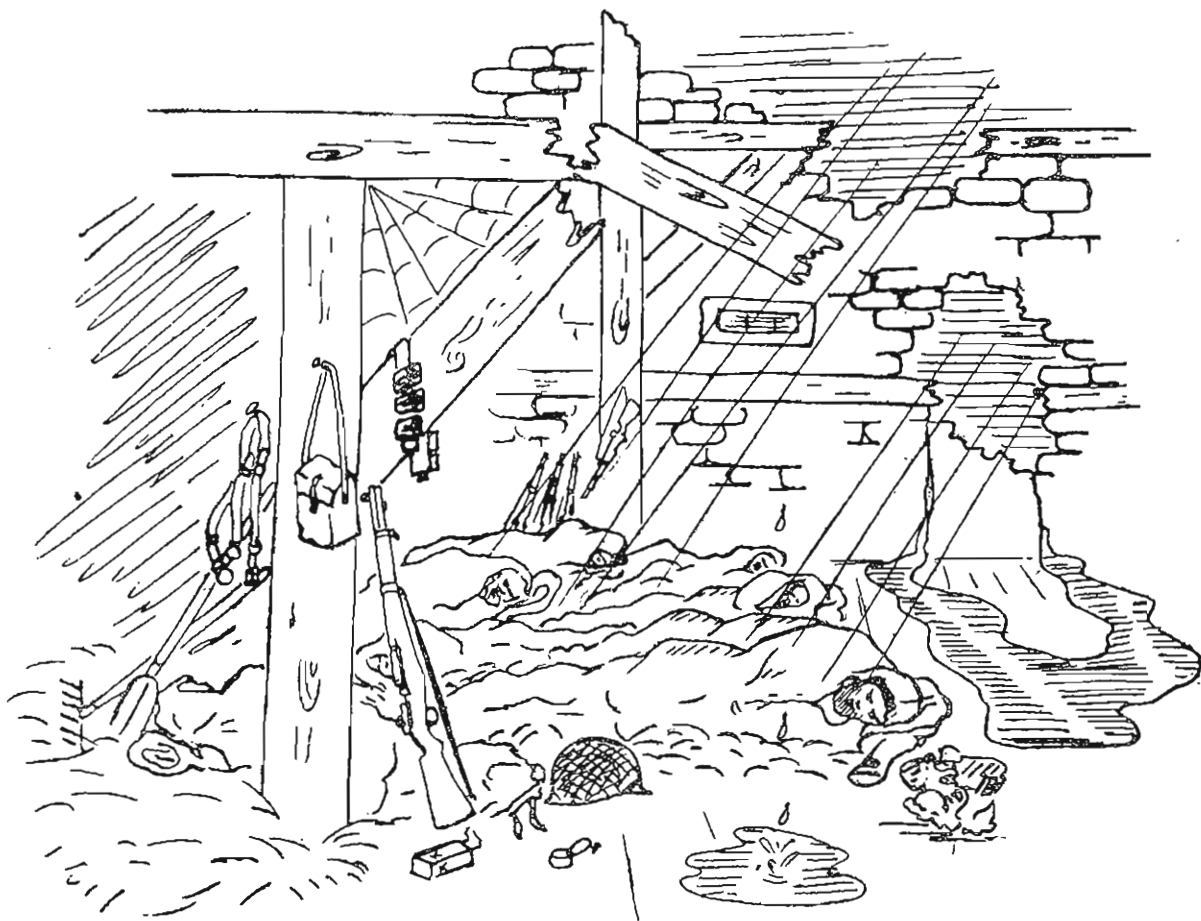
So back to the boxcars we went. Only this time we weren't loaded like pack mules and everybody made it on his own power. It wasn't as cold either and the 160 miles to Verviers didn't seem much more than a thousand. We had our first taste of 10 in one rations and thought them a decided improvement over the K or C rations. Just about the time Captain Sloss had cornered the poker game, we arrived at our destination. Trucks then took us for a cold, rainy ride to the little town of Onderval. On the way we passed Malmedy and other infamous spots wrecked by the fierce fighting of the recent Bulge. This destruction gave us a preview of what was ahead.

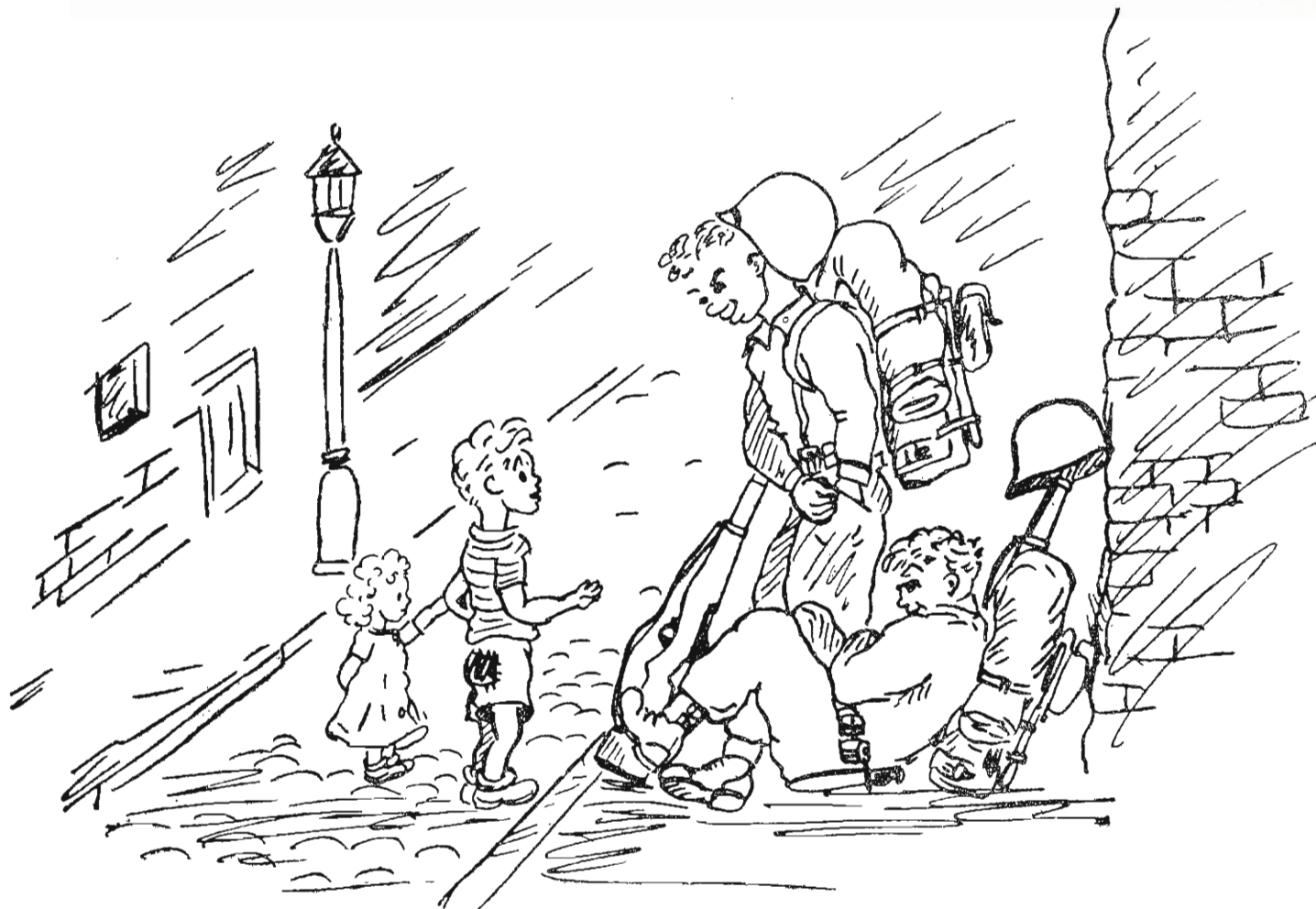
As usual, we got lost. Down muddy, rutty roads we rode. No lights except distant artillery flashes. Rain kept pouring down. Rumor -- the front line is only a few miles ahead -- we're in no man's land. What a relief when the trucks stopped



in what appeared to be a town. Houses, but what houses! Where else could you live in half a room and use the other half for fire wood? There wasn't a whole house left standing and we just flopped anywhere, the majority in a leaky hay loft. Everywhere was German and American equipment; reminders of the Bulge. We saw our first dead Krauts there, but the melting snow also revealed American soldiers. We weren't toughened enough for this yet and some of us, on those body locating hikes, had bad dreams and worse memories. The sixty-four dollar question was "Who cut off the Kraut's finger for his ring?" With the usual ingenuity, we had made the billets liveable; even comfortable. This was a signal to move, and move we did.

Early the morning of February 11, the order came to be ready to move at seven. Confusion when six men tried to roll full humps in one small room, cries of "Where's my belt, my cup, my shoe?", the litter of equipment left behind, then the inevitable wait for the trucks. Packed like sardines minus the oil, we rode into Germany. Grim faced men in trucks coming from the front passed us constantly. We saw our first Tiger tanks lying along the road, as well as all types





CIGARETTE FOR POPPA?

of German vehicles and dead horses. Soon we came into neat, snow laden forests. The artillery sounded close — too close. This was as far as the trucks dared go, so on to those feet again. Into view came the endless string of dragons teeth, impressive but rather useless then. Also easily picked out were the pillboxes—but many were so well camouflaged that we couldn't see them till we were right on their doorsteps. We passed the columns of the 99th Division which we were relieving. Down a muddy road — careful not to step off onto a mine — we trudged until we passed "Purple Heart" junction where we were but a step from the pillboxes that were to be our next home.

Germany

Our first "somewhere in Germany" was a group of pillboxes in the first belt of the Siegfried Line. We rode most of the way from Belgium in trucks, carrying full-field packs, then marched some 8 miles through the snow and mud to our new "homes". Did we "bitch" about getting lost temporarily and walking a mile too far! It gave a rather uncomfortable feeling to look around at the long rows of dragons teeth stretching away on each side, and the debris along the roadside didn't help any.



Pillbox Days - Siegfried Line

Well, there wasn't any trouble, and we settled down to make the most of the cold month of February, thankful we could stay in a pillbox rather than a foxhole. That was where we first made the acquaintance of "bed-check Charlie" when he flew over to make his rounds. We soon learned the sound of his low droning motor. The artillery kept us awake many hours sending outgoing mail to der Fuhrer's boys until we learned by the sound that it was not incoming mail. Those were the days when we sweated out the chow jeep. Two meals a day, and that God-awful empty feeling in your belly around noontime — the sea of mud around the C. P. pillbox making the jeep drivers need a rudder instead of a steering wheel when they came to bring the chow in — and the G.I.'s! When you saw a guy bust out the door unbuckling his belt, fumbling with buttons and staring straight ahead with that dazed, frantic expression, you had better get out of the way. Talking about buttons might remind us of uniforms. There was no worry about what to wear — you just put on everything you could lay your hands on, then started looking for more. You've probably forgotten about the way American ingenuity met the difficult lighting problem. The make-shift lamps made of a bottle, a wick and some gasoline worked fine if you didn't mind a little soot. What heating arrangement we had was equally novel, a block of Composition C placed in the center of the floor and touched off with a match. Of course the fact that we weren't all blown across the Styx was merely incidental.

We had our days as engineers, too. Rain and snow made the roads bottomless pits of mud. Our job was to cut enough trees and logs to fill in the holes. The only trouble was that there were not enough forests in Germany to fill the holes if every tree were cut. While we were doing this, we saw many of the piles of wrecked and abandoned equipment left in the area during the Bulge fighting.

There were long hours of guard duty around our area, and a good loud hoot by an owl was enough to get trigger fingers itchy. We saw a lot of things that weren't there on those pitch black nights. It was quite a job to get out of the pillboxes or dugouts to go on guard, for everyone was sleeping on the floor and there wasn't room to put a foot down between the bodies. Most of our days were spent keeping the rust off our rifles and the stubble from our chins. We were still a "rumor-happy" crew and endless speculation went on about our future. Then, on a morning in February at 0500 hours, we moved out to meet it.

Dickerscheid

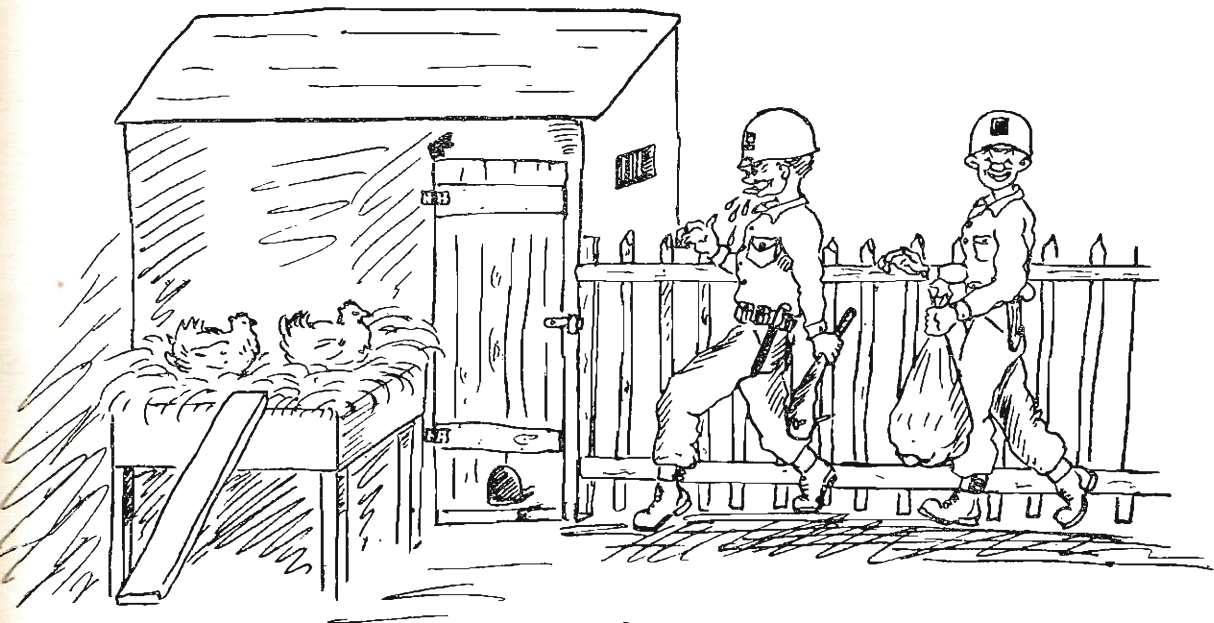
Artillery shells whistled over K Company's head pointing the way from the comparative safety of the pillboxes and dugouts to the front. Our assembly area was on the edge of the Monschau Forest facing open country and the artillery-blasted town of Dickerscheid. Late in the afternoon we moved out in a long column along a pock-marked road with our hearts pounding a little noisily. By nightfall we hadn't reached our objective, so we lay uneasily on the slope of a steep gully all night, catching a few winks, curled up under raincoats and feeling the cold seep into our bones. A patrol was sent out during the night to contact G Company. It ran into trouble and Sgt. Abernathey, who with Lt. Rudof had

led the patrol, was wounded. After returning for a medic for Piercy, who was killed, the patrol went on to complete its mission despite being fired on by G Company guards. We moved on just before sunrise. Just as the tail end of our column cleared the gully, we turned around and watched Kraut artillery cover the entire gully where we had been trying to sleep a few minutes before.

Evening found us at the edge of a small woods establishing a defensive position, and it was there we received our real baptism of fire under 88's and German mortars. We dug foxholes and we dug them deep. Then we traded holes with G Company so the battalions could be straightened out. We watched the battle of Oberreifferscheid with interest because the 3rd squad of our Third Platoon was leading L Company. We learned about that helpless feeling when the shells are coming and you can't see a thing to shoot at.

Schmidtheim

After 5 days in the foxholes, we again received the order to move out. Reluctantly we left our holes and turned in our sacks, almost resigned to freeze out another series of nights until they caught up with us again. Once more we had to climb and push our way through woods and once more we slopped through mud. Finally we came to the main road. On the other side of the road was a mine field. On the hill overlooking the road were a series of pillboxes. It's a good thing the Kraut's weren't there to open fire on us as we minced our way through the mines or we might not be here. And then when we did flush the pillboxes we found three Heinies there but they didn't have any fight left in them at all. A couple boys from the First Platoon took them back.



SCHMIDTHEIM

After flushing the pillboxes, we took off again to take our first towns and sleep in our first house in a month. It wasn't much of a sleep, however, for there were too many posts to guard. Part of the Company suffered because rations couldn't get up to us; part were able to make it up in German chow. By one o'clock the next afternoon we were on our way again, this time with Schmidtheim as our objective. After a cruel march we arrived there only to see the other battalions already in the houses while we had to go a half mile out of town to dig in. We didn't get more than started when the order came down to move. It was a bitter pill to take, but we did take it, understanding for the first time the real meaning of "It's rough in the ETO".

The move took us three miles beyond Schmidtheim to a wooded ridge where we were supposed to dig in and where we did freeze. Every man in the Company was sure he had trench foot the next morning, that is if he was sure he had feet. As usual we moved again before we finished digging in. Our next position was in the woods beside L Company and once more we began hacking away at tree roots. Then came the best news we had ever heard. K Company was in some kind of "reserve" and we were going back to Schmidtheim to live in houses. We also heard about the capture of the bridge at Remagen and the story seemed to be that we would wait until the bridgehead was made bigger.

The march back to Schmidtheim was a wonderful one. The news acted like a shot in the arm. Today, as we look back at our billets there, they seem pretty bad, but we were glad to have them at the time. After a couple days of badly needed care and cleaning, we started a training schedule. But the worst thing about Schmidtheim was the G.I.'s. It wasn't a question of whether you had them — it was a question of how bad you had them. Maybe it was the chickens we killed and ate or maybe it was the water, but whatever it was that caused them, the G.I.'s. can never be described; they have to be felt. After about two weeks, our Siesta in Schmidtheim was over. We moved out again on foot, but this time along a good road and with regular ten minute breaks every hour. It was 15 miles to our next home but the hike wasn't too bad, when you consider that any hike isn't going to let your feet feel too good.

The final week of March we spent in the little town of Lommersdorf where we'll remember the "secret radio" hunt that turned out to be a cricket "making like" a radio beam signal in a dingy old basement. The weather was beautiful there too, and we began to feel like a sulphur and molasses would help out a little. Some kind hearted G.I. blew up a dozen or so "balloons" and threw them out in the street for the gang of kids to play with. It looked like we had given the children the first chance to play and be happy they had ever had.

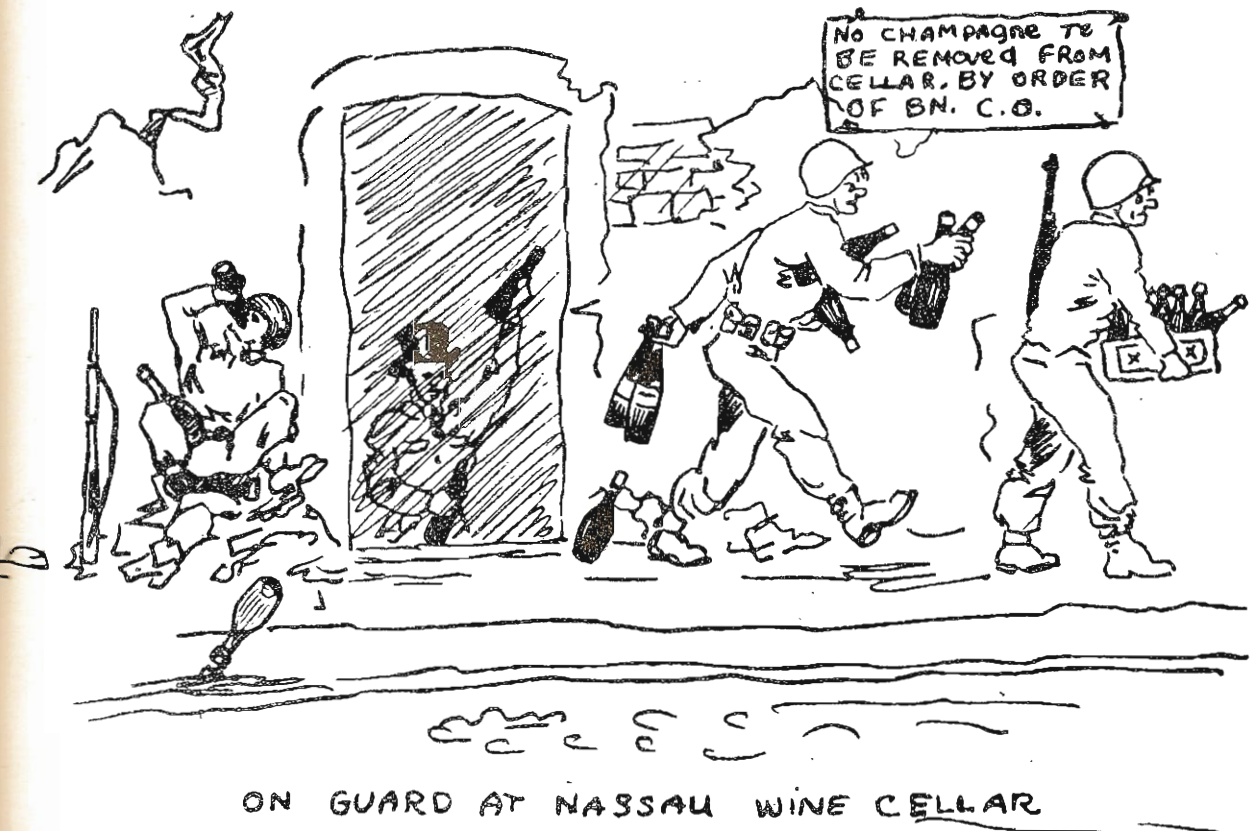
The end of March found the Company spread out in rear echelon, guarding installations and equipment around Corps Headquarters near Zulpich. Our posts were around Signal Corps, Air Corps and Q. M. areas, and our experiences were more or less identical. The mess sergeants apologized profusely for the shortage of food. It hadn't been coming through as usual. We thought it was the same old line we had heard so often before when our "three squares" were a K ration or two a day or maybe an occasional C ration for variety. But after a couple of meals we began to wonder what it would be like when the food really started "coming through".

Across the Rhine

The 1st of April found K Company across the Rhine, some 120 kilometers from our last "Somewhere in Germany", Zulpich. We saw the castles on the Rhine; we saw what the Krauts mean when they walk around sadly shaking their heads saying, "Alles kaput". We came across the Rhine on a newly constructed pontoon bridge and marveled at its workmanship and stability as our trucks rolled across one after another. It seemed to be the only whole thing within eyesight. A few giant smokestacks kept a lonely watch over piles of rubble and bricks that once had been giant factories. Semaphores along the railroad hung lifelessly by the tracks. A few homes remained untouched by bombs and shells, but they seemed out of place. High on the hills stood the old castles and forts, grim reminders of their own part in the centuries old game of war. The trucks sped on through the dust until we reached another of those little towns nestled in the hills, and a rendezvous with Bacchus.

Nassau

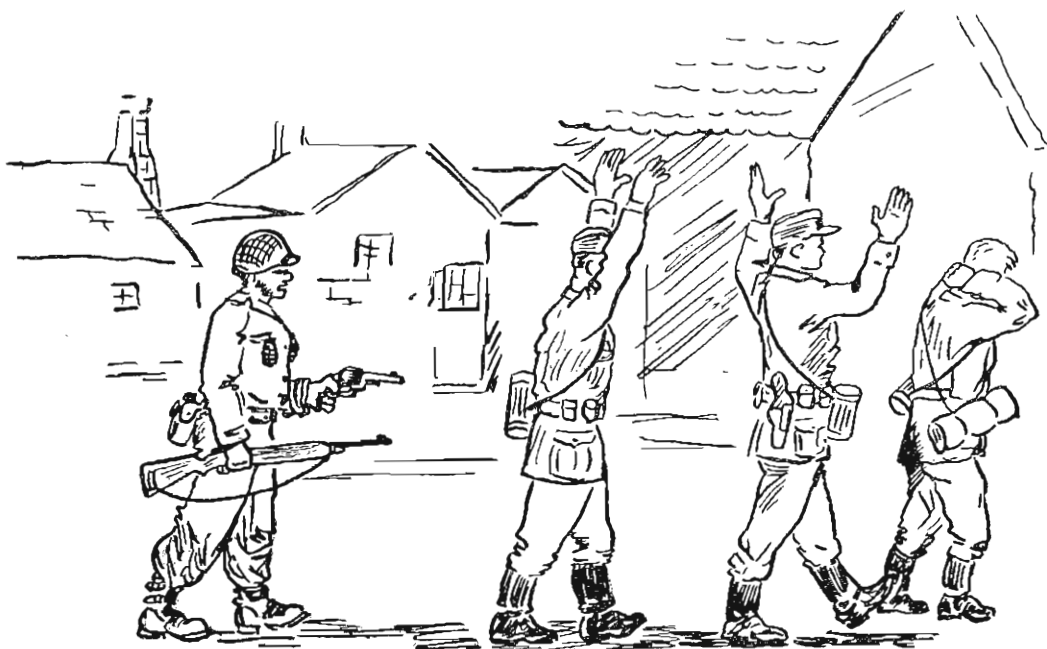
The name of that town was Nassau, and I suppose that as long as K Company men can talk, they will tell about the two days we spent at Nassau. They won't be talking about the big prison-like building we stayed in which used to be



an interrogation point for the Gestapo. Nor will they talk about the patrols that K Company provided to clear the town. What they will be talking about is the wine cellar we found and the champagne we drank. It was the first time we had ever run into anything like a liquor cache. The men of K Company were well able to make the most of it and we were all feeling good till the time we left. When we did leave, Champagne City was almost another "Dead Soldier".

Wetzlar

After that brief champagne revelry in Nassau, K Company joined again in the popular game of the time, keeping the Wehrmacht on the run. To do it, we climbed aboard tank destroyers and hung on while they took off across the countryside. Mile after mile we moved on, roaring through towns, watching the white flags go up in the windows of every house, and seeing G. I. trucks loaded with overwhelmed Kraut prisoners. We watched the "Polski" and "Russki" liberated peoples streaming back along the highway. They grabbed carts and wagons, loaded them high with bedding, clothing and a million and one other things that had taken their simple fancy — call it loot, souvenirs or just plain junk, which it resembled more than anything else. At any rate, it was their pay for keeping the fields so neat and trim, while the men who should have been doing the job were raping the homelands of Europe, and pleading for mercy from us now. They all stopped to stare at our long convoy of tanks, T.D.'s, jeeps and trucks, a look of wonder stamped on their faces.



FIRST PRISONERS IN WETZLAR

We went through giant railroad yards blasted to twisted steel and rubble by our bombers. We passed villages where the Germans had chosen to resist — where there just wasn't a village anymore. Foxholes and emplacements along the route were littered with Jerry helmets, broken rifles, and stacks of unused ammunition; giant radar stations stood mute and abandoned, and scattered everywhere were the trucks, tanks, and "88" guns; scrap metal now.

Every now and then storm clouds would gather darkly overhead, the wind would come up, and rain soaked us all before we could unfasten our raincoats and ponchos. The precarious seats on the T. D.'s. cold metal sides soon had us feeling like "Dead-End Kids".

After about 8 hours of steady going we wound up in another of those stinking little towns and headed for civilian billets, stretching the kinks out of our muscles. We had just finished chow and settled down to enjoy a little "liberated" schnapps when the order came down from the C. P saying we had five minutes to get ready to pull out. There were riots in Wetzlar and we were the guys who were going to reestablish order. And us, with those fresh-killed fryers just beginning to sizzle in the pan! We climbed aboard the T.D.'s again with our mouths still watering.

The wind was cold and strong during that night ride, and the moon was taking cover and concealment to make things a little more "pleasant". It was with a great deal of relief that we pulled into the enclosure around a very large building where we were to stay. It didn't look too inviting; the guts were blown out of a large section and the quiet was like that of a graveyard. It wasn't long before we made our own G. I. atmosphere of noise and confusion while we looked for beds up and down the long barren halls.

By morning, after a few hours sleep, the aspect changed. In between patrols and guard duty we found time for "souvenir" hunting and general exploration. Our patrols netted many prisoners, some of high rank, and riots made things interesting for awhile. Several of the boys were toying with German Lugers, Mausers, fancy knives, bayonets and all the other ornaments that make good collectors' items. Strange noises began to echo through the building when some of the boys ran across a room-full of band instruments; they soon had us all howling for mercy. Easter Sunday came and went just like any other day, except that we all thought a little more about home.

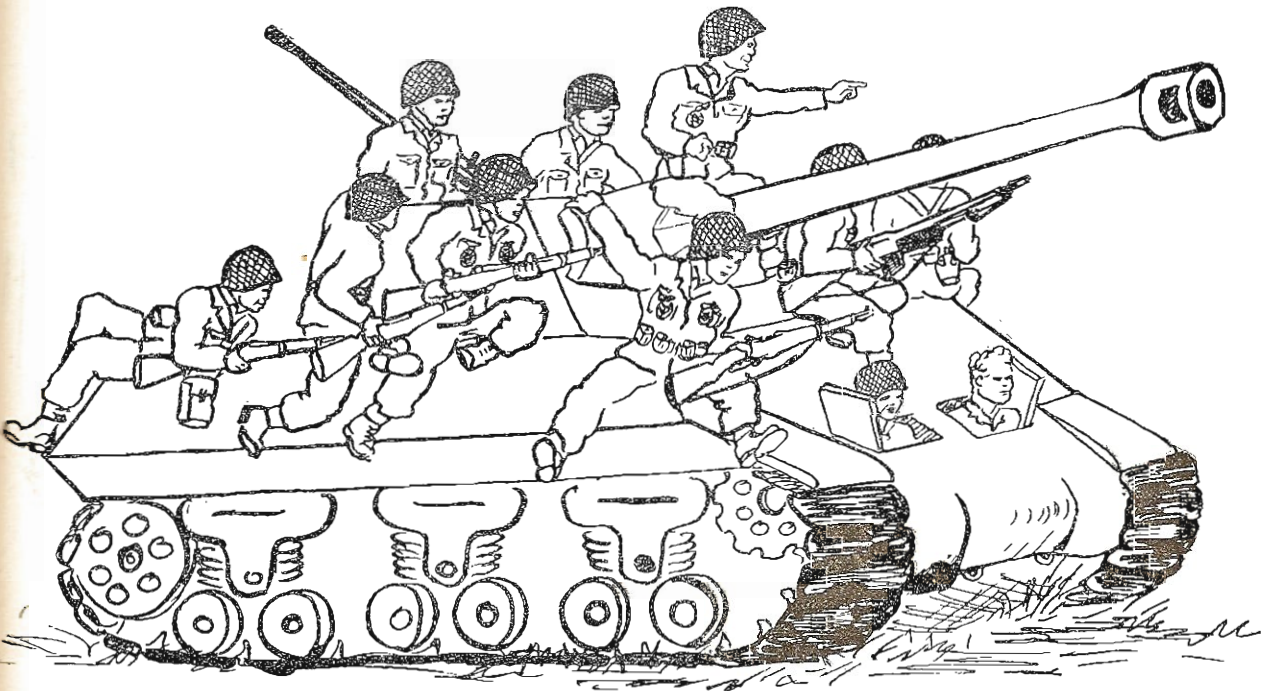


On to Kassel

T. D.'s were again used to take us on from Wetzlar. An hour's ride took us to an assembly area where we lay around in the woods all day waiting for evening to come. At 8 o'clock that night we started on another long night ride. While it remained light there was little trouble, and the long convoy of trucks, tanks, jeeps and T. D.'s rolled along steadily through the intermittent showers. We sprawled all over the T. D.'s, covered with ponchos, blankets or anything else that would keep out the cold wind and rain. The gathering darkness forced us to glue our eyes to the small blackout lights on the vehicle directly in front and made us wonder how the drivers could keep on going on such a night. When we rolled past an overturned truck, a smashed jeep or a bogged down tank, we knew that sometimes it was not possible.

More and more piles of German equipment, abandoned in the hasty retreat, lay along the route. Even airports and airplanes were left entirely intact, emphasizing the complete route and the reason we must keep on chasing the Krauts so they couldn't settle down and go to digging. All the time we saw the stream of German prisoners heading back along the road and wondered how or why the Heinies could keep on fighting.

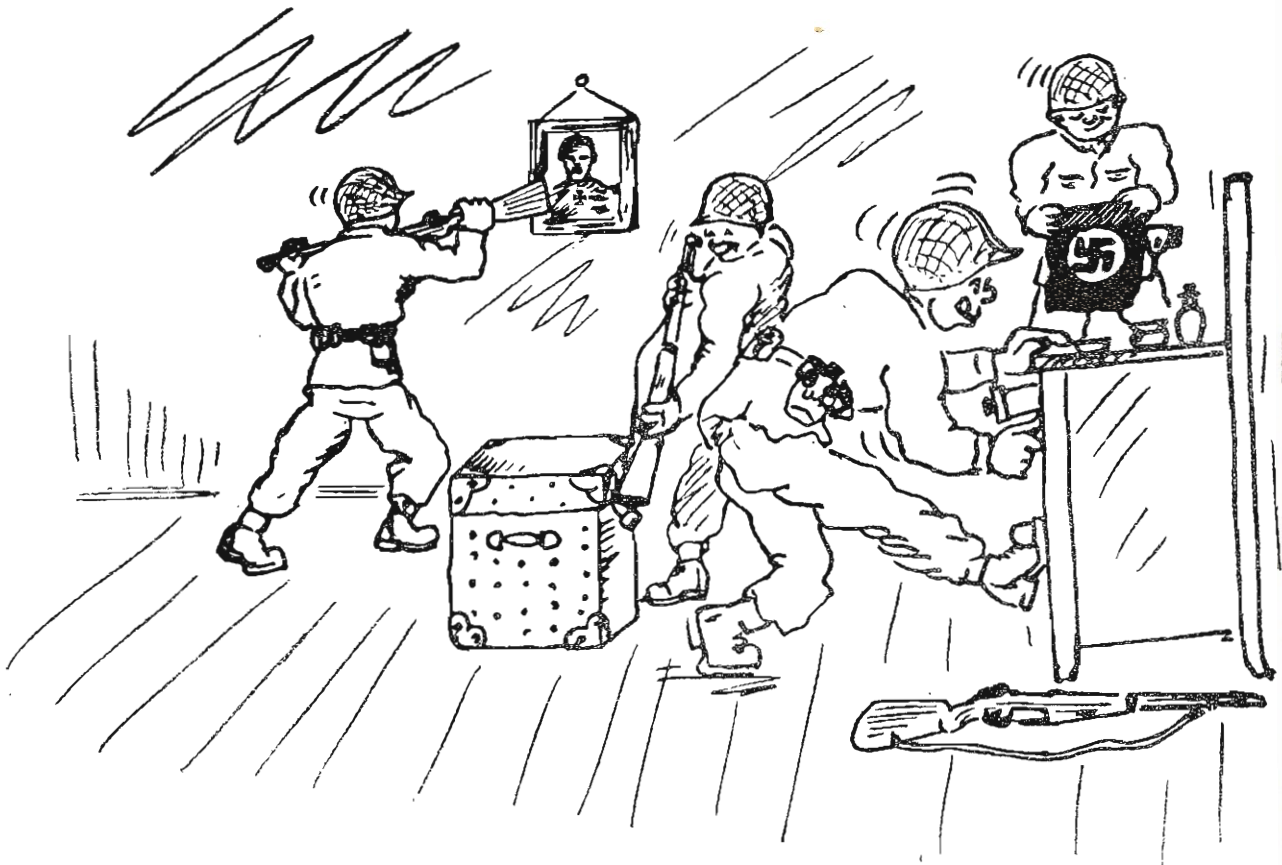
After a day's stop in another small village where we caught more Krauts hiding out in a nearby forest, our convoy moved on into Kassel where we were to relieve the troops who had taken the city, and finish the cleaning out of trouble making elements as well as guarding important bridges.



Kassel

Kassel was a clean looking city though it bore scars of war. The wide streets and clever planning made it appear more like a city at home than anything we had seen in Germany. We sensed in Kassel, more than any other place, the hatred of the German people for Americans, perhaps because it was a large city, and we always heard that Naziism was stronger in heavily populated places.

Most of the Company was billeted in a very large apartment building that had been hit in several places by bombs. It seemed rather luxurious, however, after spending so many nights in simple country homes. For a couple of days we even escaped from out-door privies and trenches. In every room, every drawer, we found evidences of strong Nazi sentiments. There were uniforms of every color, dress bayonets, knives, hats, military boots, weapons and all kinds of accessories. Snapshot albums bulged with pictures of stuffed-shirt army uniforms and that same peacock strut that we would have called an exaggeration had it come out of Hollywood. There were huge stocks of canned fruits in every basement all bearing French labels — and we all had a good idea how it came to be found in such abundance in Nazi homes. The silk dresses and “undies” seemed very fine, which is probably

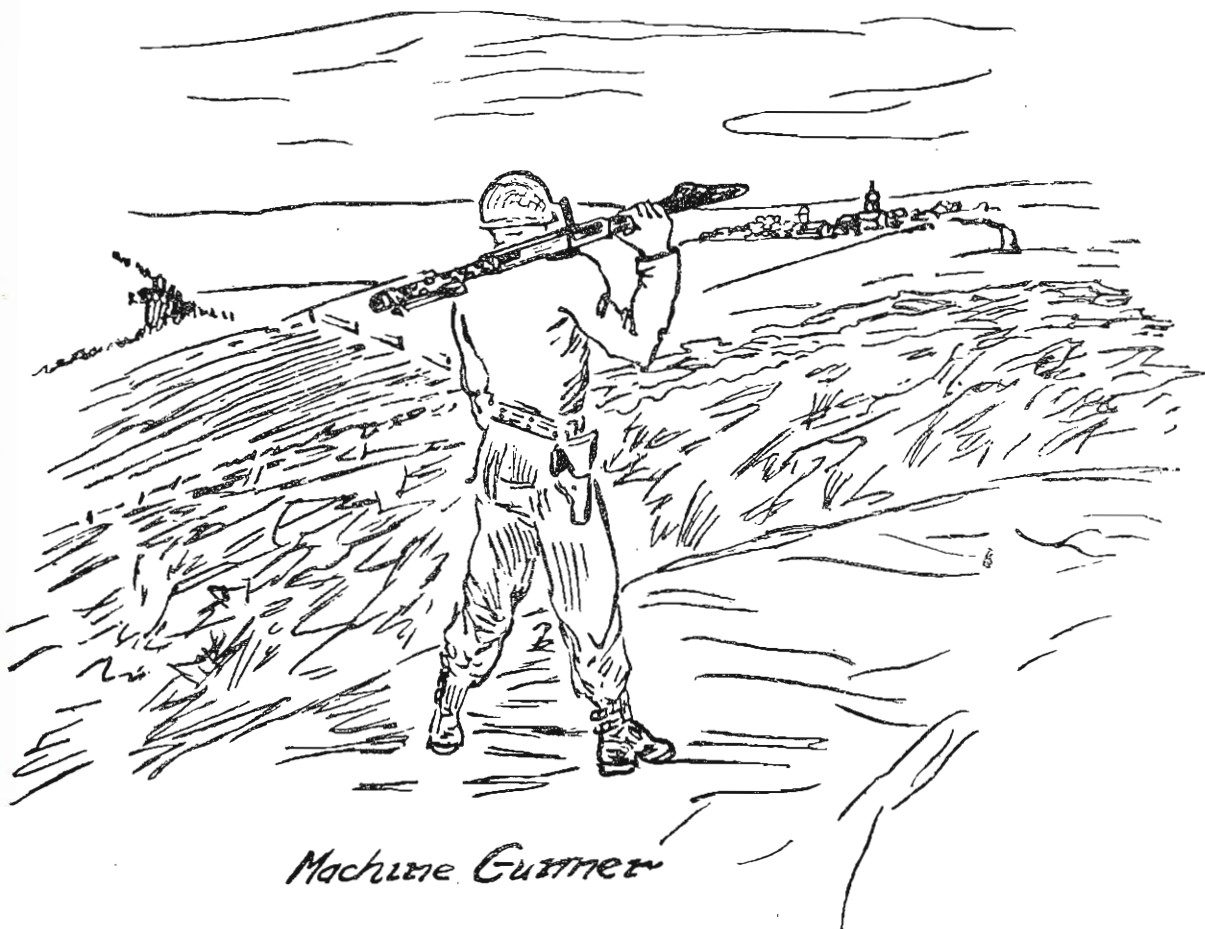


KASSEL

as it should be since "Made in Paris" tags were found on most of them. Our "explorations" did help us pass the time between guard duty and patrols, however, because in the long run a fairly adequate supply of schnapps was located. This is the city where "J" Platoon joined us.

The newness of big city life didn't have a chance to wear off for we were soon on the move again. Trucks took us for a two-hour ride to an assembly area where we de-trucked and moved out on foot. We knew then that we had caught up with the enemy or that he was waiting for us not very far away. In the next town we found out for certain. A pontoon bridge, recently thrown up across the river we had to cross, was under machine gun fire. Before all the Company had crossed the bridge, a tank was called up to knock out the machine gun position.

Once we got across the river we made a little hike through territory so newly acquired by our armies that the whole populace of one town was standing at a road junction, still waving white flags. After a tank scare that turned out to be a few German anti-tank guns in the distance, we settled for the night in a wooded draw. It was here that some of the boys of the Second platoon were attacked by a German patrol, and they, led by Lt. Lashley, had mowed 'em down.



The next morning found K Company starting on a Shelby-like forced march. Nobody seems to know the exact distance, but it was something over twenty-five miles. We cleared endless numbers of small villages on the way. In one of these the freed Poles threw flowers at us as we marched through. It was on this hike that the boys from J platoon, who acted as flank guard, picked up a couple of SS troopers who had shot at the Company.

At the end of our journey was another town, but this time instead of going through it to dig in on the other side, we stayed and slept in houses. The next morning we heard the good news (to our aching dogs) that we were to ride artillery trucks. Of course, we had to walk to the trucks which were about two kilometers away, but we didn't feel too bad about that. Even when the walk turned out to be a dry run, we still felt too good about the prospect of riding to let it get us down.

The Drive to Leipzig

From here, at least for the next couple of days, it was hello Germany, but way too fast to make a decent acquaintance. Still it seemed as though we would never catch up with the front. Remember the day when Chow-Time-Charlie came over, and Joe Fleming jumped off the truck so fast he almost broke his ankles? Those of us who were unfortunate enough to be caught in the fields watched the bombs come, slowly, as if straight for us, then veer off at the last moment. That, incidentally, was the town to which Battalion moved when we were in Karsdorf.

There was that field outside of Weissenfels where we dug in, and listened to the artillery phone in targets the boom of the Long Toms and the silence when the operator phoned in "mission completed". The rumor mongers had a field day here, and every morning we got reports of "our being committed. One day a breathless figure ran across the field shouting, "Roosevelt is dead. I heard it at Battalion — honest!" We didn't believe him, but that night we heard the rumor confirmed by an Artilleryman, and that made chow pretty tasteless.

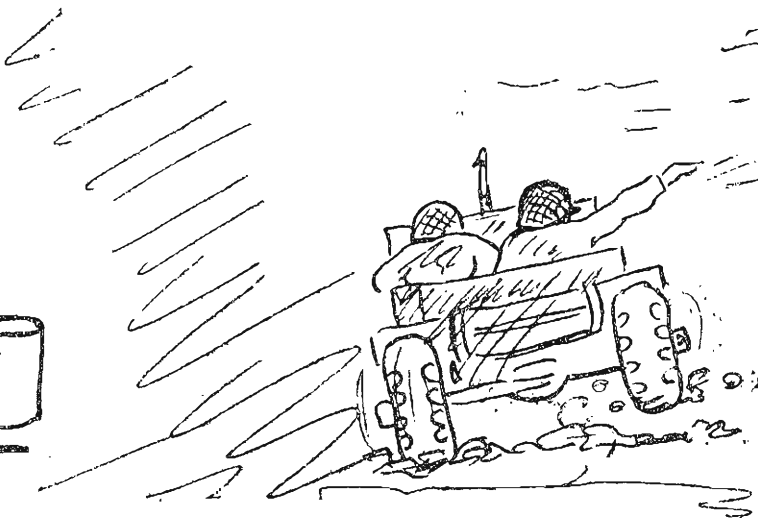
The next day we pulled into another field after a long day's ride, and found holes already dug for us. Everybody smiled and said, "At last K Company got a break." We had a break all right — a dawn attack on Lutzen. So, saying goodbye to the dusty roads and Pate's corny trumpet playing, we started out. Due to the confusion of the next couple of days, and in order to give as clear a picture as possible, we shall attempt to give the actions that followed in terms of the stories of each platoon, taken separately.

The First Platoon

At Lutzen the First platoon was in reserve on the right, behind the Second platoon. It set up defences along the railroad track before we all pulled out for Pegau. Lutzen was an easy deal all around and the First had the easiest. But the next day, they were the Company point.

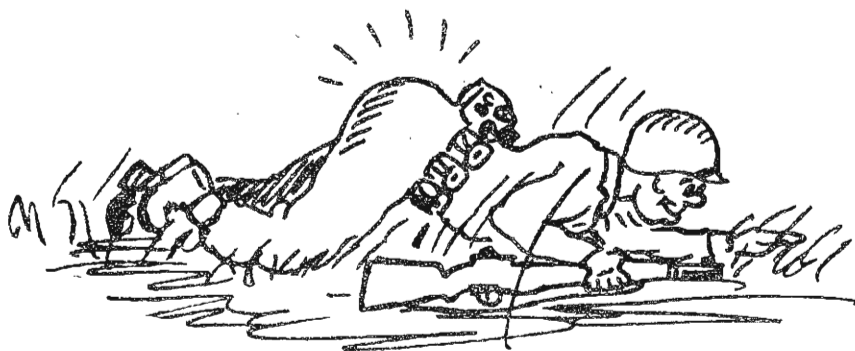
The point squad was the third under Kirkland. As they moved on Audigast, a panzerfaust struck over Lt. — then Sgt. Henderson, — and wounded Gallion who

GROCERIES
+
MEATS

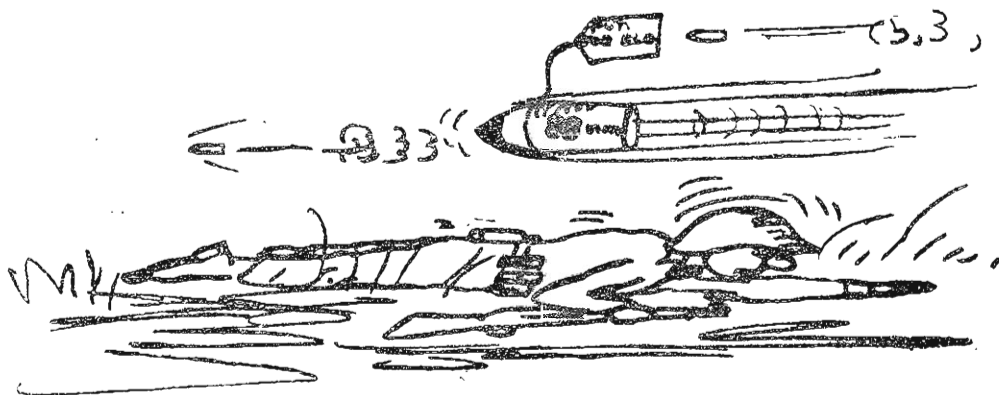


became the platoon's first casualty in the action. In the town of Audigast, Knapkic and Gage, with the only two operating BAR's in the Company, helped our tanks clear out a road block.

On the way through Audigast, the First moved across an open field of about 300 yards using marching fire, with J Platoon on their right. While the rest of the platoon was fighting its way across the field, Ellis sent Byalek and Catlett to burn down a barn which stood in the field and which held snipers. The third squad moved very fast and went all through the town coming out on the other side about 300 yards away. Here Delucia and Eubanks spotted an enemy machine gun nest and fired on it. Then all hell broke loose. The Jerries threw everything they had and the barrage killed Kirkland, Huff and Eubanks. Fisher and Byalek captured 18 prisoners in a cellar which was then converted into an aid station in time to receive what was left of the third squad as well as the casualties. Alverado got 14 direct hits with his bazooka but all were duds. For the rest of the day, the men of the First who didn't become casualties watched the steady stream enter the aid station they had set up. That night, what was left of the First platoon — 14 men spent the night in a hole, 10 by 5, and sweated out the Jerry barrages.



SHELBY



FLAK VALLEY

The next day the First platoon wasn't committed. That evening it moved to the next town with the Company, where it was combined with the remaining elements of the Third platoon which had also been hard hit. One night of rest and the Company was off for Leipzig by way of Borna, which was the assembly point.

The attack plan failed as the Company got pinned down and had to withdraw to wait till morning. That day, aside from patrolling and helping the Second handle their prisoners, the First platoon sent two BAR teams to a burning house to fire at a gun emplacement and draw fire so that elements of the Second platoon who were pinned down could withdraw. The mission was accomplished, but minutes after leaving the burning house, the men saw it blow up, for it developed that it was an ammo dump.

That ends the story of the First platoon. They had the only BAR's in the Company that worked, suffered more casualties, and generally had one of the roughest deals in Flak Valley.

The Second Platoon

The Second advanced on Lutzen to right of J platoon, and while J platoon was routing Jerries out of holes, the Second tackled the cement works at the edge of town, with Marion's squad bringing out about 50 prisoners. Moving to the RR track, they set up a defence line and sent patrols through the town, with Korte and Trotter bringing in more prisoners. Loading on TD's, they left Lutzen for Pegau where they got their first chance to sleep in 51 hours.

Their approach march on Audigast was as follows: Behind the First platoon, on the left side of the road with Marion's squad out as flank guards. They later joined the First platoon in their marching fire across the field toward those Flak guns. Fredericks and Johnson took their squads to the extreme right of the town, thus covering J platoon which was in the process of extracting prisoners from a hillock. Moving to the railroad, they captured 13 prisoners and staged a little Malmédy in the yard. They afterward reconnoitred both sides of the track, bringing back seven more prisoners. On the road between Audigast and Kobschutz the platoon was pinned down by artillery and mortar fire with Stone and Hunt getting killed. Blythe, seeing Trotter get his legs almost blown off, administered first aid under especially heavy fire and then called Lindow, Ivens and Pearson to help him get Trotter to the aid station.

During a lull, the Platoon beat it to Kobschutz where they set up a defence which they maintained all that day and night. The next morning they moved out in attack formation, First, Second, Third squads with the machine gun section in support. Moving down the RR track they got pinned down for an hour and a half. After that they withdrew to their old position, and advanced with the Company to take the next town that evening.

At Leipzig the Third squad went up to a 240 mm. Jerry gun emplacement. They were guided by Holt and Beale of J. platoon. Huddleson with Grey, Bartlett and Williams of J. platoon sneaked into the Jerry field hospital at Gaschwitz, and directed mortar fire on the railroad yards across the street. After a good pounding

by the M Company mortars, a Colonel surrendered himself with 250 officers and men. The surrender was made to the Second platoon which, for the whole action, topped the prisoners score for all the units of the Company.

★ The Third Platoon

The unlucky Third platoon drew all the odd assignments from Lutzen to Leipzig. They missed the looting and shooting at Lutzen because they were left to guard the artillery. The Third platoon and the artillery went to a town that hadn't been cleared and after digging in at the edge of town, they were shelled twice for a total of five hours. About 4 o'clock they pulled out to meet the Company at Pegau. On the way they were shelled and one man became a casualty, Willie Smith. After picking up their sacks for a good night's sleep, they were disappointed because they were again pulled out to guard the artillery. After another sleepless night they rejoined the Company just before the jump-off.

During the approach march to Audigast, Armstrong led a patrol on the left flank, Becker on the right flank. Both patrols were pinned down by MG and sniper fire. Armstrong got one Jerry as he tried to run across an open field. Being the reserve platoon, they were on the right, just behind J platoon. In the town Whitaker and Earles got a sniper who had played dead in the church steeple as elements of the Company had passed.

To prove Napoleons statement that fortune is a whore, we can cite the case of Sgt. Mixer, the popular platoon Sgt. of the Third. He was hit in the leg with an 88 shell that was a dud and he came out all right. But when the Third was called up to relieve the First as point, and they were pinned down in an open field, Mixer was killed by a direct hit from a flak gun, while he was observing for gun emplacements.

The word came to withdraw and during the move Whittaker was hit by a tree burst. About 500 yards back, Lt. Gluckstern's platoon set up a defence line. Here Bevilles and Moore were hit by snipers, and Klinger was hit while trying to bring them in. When night came Goodwin, Shoff, and Earles spotted a Jerry patrol and got four men. The Platoon CP was set up in a burned house but on finding it was an ammo dump, the men were forced to move as quickly as possible. The next day they got pinned down with Sgt. Ferris' Second platoon along the railroad track and had to withdraw. The platoon advanced with the rest of the Company that evening.

Although incorporated with the First platoon after Flak Valley the Third platoon was called out again to guard — this time the 4.2 mortars. They joined the Company in time to capture 14 prisoners, including several officers. The Third had the lions' share of sleepless nights and dirty details.

The Weapons

The story of Weapons is the story of the work of two definite sections, the mortars and the machine guns. In the attack on Lutzen the only "casualties" were Pietrobono, Beck and Baker who liberated a large quantity of schnapps. The Weapons didn't get a chance to search the town because they had to set up immediately for a possible counterattack.

The machine gun section had it rough enough in Flak valley, however. At first it was employed to protect the flanks of the Company, but it was soon called up to aid the First platoon in Audigast. Here sniper fire got Coff and Hatton. After that, Jerry shells, and flying debris and panzerfaust rounds from an ammo dump, set off by Gee and M. Jones, the bazooka team of J platoon, forced the section to the CP where they checked ammo and set up again facing the next town.

Gilpin's MG squad got hit especially bad; they were in the middle of town covering the front when the big stuff started to fall. Blake was killed and the rest of the squad was hit and became casualties, thus putting the No. 2 gun out of action. The first squad was set up in the CP all that day and night. During the early part of the night, Turner spotted a Jerry counter-attack. Lt. Nock directed mortar fire on it. The next day the remainder of the three squads under Fleming, Curran, and Pietrobono moved up to support the Second platoon. Again they were pinned down, this time losing Barker and Turner through wounds. By the time they got back to Kobschutz there were only enough men to operate one gun properly. The MG's were not committed at Leipzig.

The mortar section was committed neither in Lutzen or Audigast, but in following up the Company, F. Anderson was killed, Bush and Poland wounded. That afternoon when the Jerry artillery curtain was lifted, the mortars were committed to repulse a counter-attack, a task which they completed successfully. The next day they put down a preparatory fire for the Company's attack, and covered the subsequent withdrawal. At Audigast and Kobschutz the Weapons platoon covered all the leading elements of our advance and broke up at least one counter-attack.

The medics had a tough job to handle, but we shall not soon forget the work of Corporal Hunyadi in the aid station — work that went on despite his own wounds. The runners too had an unenviable job as they ran around with their walkie talkies. Those of us who had an idea of what was going on remember Johnson, Lines, Bradley, Peresheek, Driggers and Joseph, to name only a few. Among the other sights we will remember of the battlefield, were the tanks of the 777th Tank Battalion who lost one officer and two tanks, "All American", and "Always Arlene"

And remember that hot meal Sgt. Fox had for us in Leipzig — and that mail call in Leipzig, where stacks of mail went uncalled for because the men they were addressed to were killed or wounded.

From Leipzig the Company moved to Deuben where we had a rest that was welcome. Our only task there was to set up a defence line on the river bank at 4 every morning. But for K Company as a whole, the days of sweating out those barrages were ended. We now began to sweat out better billets, wine rations, training schedules and things like — well — V-E day which is the subject of the next section.

From V. E.

V. E. Day How we dreamed of this day! How we discussed, pro and con, when it would come, and under what conditions it would come! Those among us who were optimists just knew that the war was all but over, that the enemy had no alternative and must surrender — and the pessimists insisted that Jerry could not surrender, that he would fight on and on, even when there was no longer any hope of his winning. And some of us didn't think very much about it, but hoped that it would all be over soon. We argued about it, and even had bets with one another about it, and every time an issue of the Stars and Stripes came down, which wasn't as often as it should have been, the discussion would start all over again. Yes, V. E. Day was going to be a big day for G. I. Joe in the E. T. O. . . . We were all going to shoot our guns off, kick the officers in the pants, and raise all kinds of hell!

And finally V. E. Day did come . . . and somehow no one got terribly excited, we didn't shoot our guns off, no one kicked an officer in the pants, (it's a good thing), and we didn't even raise very much hell. . . . Perhaps it was because it had dragged on so long after most sectors of the front had surrendered, or because we had begun to read so much about redeployment, the C.B.I. etc., or maybe it was just that the various and sundry kinds of manure we had been absorbing in Nepperwitz and Deuben, and now in Leisenau, had dulled us to the point where



we just didn't give a damn any more. . . . Yes, V.E. day had finally come, and somehow no one seemed to care very much. A few of us did drink a few toasts to celebrate the occasion; in fact, now that I think of it, some of us really got plastered; but all in all V.E. day was somewhat of a disappointment. The training schedule was carried out as usual, no celebrations, no days off, just a little more chicken — not the kind you eat. . . .

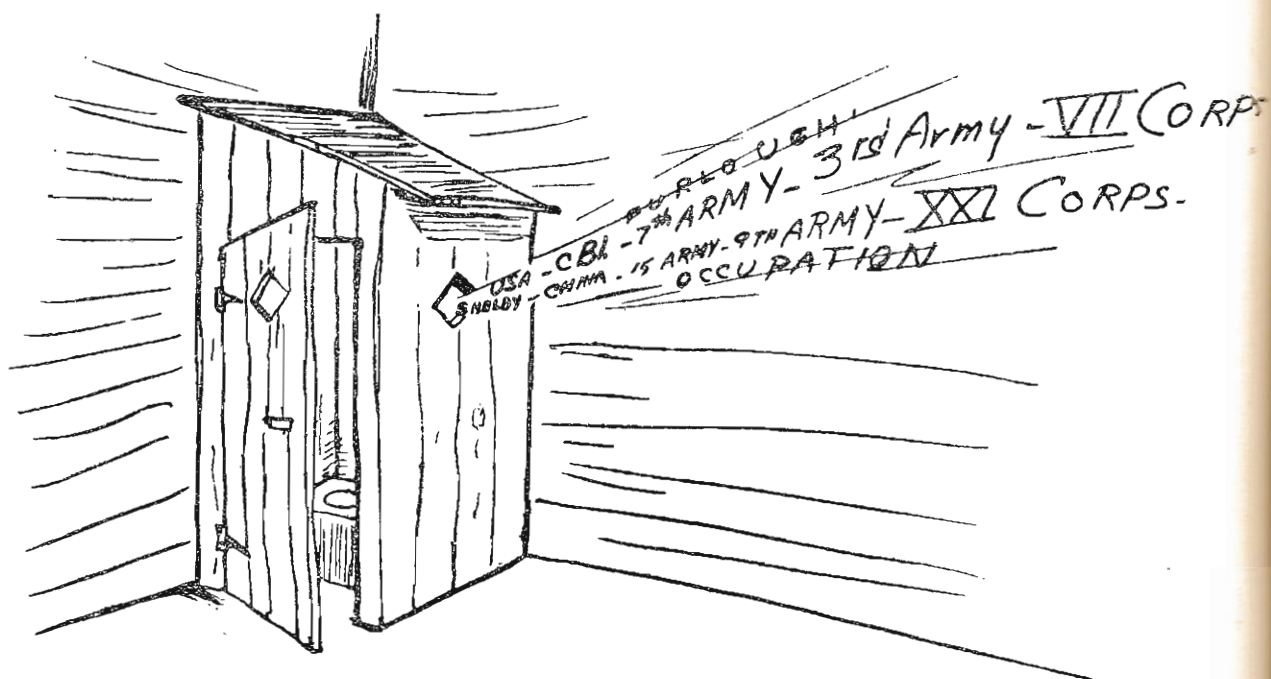
We left Leisenau pretty much the same way as we left other towns. Got up bright and early and had early chow. . . . Then we sat around for a couple of hours waiting for transportation. Army tradition probably, hurry up and wait . . . And when the trucks did come, as usual there weren't enough of them, but we piled on and started off on our way. It was a bright, sunny day. The countryside looked pretty good, especially since we were moving West.



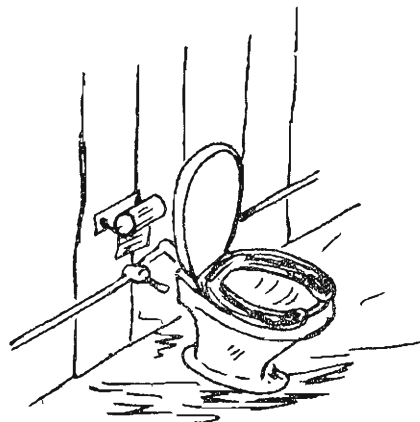
TRAINING PROGRAM

That was really some caravan, a couple of the boys from the Third platoon were sitting on the cab of a truck wearing top hats, and a fellow from "J" platoon played his trumpet all the way to Karsdorf. We were a little disappointed in Karsdorf; we had passed so many decent-looking towns, and finally stopped in this tiny, manure infested village, got into our billets, and the next morning started right off on our training schedule.

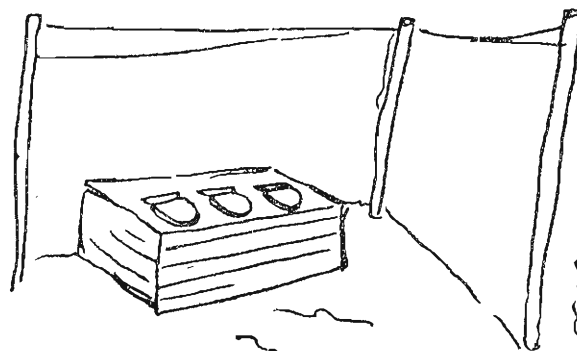
And now that the war was over, at least for those of us in the E.T.O., we could begin to look forward to some entertainment. The Stars and Stripes had announced all sorts of wonderful things for us: plays, concerts, shows, etc. . . . We are still looking forward to them. I guess that way down deep in our hearts we didn't really expect very much, after all we were still in the Infantry, and a line Company at that! And it's a good thing too, because we didn't get very much of it. A few went into Leipzig to see a play, some had a chance to see a movie, and others went sight-seeing in Leipzig. Other than that, all the entertainment we had was what we made for ourselves, our softball games, our track meet, some impromptu parties, usually on the nights when wine or champagne was issued. There was some talk of various classes . . . just talk, we never had them. Some of the boys took to playing cards, others bet on the baseball games, and it's rumored that there was some fraternization, . . . however that couldn't be true, fraternization was verboten! And we all took to arguing again, this time whether or not we would get a furlough at home before that long boat ride. And the longer we had time on our hands, the more rumors we heard. We were transferred from Army to Army, from Corps to Corps, from Berlin to Paris to New York, until our heads were swimming. We got a little equipment, pulled a little guard, wrote letters, and most of all, we just sat around and waited for news of our future.



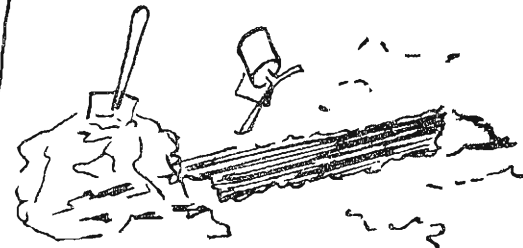
Rumor-fabrik - ETO. Model M-1945



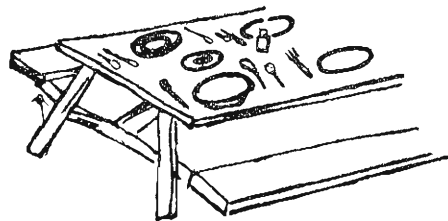
Shelby



France



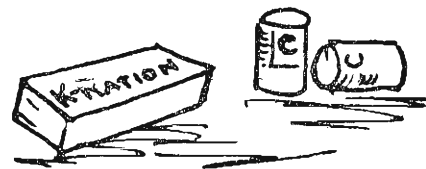
Germany



Shelby



France



Germany

We were given few hints of what that future was to be. The only clear fact was that K Company as we knew it was being broken up. As time went on, the training schedule became less demanding and our lives in K Company became more pleasant and less like the army. Twenty years from now we may look back at our life in Karsdorf and Berneburg and say it was damn good. But there is little satisfaction in this statement for men who are civilians at heart and who want to go home as badly as we do. Although it becomes harder and harder to find something to bitch about, we are going to bitch until the day we get that PAPER, and from where we sit, it looks like a long way off.



The Fifth Platoon of Company K

This is the story of the Fifth Platoon of Company K, otherwise known as J platoon, and the men who made it up. During the latter part of December, 1944, when the army was pressed for reinforcements, the brass decided to let negroes volunteer for infantry assignments in combat proven divisions.

The volunteers who were gathered at the training camp in France were a varied lot. There was Richardson, who had landed on D-Day, Strange whose regiment built bridges all over Europe including the famous one at "Carentan", and there were a few old men like Bailey who had two sons in the service. Strangers all, they soon got to know one another, for they had one thing in common — the desire to do something more than work for victory, the desire to get back at the Jerry who planted the mine that got a friend, the Jerry artilleryman who bracketed in on their convoy, and the pilot who bombed their billets in England. These men never forgot such things, they were tired of their own inglorious role in the war. Steeled thus, with hate in their hearts, anticipation in their minds and an intensive training behind them, they left France to join the units to which they had been assigned.

Joining Headquarters Company of the Third Battalion during its siesta in Schmidtheim, our fervor was dulled by rifle inspections and a training schedule. We stayed with Hqts. from Schmidtheim to Kassel, during which time the platoon underwent several changes. Skurdy became platoon sergeant when Green went back to I Company. We lost Lt. Pitton for Lt. Lovejoy, and Lt. Lovejoy for "Rudy" (Lt. Rudolf). At Wetzlar we received some reinforcements from the 106th. Aside from looting, the town of Obernhof will always be remembered for the champagne which ran like water, and it was the place where Brown and Lampley captured our first prisoners.

We joined K Company as we were leaving Kassel, putting an end to rumors concerning our new assignment. The first thing we did with the Company was to take a hike. Although no two men will agree on the actual distance, we all agreed it seemed a thousand miles. It was on the hike that White and Bryant captured two SS men who held up the Company's advance.

The next morning, after one or two dry runs (one was a walk of two kilometers), we finally loaded onto artillery trucks. Our ride with them was marked by three distinct things, dust that you couldn't escape from, Chow - Time - Charlie, the last of the Luftwaffe, who came over every day at chow time until the AA boys knocked him down, and Pate who blew the "Bugle Call Rag" on a battered German trumpet as we passed through the small German towns.

Digging in outside Weissenfels, we waited and listened to artillery and more rumors, which were wrong as usual. Remember that field we pulled into with the foxholes already dug? We thought we would stay there all night, but we had to leave a little while after chow to check ammo and rifles, for we were off to Lutzen.

Lutzen was easy for we caught the Jerries sleeping, and after sending out some patrols we moved on to Pegau. We all got sleep that night for at Lutzen we were so tired we just didn't give a damn. Pegau will be remembered, for here the Platoon became officially assigned to K Company, and the acting non-coms got some ratings.

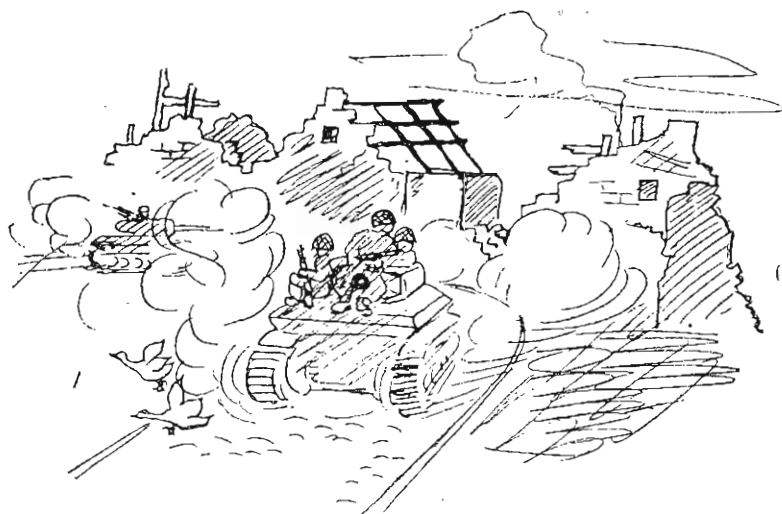
"M. P.'s slept there last night, so just expect sniper fire. Mission to follow tanks through town" — that was our introduction to "Flak Valley" before the jump-off.

The story of Audigast and Kobschutz is written elsewhere, but we can note that we did get that fire all right — straight from the mouths of flak guns and 88's at point blank range. To mention a few of the highlights of the Battle: the First squad had the lead tank knocked out from under them, and after hitting a hillock, Washington shouted to some Jerries on the other side, "Ergeben oder sterben!" Some came over and surrendered — quite a few died. Audigast was the place where everyone dropped grenades, indiscriminately, in all cellars, and it was here that Gant had his backside torn by a civilian shiper.

Coming to Kobschutz, Skurdy captured a Jerry captain, dressed in civilian clothes, who was giving away our positions. Before despatching him, Skurdy found a detailed map of German gun positions, which he turned over to Lt. Rudof. Many of the boys say it was this day that made them take K Company into their hearts, and surely it was here that the men of J platoon showed the rest of the Company that they could fight and die for what they believed, and do it in the best of American tradition.

Loading on TD's at Kobschutz, we moved to Borna, and dug in around the town while awaiting orders. The orders came, "We move on Leipzig tonight." Nobody said a word. "The marching order is Second squad, Third squad, and First squad." Then Rudy smiled, for he noticed the relieved expression on Washington's and my face, for the First squad always led the Platoon and we were the scouts in that squad.

A final weapons check and we moved out, marched about an hour and stopped at the Battalion A and P platoon for a short break and final orientation.



K Company is to contact any opposition and I and L Companies are to by-pass it — that was the final word. As we moved out again somebody shouted, "Give 'em hell boys"! A feeling of restlessness overtook us, for that expression was bad luck to the Platoon.

The beginning — that's what it was — the beginning of what was to become legend in the Battalion — of J platoon's trail of Jerry blood. The beginning was sort of hazy, hitting the ground, having soldiers pass over your head, getting up and passing them, hearing a muffled snarl when you stepped on somebody, and finding yourself out in the middle of nowhere pinned down by mortar and machine gun fire. That's the way it was until Lt. Rudof and Big Dave opened up on that car full of Jerries, giving away our position.

During this time, the Platoon broke down into two groups, those who got through and those who didn't. The group that didn't get through remembered the gun positions and the next day Holt and Beale showed the Company where they were.

The group that did get through moved down the road several hundred yards during the lull, but they were held up, for there were some foxholes that held sleeping Jerries, and these holes needed clearing. At this time the sharp click of bootheels was heard. It was a German guard relief of 25 men coming down the road. In a hedgerow, Jackson was waiting with his machine gun, and when they got in range he opened up, getting every one, for they fell in place like planted trees row on row.

When passing through Gaschwitz we went by a field hospital, dropping a few grenades while Burwell and Clark called Jerries out of their holes to death. The rest of the night we followed a river with the star flares illuminating the sky in our wake. When morning came we were on the outskirts of Markkleeberg and it was here Washington convinced a Jerry platoon sergeant to surrender his whole platoon. Putting the column of prisoners in front with a great white flag, we entered Leipzig where we turned the Heinies over to the Second Division. Here a lucky few got some hot coffee before we set out again with our numbers strengthened to 18 men, for Jones, Poole, P. Davis and D. Davis had come through also. The rest of the day was highlighted by the capture of 23 more prisoners whom we turned over to the 272nd, who tried to get us in on their Monument Battle, and by the drinking at a beer hall we had commandeered.

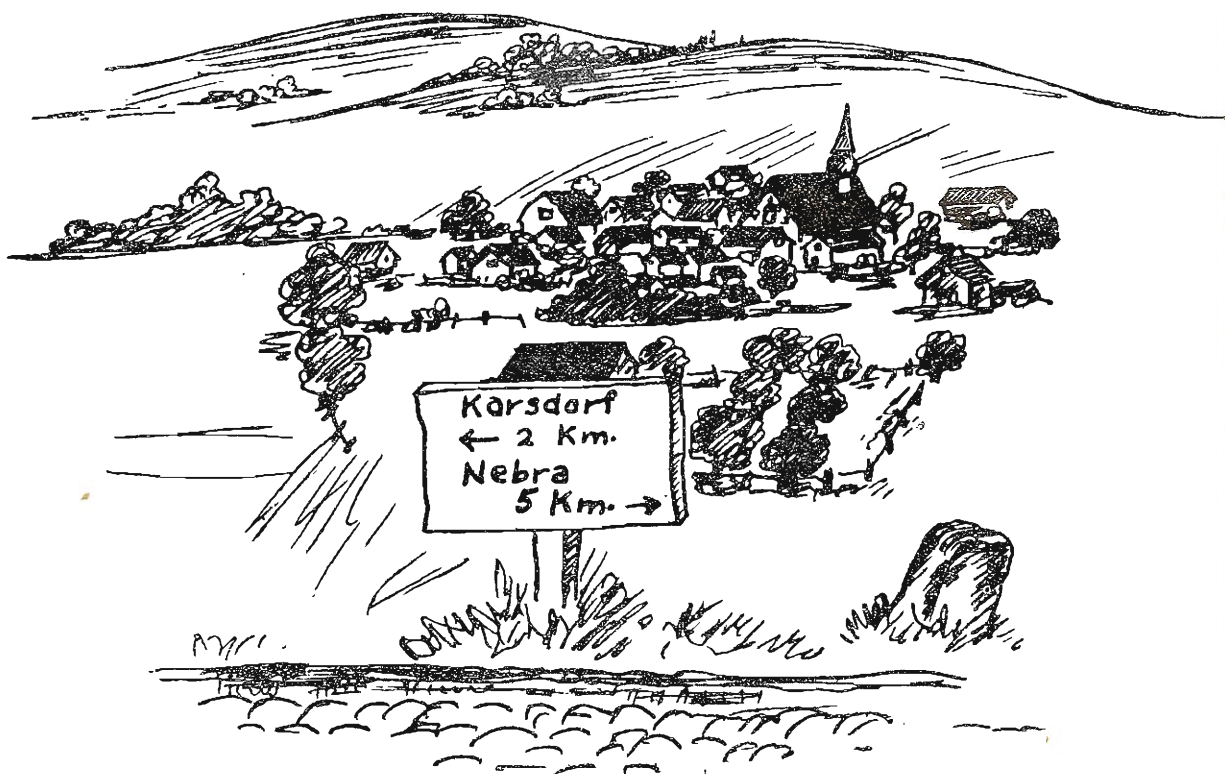
Aside from the guard relief, every man in the Platoon, including those who didn't make it, got at least one kill; and the most unforgettable things of that night included Burwell's and Clark's calling Jerries out of their holes and shooting them — Bailey, who was high, leaving his bayonet in a Jerry when he couldn't get it out — little Pate who fixed up a Jerry he had wounded, with his own first aid packet, and then after leaving him there, walking back a hundred yards to shoot him with his own gun because he was moaning too loud. That night we killed more men than any unit our size in the Battalion. We were also the only ones to get into Leipzig, and yet this was accomplished without a casualty.

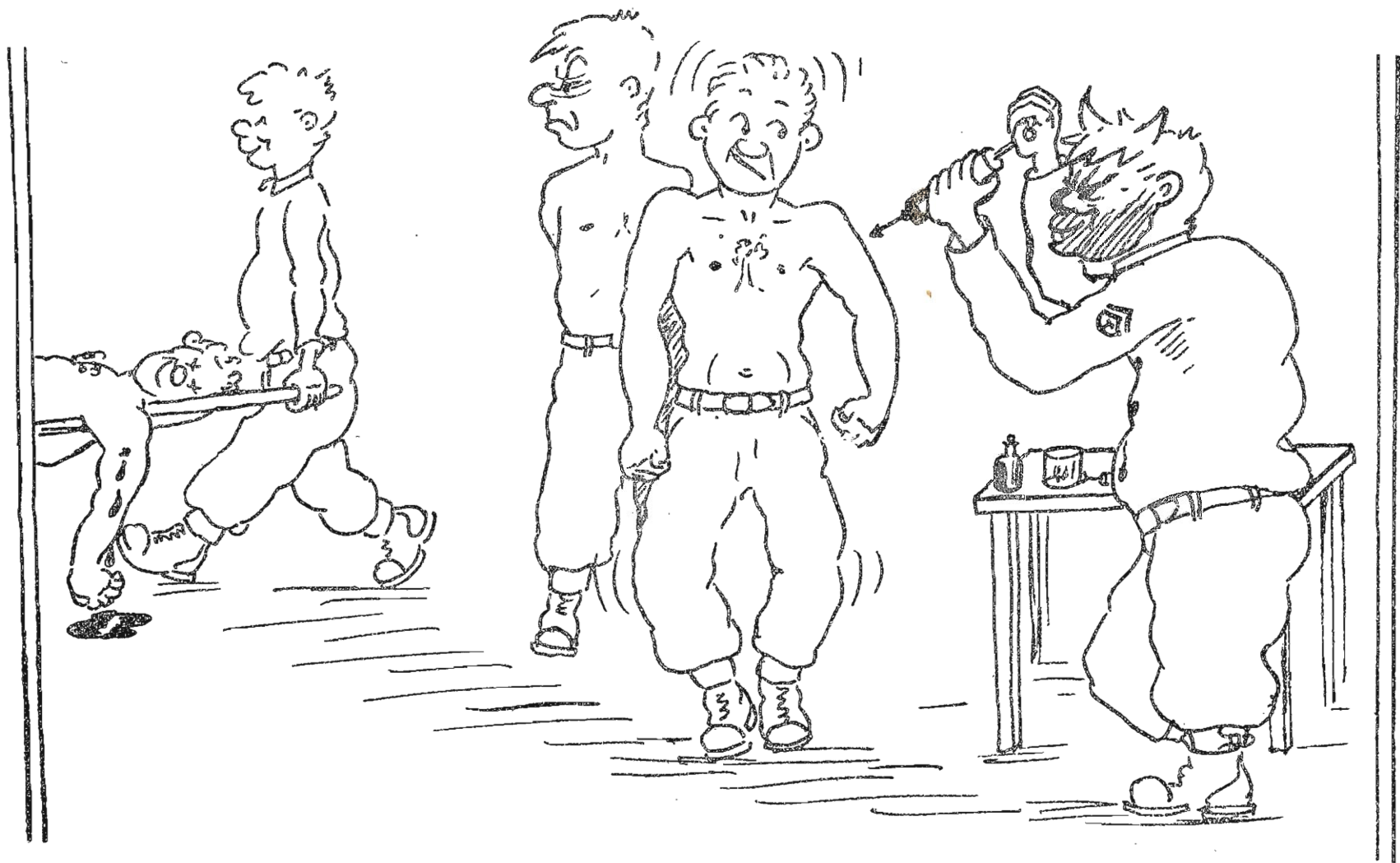
From Leipzig we went to Deuben, where our last mission was a disastrous patrol sent out to contact the Russians. We carried Byalek from the 1st Platoon as

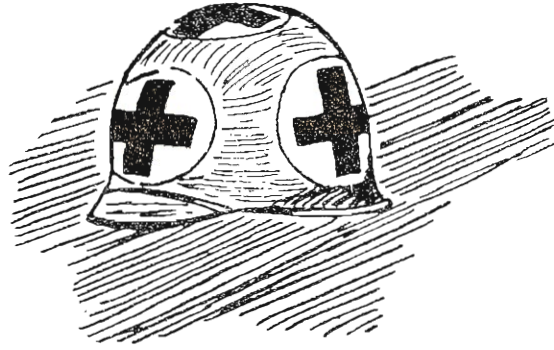
an interpreter. However, the patrol was spotted and after shooting a guard who levelled down on us, we beat it back to the other side of the river, leaving Clark and Richardson behind in the Mulde.

We left Deuben for Nepperwitz and Nepperwitz for Leisenau and Leisenau for Karsdorf, where Big Dave, Judge Gray and Coon left us to go home, and Bailey commercialized on Jerry wine.

Now, like the rest of the Division, we are sweating out what is to become of us, but no matter what our fate, "Blue King" will always be our Company. The men in the Company have our appreciation for making our association a pleasant one. We hope they never forget the Fifth Platoon of our Company K.

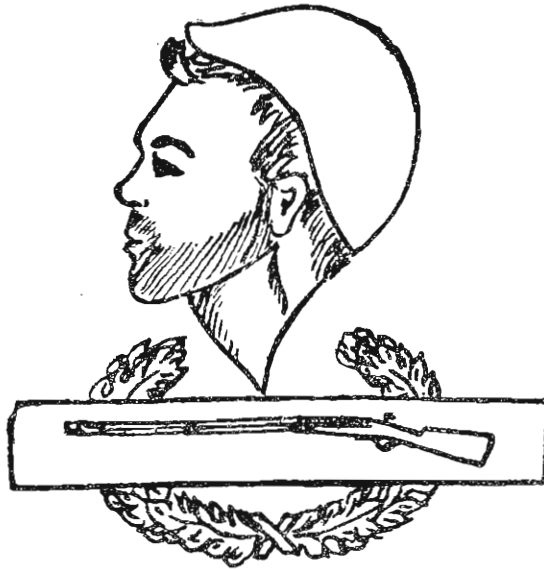






THE MEDICS

No story about a rifle company is complete without a mention of the medics. The men of the infantry risk their lives so often that death and injury become almost commonplace. The fact that they can view such personal disasters so calmly is traceable in a large measure to the assurance they have of selfless medical aid when they need it. To the infantryman, the man who gives that treatment is no commonplace person. The medic is someone special who goes into combat without arms but with a mission as important as that of the man who pulls the trigger. From the time that the man with a red cross first stuck a needle in to protect us from disease to the days when the needle injected morphine, we have been conscious of the wonderful medical organization that stands beside us, and we have been comforted. The only fitting tribute we can now make is to say to the medics, "We remember Kobschutz and the Monschau Forest, and thanks a hell of a lot."



THE ROLL CALL

The roll call which follows on the next few pages is not a complete roster of K Co. at any one time. It would surely never do as the basis for a morning report. Basically, it refers to the Company as it was in Karsdorf. There is no definite order that prevails throughout, nor is there any uniformity. Personally, we've been in the army long enough to be sick of uniformity. We only hope that you will find in this list, mention of most of the men you will always remember when you think of K Company.

Headquarters Company K

Herbert R. Pickett — Captain Inf. Agricultural Engineer from Baton Rouge, La. Strictly one of the boys, but still commands the respect of all. One of the few Division officers left who came as cadre to the 69th, volunteered to be CO of a rifle Company. He wears the Bronze Star, Purple Heart and has over 85 points.

Russell M. Sloss — Captain Inf. All American Center at Indiana, commanded Co. K. from its Camp Shelby days until our rest period at Schmidtheim, Germany. Was then made Bn. Executive Officer. He hails from Pittsburgh, Pa. and expects to make West Va. his home after the war. At present is Regimental S-3. He also wears the Bronze Star.

Albert W. Nock — 1st Lt. hails from Long Island N. Y. Executive Officer of K Co. during our entire combat days. Steady as a rock, and "Al" to everyone. A former T D officer he now serves Co. L, 271st Inf., still feels he is a King Co. man. His big hope is to get back to L. I. and shake hands with Al Jr. his kid whom he has never seen.

Travis E. Wells — 1st Lt. another La. Officer has been in Uncle Sam's service since 1940. Present Commanding Officer of K Co., he has over 85 points and is sweating out getting back to U.S.A. Came into the army as a college man straight from L.S.U.

Burton Pierce — Captain Inf. Commanded K Co. for 13 months of its training period at Camp Shelby. Known as "Bouganville" because of his love for keeping the Co. in the swamps; deserves much of the credit for the calibre of NCO's in K Co. He left K Co. for overseas service in June of '44. Distinguished himself as CO of a Headquarters Co. in the 7th Armored Div. Still attempts to keep in touch with his true love "Killer K".

Everett R. Lashley, Jr. — 1st Lt. Executive O. hails from the aristocracy Kentucky. He was a student of engineering at the Citadel, in Charleston, S. C. Throughout combat was platoon leader of the Second Platoon where he won the Silver Star. Was transferred to the Army of Occupation with the 29th Division.

John H. Cross — 1st Sgt. — "Top" — hails from Huntington, W. Va.

Thomas E. Ferris — 1st Sgt. calls Philadelphia, home. Throughout combat was platoon Sergeant of the Second Platoon. He wears the Bronze Star and Purple Heart.

Asa R. Cowden — Communications Sgt. hails from Sharon Hill, Pa. Awarded the Certificate of Merit for heroic action at Kobschutz.

Fortunato Esposito — from Chicago Ill. "Footie" is mail clerk of Co. K.

Bernard J. Natkin — comes from Roanoke, Va. He holds the Purple Heart and the Certificate of Merit.

Roy R. Tomanek — Bugler — "Tommy" to everyone, Comes from the dorf of Mandan, N. Dak.

Clarence Frederick — formerly of the 2nd Plat. called "Daddy" by all. He hails from Dayton Ohio.

Jack Hogan — "Tweeter Pole" during combat was assistant Commo Sgt. Calls Wilmington Del. home.

Charles Buchanan, — comes from Madison, Wisconsin; (Death Takes a Holiday)

Milfried Wylie — comes from Davidson, Okla. Served as Bn. Runner in combat

James Wilson — "The Kentucky Kid"

James Bawbell, — Hollywood, California.

John Henry Saughan — Personnel Clerk of Co. K. Originates in Louisiana.

Donald A. Krum — hails from Pennsylvania. He is Officers Section clerk of Personnel.

George W. Harrison — from W. Va. Kitchen truck driver.

Virgil A. Spanos — from St. Louis Mo. Assistant Supply Sgt. and Orientation Non-Com. "Morale Builder of Co. K."

Melvin D. Fox — Mess Sgt. Commonly known as "Stud" Holds the Bronze Star for Meritorious Service.

Ralph R. Johnson — Supply Sgt. K. He has been awarded the Certificate of Merit.

J. D. Elliott — Armor artificer of Co. K. won the Purple Heart. Hails from Arkansas.

Harry Komansky — 1st Cook. "Muscles" Awarded the Certificate of Merit.

John J. Maly — 1st Cook from Nebraska.

Carrol D. Sharrer — "IKE" 2nd Cook — from Pa.

Harvey Conrad — Cook. — The Pennsylvania Dutchman.

Charles Bach — Cook — from the Capital of the U.S.A.

Jesus P. Aguilar — Cook "Pajuka" — The lone ranger of Texas.

Henry and Pop — The two Beligues, adopted sons of K Co. for whom K Co. is their transportation home from Germany.

Clarence H. Tyson — "Tex" — Cook.

Leaman Young — The Oklahoma Kid. Bn. Runner.

Gaar Joseph — "Joe" — Armor artificer for Co. K.

The First Platoon

by Phillip Babb

Raymond Abernathy — called "Ab" — from Table Grove, Ill, and is a squad leader of the first squad.

Edward Adcock — a rifleman in the 2nd squad, "Honeybee" comes from McMennville, Tenn.

James Albert — they him "Shorty" — he's an assistant BAR man in the First Squad. He comes from Stokesdale, North Carolina.

Roy Alley — "Al" — comes from Clinton Tenn. He's a rifleman in the second squad. He wears the Purple Heart.

Frank Alvarado — "Alvo" — a bazooka man in the first squad. He comes from Chicago.

Vencil Akers — "Handsome" comes from Matoaka, W. Va., and is a rifleman in the second squad.

Aaron Anderson — they call him "Andy" — a BAR man in the third squad. He comes from Nashville, Tenn.

Russel Aw — "Junior" — he comes from Atlanta, Ill A platoon runner, he wears the Purple Heart.

Phillip Babb — another "Junior" — this one comes from Calais, Maine — Babb is another of the platoon runners.

Ralph Ball — "Garrison" — a rifleman in the second squad, he comes from Winston-Salem, North Carolina.

Vestal Bartley — is known as "Bogie" — an ammo-bearer in the second squad, he comes from Kingsport, Tenn.

Doy Lee Battles — "Hammerhead" — comes from Coalgate, Oklahoma — the squad leader of the third squad.

John Beasley — "Bez" — comes from Burlington, North Carolina, BAR man second squad, and he wears the Purple Heart.

Andrew Belky — the "Trooper" — comes from Irvington, N. J. — a rifleman in the first squad.

Cloyd Benfield — called just "Cloyd" — he comes from Hickory, North Carolina — a BAR man in the first squad.

Lewis Berry — a rifleman in the first squad where he's called just "Berry". He comes from Abingdon, Virginia.

Paul Bialek — "Polack" — comes from Central City, Pa. He was the Company Russian interpreter as well as being a rifleman in the third squad.

Hugh Birchfield — "Jackson" to everyone — comes from Oneida, Tenn. A BAR man.

Ediley Blair — the nickname is "Slim" — he's a rifleman in the third squad and he comes from Bristol, Tenn.

Donald Boggs — just call him "Don" comes from Becklay, W. Vir. and is a rifleman in the second squad — another of those Purple Heart boys.

Frank Bosworth — "Boz" — hails from Fairhaven, Mass. — assistant bazooka man in the first squad.

Richard Boyd — "Dick" — is from Woodruff, South Carolina. He was the first scout in the first squad.

Eben Buley — "Bul" — comes from Houston, Texas — he's a rifleman in the third squad and wears the Purple Heart.

Thomas Carolyn — "Tommy" — Baltimore, Maryland — he's a rifleman in the second squad who also wears the Purple Heart.

Hugh Catlett — "Babe" — hails from Knoxville, Tenn. He is a rifleman in the first squad and wears the Purple Heart.

John Clancy — just call him "Clancy" — comes from Woburn, Mass. He's an assistant BAR man in the first squad.

Patrick Conerly — "Pat" comes from Miami, Fla. He's a rifleman in the third squad who wears the Purple Heart.

James Coppola -- "Jimmy" is the name. He comes from Providence, Rhode Island. In the second squad where he was squad leader, he also wears the Purple Heart.

Evandus Dail — "Dail" hails from Merry Hill, North Carolina. He's the first scout of the third squad and wears the Purple Heart.

Lee Davis — "Dave" — St. Petersburg, Fla. is his home town. Right now he's a rifleman in the second squad and wears the Purple Heart.

Alfred Dearborn — "Buzzbomb" — the assistant squad leader of the third squad, and another owner of a Purple Heart.

Daniel Denofa — "Sick call" — Philadelphia, Pa. — a rifleman in the third squad, he wears the Presidential Citation from a previous membership in the 83rd Division.

John Devoy — "Mickey" — a Brooklyn boy, he's a rifleman in the second squad.

Louis DiLucia — "Lou the Lip" — a rifleman in the third squad, he wears the Purple Heart — hails from Pittsburgh, Pa.

Everett Driggers — "Drig" — Venice, Fla. — the Company runner for the platoon.

Verness Downey -- "Ollie" — the platoon guide, he comes from Columbus, Ohio.

Charlie Duncan — "Charlie" another Oneida, Tenn. boy — he's assistant BAR man of the third squad.

Arthel Ellis — "El" — our platoon Sgt. hails from Trion, Ga.

Thomas Erdley — "Baldy" — calls Winfield, Pa. his home. He's the second scout of the first squad.

Russell Farmer — "Dick" another man from Winston-Salem, North Carolina — he's a rifleman in the second squad.

Daniel Fisher — "Danny" — a platoon sergeant from Reading Pa. who holds the Purple Heart.

O. M. Gage, Jr. — they call him "O. M." assistant squad leader of the third squad — comes from Abilene, Texas.

William Gallion — "Bill" — hails from Columbus, Ohio — he is BAR man in the the third squad.

Lawrene Gillen — the "Sad Sack" — a bazooka man in the first squad, he he hails from White River, South Dakota. Another man who holds the Purple Heart.

Vernon Gorski — another "Polack" — comes from Northeast, Pa. and is squad leader of the second squad.

Jack Henderson — "Jack" — platoon sergeant who made loocy. Holds the Purple Heart and Bronze Star.

Herman Hess — "H. H." — comes from Cobbton, Ga. — an ammo-bearer in the third squad.

Roy Hopkins — "Hoppy" — Parkersburg, W. Va — rifleman in the second squad.

Lonza Huff — "Our boy" — a Virginia boy who is a rifleman in the third squad and wears the Purple Heart.

Louis Hyman — "Chowhound" — From Detroit, he is bazooka man in the third squad.

Larry Jones — "Dee" — from Silver Point, Tenn. — assistant BAR man in the second squad.

Charles Knapick — "Knap" — comes from Binghamton, New York. BAR man in first squad.

Rudolph Mollner — "Rudy" — hails from St. Paul, Minn. — assistant bazooka man of the third squad.

Anthony Pierpont — "Toni" — an assistant BAR man in the third squad, he comes from Newport, R. I.

John Plaster — a rifleman in the third squad, he hails from Duffield, Virginia.

Joel Rudof — "Smoodie Rudy" — platoon leader from Oakland, California. — Holds the Silver Star.

Frank Sullivan — "Sully" — the first scout of the second squad who is from Kansas City, Mo.

George Taylor — "Daws" — comes from St. Michaels, Maryland — right now he is a platoon leader.

Joseph Tilley — "Joe" — another from Wiston - Salem, North Carolina — the second scout in the second squad.

Cliff Walker — "Clipper" — is from Reedsville, North Carolina -- assistant bazooka man in the first squad.

Rufus Watkins — "Junior" — also is from Reedsville — an ammo-bearer in in the first squad.

Lewis Weltzbarker — "Lewis" — comes from Norman Park, Georgia. A rifleman of the first squad.

Richard Akermark — "Panie Cakie" — assistant bazooka man in the first squad and he wears the Purple Heart. Comes from Minneapolis, Minn.

SECOND PLATOON ROSTER

by Daniel Tucker

Joseph Andrade — "California" hails from Laton, California

Rufus Beasley — from Four Oaks, N. C. he carries the bazooka.

Wilmer Blank — from New London, Wisc. — is the third squad leader.

George Buerkle — "Bupps" — of Kansas City, Mo. — has the Purple Heart.

Bernard Citrenbaum "Bunny" — proud of Washington, D. C. — a squad leader and he has the Purple Heart.

Martin Deford — "Peuny" — from Nashville, Tenn.

Stephan Fearon — "Slippery" Brooklyn, N. Y. is his home.

Pedro Gameros — from Chicl, Texas is assistant on the B A R in the third Squad.

Key George — "Chief" — of Ship Rock, N. M. is a rifleman in the first squad

Robert Griffin — Bob is from Greenville, N. C.

Ivey Hedgecock — a Kernersville, N. C. boy — first scout in the first squad.

Martin Heimbach — "Pinhead" — made shoes in Emmaus, Penn., second scout in the third squad.

James Hinshaw — "Red" — A Huntland, Tenn. farmer — first scout in the second squad.

Lonzo Holcomb — "Dolen" — from Booz, (no kidding), Ala., has the Purple Heart with one cluster.

Willie Huddleston — "Ghoul" — from Byrdstown, Tenn., — assistant squad leader of the third squad.

Vicent Isbill — Vince is from Madisonville, Tenn., a rifleman in the third squad.

Fred Ivens — from Alcoa, Tenn., is assistant squad leader of the second squad

Joseph Jackson — Sawanee, Tenn. is his hometown.

Will Johnson — Hails From Humboldt, Tenn., he is a rifleman in the second squad.

James Jones — Wienston, N.C., carried the bazooka in combat.

William Lindow — "Lynne" is a Texas boy, (San Antonio) — is squad leader of the second squad.

Lloyd Mathers — "Shorty" comes from Kingston, N.Y. — is a rifleman in the first squad.

John Meyers — Elkhart, Ind. — "Curls" is first scout in the third squad and has the Purple Heart.

Oliver Nolen — "Hotshot Ollie" is from George West, Texas — he is an automatic rifleman of the first squad.

John Robinson — Canton, Ohio is "Robey's" home. Assistant squad leader of the first squad.

William Shanks — Bill is from Cleveland, Ohio — he is platoon guide and has the Silver Star and Purple Heart.

Ernest Simpson — "Simp's" from Pine Bluff, Ark. — he is a rifleman in the second squad.

George Sitti — from Lester, Penn., squad leader of the first squad — has the Presidential Citation.

Harold Spurlock — "Spur" is from Center, Texas — carries the bazooka in the first squad — has the Purple Heart.

Clyde Taylor — "Jimmy" is a Kingsport, Tenn. lad, is assistant bazooka man in the third squad.

Daniel Tucker — "Red" is from Chase City, Va. -- Is Company runner and has been awarded the Purple Heart.

Charles Vocke — from Brooklyn, N. Y. — "Chuck" is automatic rifleman of the third squad.

Charles Wolfe — "Chuck" is from Chicago, Ill., — he is a platoon runner.

"The Boys from the Third Platoon"

by Robert Albert

Robert Albert — "Heavy" — he comes from Defreestville, N. Y. His platoon job is Company runner.

Lester Allen — "Al" — He hails from Winston Salem, N. C. He is toting the BAR at present.

William Armstrong — "Army" — Pittsburgh, Pa. He is a squad leader.

Frank Balicky — "Frankie" — From Johnstown, Pa. He is a squad leader in the platoon now.

Thomas Barry — "Pete" — from Moultrie, Ga. He is an ammo bearer in his squad.

Benja Batten — "Junior" — The little man from Douglas, Ga. He is assistant BAR man.

Berton Becker — "The Nose" — He's a proud son of Chicago, Ill. He is an assistant squad leader.

Calvin Bendel — "Smoky" — From cloudy Pittsburgh, Pa. He is a rifleman and has the Purple Heart.

Robert Bennet — "Andy Gump" — Mahanoy City, Pa. He is a rifleman according to the T/O.

Paul Berumen — "Sleepy" — Los Angeles, Calif. His job in the platoon is that of second scout.

Francis Beville — "Bev" — He's from Mims, Fla., is a rifleman.

Budd" Cameron — "Bud" — From Valier, Ill. He is a squad leader holding the Purple Heart, and Presidential Citation.

Russel Dawson — "Bull" — He hails from Cumberland, Md. He is a rifleman in the platoon and holds the Presidential Citation.

George Depierro — "Dip" — Holden, Mass. He is a BAR man in the platoon.

Richard Dodge — "Pappy" — who hails from North Baltimore, Ohio. At present he is a cook and holds the Purple Heart.

Frank Duran — "Mouna" — From Albuquerque, N. M. He is an assistant squad leader and holds the Purple Heart, the Silver Star and a Presidential Citation.

Frank Earles -- "Sharpie" — A boy from Morristown, N. J. He's a first scout.

Joe Fields — "You-all" — A second scout whose hometown is Cookeville, Tenn.

Joseph Fleming — "Silent Joe" — He's a native son of Jersey City, N. J. He is Plt. Sgt. and holds the Purple Heart, Bronze Star.

Alva Goodwin — "Red" — His home town is Howett, W. Va. His platoon job is assistant BAR man.

Charles Martin — "Charlie" -- He hails from Kingstown, Tenn. His job is rifleman.

Raymond McMillan — "Red" — from Eugene, Oregon. He is an assistant squad leader.

Dorman Nichols — "Nick" — the little guy from Brady, Texas.

Calvin Owen "Cal" from Blairs, Va. He is first scout.

Lee Pack -- "Good-Lookin'" — from San Diego, Calif. He is an ammo bearer.

Paul Pound — "Jay-Hawker" from St. Johns, Kan. He is a rifleman.

Thomas Powers — "Chow-Hound" — Pulaski, Va. He is a BAR man in his squad.

Reuben Saladana — "Shorty" — He claims to hail from Harlinaen, Texas. His job in the platoon is rifleman.

Russel Shay — "Rudy" — Parkers Landing, Pa. He is assistant BAR man in his squad.

Andrew Sherosky — "Slu-foot" — from Pa, the town is Madera. He is a rifleman.

Norbert Simon — "Cy" — From Grand Rapids, Mich. He is a rifleman and wears the Purple Heart.

Harold Springer — "Ted" — He hails from Waukesha, Wis. He is a rifleman and has the Purple Heart.

Skelton Smith — "Smitty" — a boy from Middlesboro, Ky. His position in the platoon is rifleman.

Worley Smith — "Pop" — from Pontiac, Mich. He is a squad leader.

Michael Szluk — "Mike" — from Alvada, Ohio. His job is the platoon sniper.

Houson Timms — "Tex" — from Ennis, Texas. His job is rifleman.

Lambert Thieda — "Slim" — from Detroit, Mich. He is an ammo bearer for his squad.

David Thomas — "Tommy" — from Somerset, Ky. He is platoon runner.

Keith van Deventer — "Van" from Miami, Fla. His job at present is rifleman.

Fredrick Vaughn — "Rebel" — from Columbus, Ga. He is platoon guide.

Frank Wardgo — "Coal Miner" — from St. Claire, Pa. He is now a rifleman.

Our Buddies we lost to the 29th Division

Robert Gluckstern — "Gluck" from Brooklyn, N. Y. His job was that of platoon leader.

Norman Harry — "Handsome" — He comes from Washington, D. C. His position was that of squad leader.

Robert Kremin — "Bob" — the Irishman from Syracuse, N. Y. who was our platoon guide.

Antone Peruchek — "Tony" — He hails from Ely, Minn. He was platoon runner.

Bernard Sabaroff — "Sab" — the jolly boy from Detroit, Mich. who was Company runner.

Roger Sahr — "Gold-Brick" — the laddie from Minneapolis, Minn. He was a BAR man in his former squad.

Harold Sands — "Baldy" — the ever-talking G. I. Joe from Ordano, Okla. He was a rifleman.

Beecher Self — "Hill-billy" — the lad who came from Black Creek, Tenn. He was a second scout.

Robert Schoff — "Lard" — the wee lad from Lancaster, Pa.

Wallace Sharpe — "Wally" — the smiling guy from San Bernadino, Calif. He was an assistant squad leader and has the Purple Heart.

Earl Tipton — "Tip" — the husky kid who claims Nashville, Tenn. for his home town. He was a rifleman.

Weapons Platoon Roster

by Harry Seymour

Frank Tufariello — from Brooklyn. "Tuff" is holder of the Purple Heart, and platoon sgt.

Thadeus Walczynski — One of the Joisey boys, "Thad" was a jeep driver.

Eugene Neiss — from the Buckeye State, another of those darn jeep drivers, one of those Bronze Star boys. "Pinky".

John Lines — "from Detroit, Mich". — Weapons runner, Johnnie is another wearer of the Purple Heart.

Thomas Barry — "Mother" — hails from out San Gabriel, California, was a runner.

James Curran — machine gun section leader — hails from Jenkintown, Pa.

Beny Cornell — "The Brooklyn Hill-billy" — a machine gun section runner.

John Ragborg — "Big John" — hails from Euclid, Ohio, is machine gun squad leader.

Harold Doak — another of Ohio's favorite sons; known as "Gus", and is the best machine gunner in the battalion; wears the Purple Heart.

Andrew Sundell — hails from Jersey City, New Jersey — Andy is assistant gunner on the machine gun.

John Sullivan — "Short-Timer", was ammo bearer with the machine guns.

Anthony Szwec — "Polak" — hails from Philly; was ammo bearer for the machine guns.

William Gilpin jr. — "Gil" — machine gun squad leader hails from the great state of Oklahoma; wears the Purple Heart.

Richard Bentley — "Dick" is ammo bearer with the machine guns. He hails from Omaha, Nebraska.

John Pitrabono — "Beetle-brain". Came from Niagara Falls before the war; light machine gun squad leader.

Russell Turner — "Bat Man" — from Sesser, Ill, a machine gunner. He wears the Purple Heart and cluster.

Morris Coff — Genius, known as the "Mole" — is a machine gunner and hails from Denver, Colo.

Henry Beck -- "Heinie" comes from down "thar" in Arkansas. He's an assistant machine gunner.

Martin Baker — "The old Man" hails from Nacogdoches (wowie) Texas. He's an ammo bearer for the machine gun.

Patrick Coccozza — "Coke" is one of those Bronx boys. "Coke" is an ammo bearer for the machine gun.

Joseph Crafton — "Tennessee" used to be an auto mechanic down Nashville way. Joe is an ammo bearer with the machine guns.

Robert Johnston — "Cussie" divides his time between the Weapons and the kitchen.

Dennis Strange — Assistant jeep driver. Hails from San Francisco.

Julian Rateau — "Joe" hails from the Blue-grass State, Kentucky.

Perry Gault — "Smoky" hails from Knoxville, Tennessee and is mortar section runner.

John Baker — "The Father" mortar squad leader hails from Beverly Hills, Calif. He is a wearer of the Purple Heart.

Dallas Eastep — A mortar gunner, comes to us from Virginia.

Clive Edwards — "ED" another southern boy from Sparta, North Car. is assistant gunner on the mortar.

Eugene Andre — Expert on service stations (has the best one in East Providence). "Jap" is ammo bearer for the mortar.

Elmer Murray — "Red" is an ammo bearer of the mortars, comes from Cincinnati, Ohio. He wears the Purple Heart.

Edward Flowers — Ed comes from Virginia. He is an ammo bearer in the mortars.

Harry Seymour — mortar squad leader — hails from that great metropolis of Jacksonville, Ill.

G. C. Hoover — Comes from Commanche, Texas; he was a gunner in the mortars.

Richard Collins — From New York. He is a gunner in the mortars.

Claude Reed — "The corporal" — hails from South Bend, Indiana. Reed is an ammo bearer in the mortars.

John Duffy — One of those Irishmen from Chicago. Duff is an ammo bearer in the mortars.

Dewey Poland — From Olney, Illinois (a good state), Dewey is ammo bearer for the mortars. He wears the Purple Heart.

Ernest Salvatore — "Sal" is just another chip of that tree in Brooklyn. Is a mortar squad leader.

John Young — From Tennessee. John is a gunner in the mortars.

Leonard Tokarsic — Len is an old coal miner from Pa. He is an assistant gunner on the mortars.

Frank Erdy — "Fat boy" — hails from Millfield, Ohio. Erdy is an ammo bearer for the mortars.

Clifford Simon — From the Buckeye State, "Si" — is ammo bearer for the mortars.

Carlyle Walsh — From Cincinnati, Ohio. He has been a mortar gunner and section runner.

Gaylord Sargent — "The Deacon" — comes from Cleveland, Va. The Deacon is an ammo bearer for the machine gun section.

Vernon Nauer — Another one of those jeep drivers, is from the steel city, Pittsburgh, Pa.

Albert Hornyak — "Cognac" — Is from Cleveland, Ohio and is an ammo-bearer in the machine gun section.

"J" Platoon

by John Teare

James Selby — is from Nashville, Tennessee, "Shadow" was an ammo bearer in the machine gun squad.

William Lampley — or just plain "Bill", hails from Chapel Hill, N. C. He was a BAR man second squad.

Clifford Bender — Nicknamed "Big Tracks", he comes from Birmingham, Al. Rifleman first squad.

George Bailey — Home is Philly. His nickname is "Norris St." A rifleman second squad.

Willford Peppers — a citizen of the Bronx, called "Pep", ammo bearer in the machine gun squad.

Willfred Strange — lives in Washington, D. C. Is called "Prof". Scout second squad.

Joe Sanders — From Atlanta, Ga. His nickname is "Smitty". Rifleman second squad.

Preston Davis — From Gary, Ind. Squad leader, third squad.

Joel Rudof — Our combat officer, just plain "Rudy". Platoon leader.

James Brown — A Harlem boy, called "Barrelhouse". BAR man, first squad.

Louis Bradley — lives in New Orleans, La., Bradley was a runner and wears the Purple Heart.

Melvin Jones — From York, Penn. He is called "Charmer"; was a bazooka man.

Gene Burwell — Home is in Kansas City, Mo. "The Fox" was squad leader of the first squad and later platoon sergeant.

Howard Jones — Albany, N. Y. A scout for the third squad he is known as "Twilight".

Leon Simpson — from Kansas City, Mo. A scout in the third squad. Is called "Slink".

Alvin Beale — A Harlem boy, assistant gunner in the machine gun squad and is called "Trigger".

Carl Martin — a Monclair, N. J. boy. Called "Hypockets", he has the Purple Heart and was a rifleman in the first squad.

John Poole — Washington, D. C. Called "Ace" he is squad leader of the second squad.

Raymond Connely — our present platoon leader comes from the Bronx whispered about as "Wild Bill".

Christopher Joseph — New Orleans, La. A platoon runner referred to as "Bad News"

John Teare — from Brooklyn, known as the "Gaslight". He wears the Purple Heart and was scout of the first squad.

Johnny White — Atlanta, Ga. known as "Rineheart", is rifleman second squad.

Mathews Robert — Opelika, Ala. We call him "Slim", was bazooka man second squad.

Lawrence Holland — From Cairo Ill. A rifleman for third squad he is called "Snafu".

Oscar Wiegand — A looney who comes from Mexico known as "The Head".

Roland Hartford — he is "Junior" comes from Haverville, Mass. He wears the Purple Heart and was a rifleman in the third squad.

James Woodford -- Another Harlem boy. Known as "Tiger Reefer" was a rifleman third squad.

Clifford Taylor — a lad from Pittsburgh, Penna. A rifleman in the third squad where he is known as "Doc".

Curtis Gee, — A metal worker from Detroit, Mich. "Rubber Gut" — was squad leader of the machine gun squad and wears the Purple Heart.

Taylor Washington — Pittsburgh, Penn. Aside from being the Company and Bn. interpreter, he was scout for the first squad and is called "Tubby".

Louis Skilings — from Brooklyn, N. Y. Known as the "Killer". Was a rifleman in the first squad.

Noble William -- comes from Cincinnati, Ohio. "Pretty Boy" — was ammo bearer on the BAR team in the first squad.

Elija Williams — Comes from Norfolk, Va. The assistant BAR gunner in the first squad we call him "Sweet William".

Alphonso Holt — from Atlanta, Ga. Called the "Minute Man" was an ammo bearer in the machine gun squad.

Frank Pridgent — from Springhope N. C. is called "Nip". Ass't. BAR gunner for the third squad.

Frank Bartlett — from Monroe, La. Known as the "Squirrel" is assistant squad leader of third squad.

John Nolan — comes from Greensburg, Penna. The BAR man for the third squad, he is known as "Eat Mo".

Roland Scott — from Boston, Mass. Known as "Abie", he was the assistant BAR man third squad. He wears the Purple Heart.

Edward Thomas — New Orleans, La. A rifleman in the first squad likes the name "Dick".

Oren Pechette — from Maupin, Org. is our medic. Has the Bronze Star and is called "Frenchy".

These men were discharged or are still in the Hospital

David Davis — NY, NY — "Big Dave"

Chris. Skurdy — Detroit, Mich. — "Candy Man" — Silver Star

Lawrence Grey — Washington, D. C. — "Judge"

Marion Bryant — Florida — "Eyes" — Purple Heart

Leon Coon — Pittsburgh, Penna. — "Sweet Man"

Robert Allen — New Orleans, La. — "Mistreated" — Purple Heart

Richard Gant — Atlantic City, N.J. — "Skull" — Purple Heart

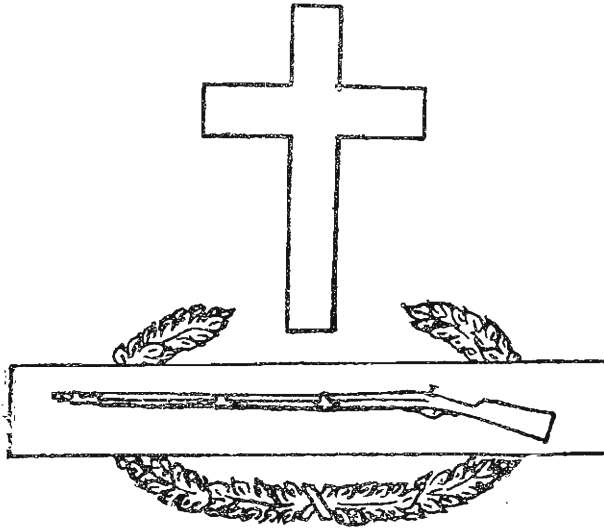
Oscar Pate — Baltimore, Md., — "Huss"

Geferod Saxton — Washington, D. C. — "Sax" — Purple Heart

Leon Lawson — Baltimore, Md. — "Mokey" — Purple Heart

Ralph Jackson — Washington, D.C. — "Character" — Purple Heart

Leon Swain — Cincinnati, Ohio — "Lover" — Purple Heart



GREATER LOVE HATH NO MAN

Joseph Tavares

Earl Piercy

Maurice Thompson

John Mixer

Jesse Kirkland

Philip Eubank

Joel Bailey

Lonza Huff

Fred Anderson

Courtland Blake

Charles Whitaker

Lee Davis

Gerald Stone

John Hunt

Stanley Hill

James Clark Jr.

Augustus Richardson

Paul Anthony

From the Staff

Now that the book is finished, we realize far too clearly the mistakes and omissions we have made. We regret that we could not include in the story the actions of each man, for we know such recognition is merited. We also know that things which may influence the rest of our lives are given only a one or two line mention in the book; but such is the nature of books in general and histories in particular. We only hope that we have told you enough so that you can recall the rest of what happened while you were with the Company, and have some idea of what the Company was like before you became a member.

We will close by making this offer: To the first ten people who can correctly identify 100 errors, the editorial staff will award certificates good for a 20% discount on the purchase of a fur-lined p--- pot.

The Editors

Morris Coff

Rudolph Mollner

John Teare

Wallace Sharp

Bernard Sabaroff

William Gilpin

Daniel Tucker

Harry Seymour

Editors in charge of publication

Morris Coff

Rudolph Mollner

John Teare

The cartoons and drawings in this book are the work of Rudolph Mollner, William Gilpin, Bernard Sabaroff, and Murry Wachtler.