

## 17: PURSUIT

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Motorized, the infantrymen swept past town after town, taking and clearing miles of enemy territory. At Lowenstein 1st Battalion was temporarily halted by artillery, rocket and small-arms fire and again at Pfedelbach 2d Battalion doughs had to dismount from trucks and tanks to clean out pockets of last-ditch Nazi resisters.

The objective of the drive was to cut the road to the rear of Stuttgart, preventing the Germans in that key city from escaping the jaws of a huge American-French pincers movement. Except for the actual physical resistance at Lowenstein and Pfedelbach, the armored-infantry attack combination accomplished the mission with little trouble. Methodically, the 3d Battalion followed in the wake of the 1st and 2d to mop up and clean out pockets and by 19 April the front had widened to such an extent that the 44th Division was called in to plug the gap between our Division and the 63rd to our left. The 2d Battalion, 398th Infantry, was ordered out of the lines to guard VI Corps headquarters, but 1st Battalion continued the lightning attack and took Murrhardt and stopped at Althutte. Here the 3d Battalion passed through the 1st, which remained behind to clear Althutte, and continued on to its objective, Unter-Urbach. Opposition was practically nil. Some towns and roadblocks were defended, but the big fight in our area of operations as well as those in all others of Europe was practically over.

On 23 April a task force consisting of Company L, a platoon of tanks and engineers, was assigned to drive through to Stuttgart and meet the French. The motorized contingent swept past through Bad Canstatt, Feldbach, Unter-Turkheim and continued on to clear Bernstein, Endersbach, Heppach and Korb to contact the French 3d Algerian Infantry Division at the site of the wooden bridge crossing the Neckar between Bad Canstatt and Stuttgart. On the same day march conditions for the 398th

ceased. Except for security missions and mopping-up operations the war was over for the 398th Infantry Regiment.

The Regiment as a whole came out of the front lines for the first time since its entry into combat, the beginning of November 1944. All over Europe fighting was sporadic and light. Only the official signing of the unconditional surrender remained to call a halt to the fighting in the most terrible of all wars. And on 9 May 1945 peace in Europe was declared. The 1st Battalion was assigned to Seventh Army for a security mission in Stuttgart, the 2d Battalion continued to guard VI Corps CP, and the 3d Battalion moved into the Waiblingen area.

The 398th Infantry accomplished its mission. From the cracking of the German winter defense line in the Vosges Mountains to Heilbronn, Germany, the insignia of the Alert was seen fighting, driving and dying to fulfill its part in vanquishing a tyrannical foe who threatened to rule the world.

