

# Bitch

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Battle of

**O**ne day in the first part of March came the order everyone by this time was expecting. "Send down a quar-  
tering party" ... Almost to the man, everyone knew what this meant ... rest ... going back for our long  
awaited rest. It would be our first actual time off line since we hit combat on Nov. 1st. Over 140 days of  
sweating out death; scared to walk off narrow, wooded paths for fear of mines; your body tense and hearing strained  
when the wind would whistle through the trees like a "comin' in shell". Rest, at last. A wonderful word. Time to write  
those letters that you couldn't before, time to take a decent shower and change of clothes, time to eat, time to sleep  
and sleep ...

Nine o'clock on the morning of March 12th found "F" company's men waiting for their relieving outfit... "G" com-  
pany 5th Infantry Regiment, 71st Division. Through them, we saw what we must have looked like to the boys of the 45th  
Division when we relieved them in November. Soldiers with clean faces — G.I.'s loaded down with excess equipment —  
faces that reflected apprehension, bewilderment and fear. To be moving back instead of forward, and on trucks at that,  
was certainly a wonderful feeling!

### *Relief at Last*

I could hardly believe the news when it came down  
over the "EE8" at Goetzenbruck that we were finally  
going to be relieved. When I broke the news to my boys,  
there were a lot of smiling faces and doubtful opinions  
expressed, because we had been fooled before. The  
gathering together of equipment after a month's stay in

one place was an all-day job. It was hard to realize the  
amount of junk each man had collected.

Then the process of burying all the material that we  
could not carry began. Freid and Rubano had bed rolls  
that they were just able to carry. When they found out  
the rolls were to go by truck, the loot really started to  
appear. The fourth platoon alone had enough stuff to  
fill one trailer. There was a big argument as to who was

going to carry the chicken that we had acquired by moonlight requisition. When being relieved by another outfit, it is the policy to exchange base plates for the mortars. Vampotic did a real job this time by swapping a couple of old rusty ones for new ones and the boys were happy because this meant they would not have to clean them.

The advance party for the 71st Division finally arrived. All the troops, "green to combat", were carrying everything but the kitchen sink on their backs. After talking awhile with them, we went out to inspect the positions. A few mortar shells came in and this new officer said, "What the Hell is that?". Of course, all of us, trying to act brave, said, "That's just a few mortar shells. You'll soon get used to that". He replied, "I'm not so sure about that!" That night, we had a long talk about this new outfit relieving us and we could not realize that at one time we too looked the same way.

*Lt. Thomas W. Hoelzer*

### *"Relief"*

We got quite a few little inward laughs at the way the squad who relieved us took over. The squad leader listened attentively to our description of the barbed wire, trip flares, and booby traps we had set, the guard situation, etc., then made out a guard list and posted it on the door.

It was pitch black when the outpost was finally relieved and all our men were together. We set out for the second platoon C.P. where we waited the rest of the squads. It seems that Jerry certainly was not asleep, for he started raining mortar shells just when our boys were coming back from the outpost, catching them in the open; luckily, nobody was hit, although they came close.

Finally when the entire platoon was assembled at the C.P., we left to join the rest of the company on the highway. The first squad was leading, and we were through the town and into the field when the Krauts came to life again. Without any warning enemy "88's" started whistling in. Caught in the open as we were, there were only two things to do, either hit the ground and sweat them out, or try to make it to the highway

and shelter by splurges. I chose the former, and rolled over into a rut about three inches deep in the cowpath and lay there sweating them out and wishing that the damned hole was deeper. It was so dark, I couldn't see any of the other members of the squad, but supposed they were around somewhere. When a lull in the shelling quieted things a bit, I called for Millsaps, but no answer. After trying several more times, I gave it up and was just beginning to start groping around for his corpse, when I heard Rip call from the highway. Heading that way, the first man I saw was Chynoweth feeling around for his helmet. After locating it, we joined the rest of the squad in a stable by the highway and counted noses. Everyone was there. At first we couldn't find Ignacio, but discovered that there was so much mud on his face that he just could not be distinguished in the dark. It seems that first Fann and then Ches had fallen on top of him in the mad dash for safety. A quick showdown indicated two parkas, one overcoat, and one helmet as "battle losses". But I think we all felt that we came out ahead in the long run.

*Enright*

### *"New Men"*

As we sat around in our houses in Goetzenbruck waiting for the new division to come in and relieve us, we talked about what they would probably be like. It was hard to believe we were going to be taken off the lines. After so many bitter disappointments before, there certainly was more than one "doubting Thomas" on this subject.

When, around seven at night, they finally marched in, our dreams of rest started to look like they would actually materialize. The men, new to combat, were "all eyes and ears". Everything, naturally enough, was strange to them and they were eager to learn. Their faces, clean and well shaven, reflected the fear and doubt every man feels when first entering combat.

Later that night, when we marched out of Goetzenbruck to waiting trucks at Soucht, everybody let out a mental sigh of relief. At last, we were going back for our long awaited rest!

*Richard Gabriel*



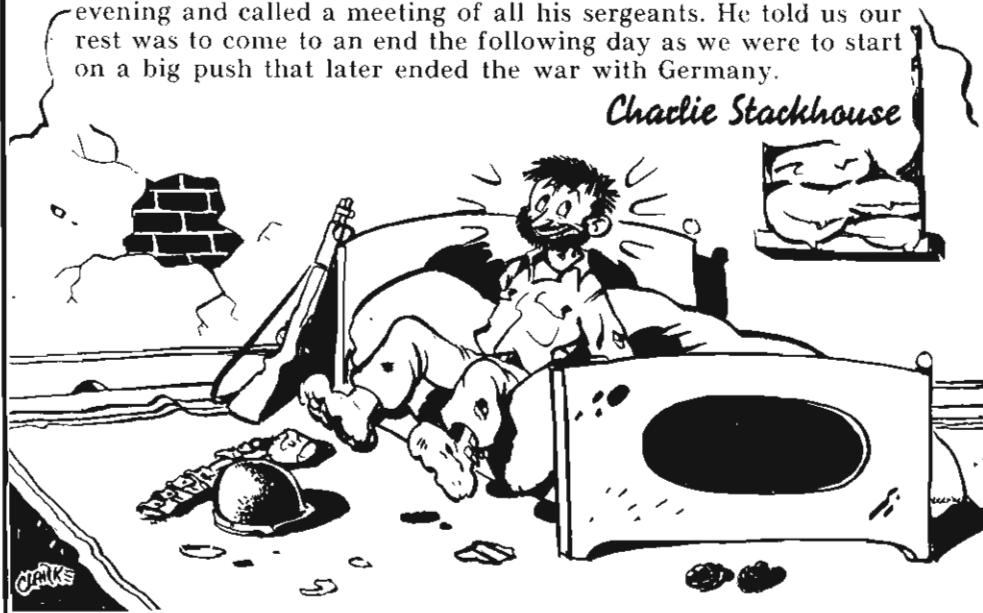
n March 13th, after a quartering party had picked out the best available houses and the kitchen and supply room had been set up, the company moved into Zollingen. Clean clothes, showers, movies, mail. Late afternoon found everything going along smoothly and then it happened.

### *"From Foxholes to Feather Beds"*

By midnight of March 12th, the company had arrived at the quaint French town of Zollingen. Their quarters were well picked out by a quartering party which had left the line the day before.

The next morning, after a good peaceful sleep, the men started straggling toward the kitchen barn. By the time twenty five or thirty men reached the kitchen for their breakfast, the farmers, who were watering their cattle at the town trough, began to realize they had American soldiers among them and moved to welcome them. After chow, the men began looking over the village and enjoying the bright warm sun. Meanwhile, I went to our Service company, which was located in Sarre Union, to pick up clean clothing and equipment. I then spoke to Lt. Adams, who later became Captain, about going to Sarreburg and get some athletic equipment and whatever else I could get to help make our rest period more pleasant. While in Sarreburg, I made arrangements with the 7th Army Baker Company to bake us some cakes. There were to be ready in three days. When I returned to Zollingen I learned that Lt. Adams was at a company commanders meeting. He returned around six o'clock that evening and called a meeting of all his sergeants. He told us our rest was to come to an end the following day as we were to start on a big push that later ended the war with Germany.

*Charlie Stackhouse*



he company commander was called to a meeting. When he came back, the platoon leaders, 1st sergeant, supply and mess sergeants went into a meeting at the C.P. behind closed doors. Late the night of the 13th, the platoon leaders brought back the unwelcome news that we were jumping off with the 7th Army's initial push. The divisions objective: Fortress city of Bitche. A second crack at the city that never before had fallen. It all sounded good on paper, but the men were far from pleased.

### *Zollingen*

We all know what it is to get a rest when you need it. During our long defense, we had had hopes many times of being relieved and of getting a rest. Finally, after a seemingly endless wait, we moved back to Zollingen.

When I arrived, the advance party had already gotten acquainted and were gradually becoming accustomed to living beyond the reach of enemy artillery.

About two in the morning, the company moved in to enjoy some hot coffee and a night of unmolested sleep for the first time since we had gone into the line.

The next day found the men engaged in such diversions as baseball, fishing and going to the movies. Also greatly appreciated were the regimental showers, which were set up close by. Mail call brought eight bags of mail with at least one box or letter for practically everyone.

Then it came. All the company commanders were called to a meeting at the battalion C.P. Almost immediately, everyone in the company knew that something was in the making. It was not very long before Lt. Adams returned with the facts. We were to jump off at 0500 on March 15th.

The platoon leaders, supply and mess sergeants, and myself were assembled around a table covered with maps and aerial photos. The tension was very great. For five solid hours we went over every phase of the operation, for the second battle of Bitche.

Before we pushed off the following morning, I was entrusted with over a dozen envelopes filled with miscellaneous items that the men wanted me to hold for them.

Personally, I was not looking forward to a lovely day and neither was Lt. Adams. I do not ever remember seeing him so worried as he was that day. In fact, I do not believe anyone was exactly looking forward to it, but as the company moved out to attack Bitche for the second time, success seemed inevitable.

*B. Hucley*

**T**

he morning of March 14th, after an excellent breakfast, was spent test firing our weapons and drawing all needed ammunition. The company moved to a rear assembly area shortly after noon chow. The afternoon was spent getting oriented on the next couple of days activities and resting up for the same. At one o'clock in the morning, after hot coffee and sandwiches, the company moved forward with Lt. Adams in the lead. It was a clear night and the units on our left, the 3rd and 45th Divisions, were moving. The artillery increased its fire until the time for their jump off which was scheduled for two o'clock. At 5:30, after marching continually, we arrived at our forward assembly area which was in the woods at the right of the French barracks. We stayed there trying to get a little rest. Rain and cold made this next to impossible. At 8:00 we moved out with Easy company in the lead, followed by George and then Fox. We hadn't advanced over 1000 yards when "G" company was held up. Jerry must have thought we were the forward company because they started throwing in plenty of mortar fire, 88's and rockets. The company secured what defilade they could from the ditches along side the dirt road. We had two casualties when, Freid and Clifford got hit by schrapnel.

### *From Head to Foot*

The beginning of the Bitche attack was not too tough.

The Jerries did not see us until we came out of the woods and were going down a dirt road. As the company cleared the woods, one man behind the other, it all began. For most of us, it was the first time we had heard rocket shells coming in. The only cover we could get was a ditch, about two feet deep, along the left side of the road. No one hesitated to jump into the ditch and lay down, and I do mean flat! I know I was so close to the ground, my nose was buried well into the hard surface of the earth. The rockets and mortar shells were coming in all around us. We were so close together that each man's head was touching the next man's feet, from one end of the company to the other.

The troops stayed there in the ditch at least two hours in the very same positions and conditions. Barrage of mortars and rockets came in constantly. Several men were hit. Two, only about eight feet from me, were wounded badly. With the care and protection of God, no one was killed.

*Andrews*



● Close up of furthest pill box.

● Forward elements reached here



● The rest of the company was lined from head to foot along this road.



● Note pill box at the vanishing point of the road.

**A**

fter some more "sweating out", "G" company moved forward and we followed up. Down the road, up a steep wooded incline, and across a very exposed strip of hillside we moved. This latter piece of terrain, a bad place to get trapped, was where the company underwent some heavy artillery fire when first we visited Bitche. From here to Fort Freudenberg, the company had to run, what with a mine field on the left and spasmodic sniper firing coming in from the right. No one was hit and the men soon took refuge in a banked-up trench adjacent to the fort. Freudenberg was pretty "kaput" thanks to the good work done by the 325th Engineers on the division's first trip to Bitche. To get to Fort Schiesseck, the men had to cross an open stretch of land, a covered road, through low brush, some mangled barbed wire and on to the fort itself. Again, crossing the open space was the only ticklish business. Waiting until the artillery would send over a smoke shell, Lt. Stalikas would send a couple of men at a time forward. When the entire company had reached the covered road, they moved out again. Reaching the fort without opposition, the men sprawled out around it to take a breather.

### *"The Second Platoon Attacks"*

After the shelling from rockets and "88's" had tapered off somewhat, we moved out of the ditch, up the road, and resumed our attack. We kept to the edge of the woods as much as possible, following communication wire past some foxholes dug by our men during the first attempt at Bitche, and stepping gingerly in the places vacated by the feet of the man ahead to avoid possible mines.

We stopped for a while to give the engineers time to clean up the mines in front of us. About twenty minutes later when they had finished picking them out, we moved out again over the hill, and past a dead G.I., one of the first casualties, and I wondered how many more of us would be in his condition by nightfall. By then we were going through a huge minefield which the Krauts had laid while the snow was still on; the shoe mines, gave me a rather squeamish feeling. With sighs of relief when we had safely transgressed the mines, we turned about a half turn to the right and began to work down through some pillboxes overlooking the reserve slope to Bitche itself. It was just then that snipers opened up from a pillbox at the edge of the town, and the platoon rapidly dispersed diving into a shellhole here, or an abandoned Kraut foxhole there. Part of the first squad worked down the hill to eliminate this threat but were fired on from some houses on the flank and forced to withdraw.

To complicate matters more, Jerry threw in some mortar rounds on the road; one of which exploded about twenty yards from the depression in the bank where I was trying to persuade mother earth to envelope me.



That was a wee bit too close; so I left the depression and hot-footed it about thirty yards up the road to a bomb crater where I felt more comfortable and was soon joined by four other boys in the squad. Shortly after, we saw more of the platoon crossing the roads in dashes and moving under cover of the crest of the hill toward Ft. Schiesseck. Leaving our shell hole rather reluctantly, we joined the others and moved through some brush up to the first Schiesseck pillbox, which proved to be unoccupied probably because it had been damaged badly in the first attack. Taking three more in short order; we reached the one on the further perimeter of the defenses and dug in there for the night, our mission accomplished, extremely thirsty and hungry, but we had to be content with some stagnant water collected in shell holes near by, which we "purified" with halizone tablets. Chow never showed up; so we spent what you might call a miserable night, we called it a good many things, none printable.

*Enright*

### *The "Bee" Line Dash*

It was on the day of the attack on March 15th. We were going from Fort Freudenberg to Fort Schiesseck and were crossing open ground of about 300 yards, when suddenly I heard what seemed to be a bee, whizzing past my ear. I remember Limbaugh coming up from behind and telling me that it was snipers shooting at us. As tired as I was, I started a 200 yard dash that undoubtedly broke all track records!

*Arthur M. Silva*

### *"Forget Me Not"*

St. Patricks day has a special significance for me as well as for the Irish. It was on this day that I pushed off for the first time with the company in an attack. Our objective was not just an ordinary one, either. The "Ensemble de Bitché" had never before been taken by storm.

As we moved across a big open field toward the town, a Jerry concealed in a supposedly empty pillbox, opened up on us. This held up momentarily, while the platoon crossed the field, one or two at a time. I was loaded with five rounds of bazooka ammo in addition to my regular equipment, so for me, running was really an accomplishment.

The mortar shells that Jerry was dumping on us were not improving the situation in the least bit. The first hole I hit was made pretty hot by snipers, so I did not stay there long. The next one I shared with Enright and his B.A.R. We were both pretty winded, but as this hole soon proved to be even hotter than the first, we quickly took off for a defiladed area beyond a road to our left. How I made that last dash untouched is still a wonder to me.

About a half an hour had gone by when the platoon leader, Lt. Lonsberg, called for the bazooka team up front. It was then that I realized that I had dropped the ammo back at that first hole. When Lt. Lonsberg found it out, he told me to go back after it.

The thought of that field was like a nightmare, but there was no alternative. I was really beginning to sweat when a man from another platoon came by with what seemed to me to be the most wonderful news possible. A smoke screen had been laid over the field to blind the sniper and get the rest of the company across more quickly.

Well as I said before, St. Patricks day will always be as well remembered by me as by the Irish.

*Kenziarski*



*Rear View*



*We were resting around this pill box when fire from within.*



*Front View*



It was an exceptionally hot day and this was a good opportunity to get some much needed drinking water out of the scattered shell holes. No sooner had everybody got comfortable than from inside the fort firing out came the noise of a grenade followed by a burst of "burp gun" fire. Little time was wasted getting scattered out and into stray shell holes and terrain depressions. A wireman and Lt. Thomas Horler, the latter sitting halfway in the embrasure of the fort, suffered slight wounds by ricochet bullets. Obviously, the German soldier must have heard the noises, and thinking the men to be inside the fort on the top floor, fired from the stairways that led deep down into the ground. A few grenades were thrown in through the top of the fort by Charles Johnson and Powers.

The company's equipment, which included most of the weapons, packs, rations, and radios, however, was still scattered out in front of the fort. While Schmidt, Johnson and Chaney kept the German soldier "buttoned up" with bullets fired into the embrasure, Rubano went forward and retrieved the equipment. The company dug in around the fort that night, and as far as shelling went, we were very lucky, receiving only a few stray rounds. It was a long, cold night with only raincoats for warmth.

### *The Pill Box*

The day had been a trying and tiresome one; it got on everybody's nerves. We all could remember the first assault on Bitchie and waited for that same pounding of "eighty-eights", rockets, and mortars to commence again. It was nearing nightfall and the objective of the fourth platoon was the pill box about a hundred and fifty yards across the field. Running the field at thirty yard intervals the platoon arrived safely at their objective. It was an ideal spot ... the embrasure was very large and about shoulder height and faced the opposite direction from Bitchie ... at last we were safe from shelling, for we all knew that our own artillery couldn't hurt these pill boxes so neither could anything Jerrie could throw at us. The embrasure was large enough to hold all of the fourth platoon and also headquarters platoon which joined us shortly after we arrived.

Packs and equipment were taken off and all went under the impression for a well earned rest ... shooting the bull on the days activities and what tomorrow might bring was the usual trend of conversation ... then it happened ...! The explosion of the grenade inside the pill box gave us the warning ... then came that dreaded "Brip" "Brip" of a burp gun ... Jerries were inside the pill box. Some-one hollered "scatter", but by that time most of the men had scattered already. Some on foot, others on hands and knees, duck-waddle or crawling. Lt. Horler, 4th platoon leader was wounded in the hand. A wireman suffered a shoulder wound, however all the men were out of range of the Jerrie gunners.

Fortunately, not all of the weapons were inside the embrasure. A few rifles were standing along the side of the pill box. "Chuck" Johnson and Schmidt grabbed one



each, and getting around in front of the pill box, fired back into the holes ... hand grenades were dropped in the pill box through holes in the roof by Powers and Johnson, by some nice throwing from out in front, managed to get three grenades through one of the front fire slots. The Germans inside the pill-box went back down, and once more things grew quiet.

Now came the most dangerous job of all ... the equipment and arms of fully forty men were still laying in the embrasure and someone had to get them. Volunteers were called for and Aldo Rubano, displaying his usual disregard of danger, volunteered immediately! Johnson and Schmidt continued to fire at short intervals with M-1's into the pill box fire slits to keep the Krauts down, while Rubano, between these intervals, crawled into the embrasure, gathered up as much equipment and arms as he could carry and crawled back out again, exposing himself to the burp gun fire should the Jerries ever catch wise to what was being done. Rubano's dangerous task was completed in about a half hour with the assistance of Chaney and Gabriel who took the equipment from him as soon as he rounded the corner of the pill box.

Fearing that the Jerries might crawl out of the fire slots during the night and go undetected until they opened fire on us, a machine gun was set up, manned by Murray, Miller, Frost, Freeze and myself. Our position was not only dangerous, because it had to be set out in front of the pill box, but was also nerve-racking because we had to be on constant alert all night. Eyes and nerves were strained to the limit so that our comrades could rest assured no trouble would come from within. Morning came with no more trouble from the Jerries, and the men of the fourth and headquarters platoon's moved off for the successful attack on the fortress city of Bitche.

*Schmidt*



he next morning, at 5:50, the company moved out with the first platoon in the lead. We covered the woods, which included a lot of very hilly terrain, from Fort Schiesseck to the main road into Bitche where we met and followed company "E" into town. Company "E" took one part of the town and company "F" moved through them to take the next section. The searching was carried on without the disturbance of snipers. This completed, the men settled back in whatever houses their platoon was situated, and ate "K" rations or dozed off to a quick sleep. "Jerry" threw some artillery in, but with cellers to take cover in, we felt comparatively safe. We did have one casualty there, though, when Mc Brearty was hit in the foot while crossing the street. That night, Hunt and Channing's rifle squads and Racy's machine gun squad went out on an all night patrol that proved very successful, killing one of the enemy, wounding two, and taking seven prisoners. The entire outpost took a pounding from rockets and artillery that night. Jerry was probably trying to cover up for his retreating troops.

The next day, March 17th, we left Bitche and moved onto the high ground outside of town.





## *"Oh, My Aching Arms"*

I remember the day very well for I was loaded down with two boxes of machine gun ammo, a carbine, gas mask, pack with toilet articles, stationary, four cans of delicious "C" rations, cigarettes and of course some loot. A box of ammo weighs around fifteen pounds, so after you have carried two for a couple of hours without resting, your arms feel as if they have been yanked out of their sockets.

By the time we reached the road that led into Bitche, my arms were at the breaking point. As we had to wait for a few stragglers to catch up, I thought here would be my chance to rest my weary bones. I set my ammo down. No sooner had I done this than the order "Let's go" was passed down the line. I picked up the ammo boxes again. By now, they felt like they weighed a ton apiece. We saw German prisoners, about thirty of them, being led out of Bitche by one of the platoons in front of us. Once we got into the center of town, people ran out of their cellars with wine, schnapps or coffee for us. The fourth platoon marched on to the other end of town while the rifle



*View of a section of Bitche. Note fortress above horizon line.*

platoons took up positions in the immediate area. After much complaining, we got to our houses where we set up a defensive position. I set my ammunition down. My arms were sore and tired, I could hardly raise them. After dumping our personal equipment on the floor, we sat down to a meal of "C" rations, stew and dog biscuits. I usually had to choke them down, but that morning, after lugging those two boxes of ammo for four hours, they tasted like steak!

*Harvey Freeze*

## *Bitche*

We entered Bitche on March 16th, much too beautiful a day for fighting. Everything went off as planned. By noon, I and four other fellows had a house with a nice bed for each of us. Being rather tired, I hit the sack early, but not for long. Era came in and told us we would have to go on a patrol.

The orders were that the first platoon would have to send a patrol, with a machine gun squad attached, out to contact another adjacent battalion and also guard an antitank gun. We reached our objective about eleven o'clock. It was so dark, we did not have the least idea of what was around us. They threw quite a few shells close to us but none had my name on it.

The next morning just before daylight, the truck came out and all but five of us rode back. Walking, besides myself, were Hunt, Brooks, Philips and Raulerson. As we walked back along the road, we spotted three Jerres. Hunt halted the first one, only to have him reach for his weapon. He was soon put out of the way with a clip of M-1 ammo. Raulerson and I quickly took care of the other two in a similar manner.

When we got back to town, we were told we would have to go back out again for the night. The following day, we rounded up fifteen prisoners, rescued a downed American pilot who had crashed during the night, and searched innumerable pill boxes. We also captured a car and just missed adding a tank to our

collection. When we got back with the company, Lt. Ward had had our holes all dug for us. Then as a final compensation, we were excused from guard for the night.

Well, that just about winds up one of those many forty eight hour days in the history of Fox company.

*Bill Joiner*



**W**e dug foxholes again for the first time in quite a while. Shells, that night, came close overhead, but all fortunately going in the right direction. In the morning we moved out, by foot as usual, and took a long hike to a deserted town named Lengelsheim. On the way there, we saw the rocket guns which were causing us trouble in Bitche. A comparatively small weapon for the lion-like roar the gun makes when projecting a shell.

The town of Lengelsheim, completely devoid of any living thing, soon came to be called "Ghost Town". The first part of the war had left the town without a single standing building. As the Germans were moving so fast, we were at this time, in a reserve position. The company stayed in "Ghost Town" several days, receiving hot chow, mail, "PX" rations, test firing, and catching up on much needed sleep. On March 22nd we moved out, again by foot.

## *Void of Heart and Soul*

Legelsheim, better known as "Ghost Town," contained not a living thing. People, cattle and even stray animals were only a faint, distant shadow, a shadow of a memory longtime departed. War had come early to this once peaceful French farming village and now, with weeds cluttering up once fruitful garden plots, grass shooting up between the rocks of the cobble stone roads, not even a field mouse was left to give testimony to the love, laughter, and life this village must once have known. War, for Legelsheim, had left a definite scar. Not only the obvious physical one, that of crumbling stones where homes once stood, but, where streets were full of barefoot children laughingly playing, cattle being led to and from the meadows, and men and women chatting in friendly animated conversation, now there was nothing. War had taken the very heart and soul out of this town; left it with nothing more than a skeleton like form to show for itself. Legelsheim ... a ghost town.

*Richard Gabriel*



*Over looking Bitche*



## "Bitche"

March 21, 1945

I entered the beautiful cathedral of "Joan of Arc". Within, was a winding stone stairway which led to the "Inner Sanctum". Close by the altar was an organ. I played with the keys and was thrilled by the soft mellow sounds. There I was in my solitude, within an immense and elaborate interior. There were long, long windows from the ceiling to near the floor. Tremendous statues of Our Lord, St. Mary, and other patron saints. Candelabras of gold glistened in the sun beams. Stained glass windows were shattered to the ground, so were many artistic statues, fixtures, walls, and domes. The magnificent and impressive organ pipes were bent, crushed, and fallen. Plaster, dirt, and dust covered every inch of the sacred structure. From without the windows, the tattered roofs of surrounding houses could be seen, but one could not escape the nobility, dignity, and beauty of this Church, and for what it stood. And I say again, as my hands lit on the keyboard, and the softness of the chords vibrated through the hallow walls, my heart was filled with rapture, for I was alone in the palace of the angels, alone in The Kingdom Of God. A. R.

## *Johnny Loses His Crease*

There I was, alone with the bed rolls ... I felt pretty safe, way back here with the artillery, which had been hammering ceaselessly away at the enemy all during the night. I had been appointed by Lt. Adams to remain behind and guard the bed rolls while the rest of the company moved into the attack of Bitche. "Jonesy" and "Frenchy", two of the company's jeep drivers, had just left me after having had a breakfast of "K" Rations, warmed by a small fire which we had built. I was just adding a few more twigs to the now-dying fire, when the roar of a fighter plane came to my ears. I thought nothing of it at first, for in the past two weeks my entire time in combat, I had seen and heard scores of P-47's flying toward a destination unknown to me. Then, as if to rouse me out of an optimistic dream, the chatter of ack-ack pierced the cold morning air.

"A Jerry!" I thought, as I instinctively sought a means of extinguishing the fire. "What can I use?" "Ah! That's it ... dirt!" I hurriedly clawed at the loose earth surrounding me, and proceeded to smother the fire, little by little. "Why doesn't it go out?" I asked myself. "God! It's starting to smoke!" "He'll surely see that! Where can I go? Where? Where?" "There's a brook ... No, I can't do that ... the water will ruin the crease in my pants. I've worked so hard to keep that crease!" I was bewildered, then the roar of the plane grew louder and louder ... I looked around, and there it was, bearing down on me! Then all hell broke loose, his wing mounted guns spat flashes of fire. This time the crease in my pants had no place in my mind. With a single jump, I was off the road and into the brook ... water, crease and all!

*Johnny Silva*

## *"The Third Attack of Bitche"*

No magician in the world ever made such a complete and speedy change in anything as the transformation that took place in the great fortress city of Bitche, France, on March 16th, 1945.

This day was filled with the fear and dangers of war in all its fury. We, the members of Fox company, were swelled with pride and satisfaction over our tremendous victory over the enemy. Then, as if it were a bolt from the blue, the impossible happened! The smoke had hardly cleared from the last screaming shell, when a bevy of T-5's and other strange inhabitants of that evil of all evil places, the rear echelon, came thundering down the road, armed to the teeth with countless numbers of "Off Limits" signs, tacking them up on doors, windows, and even piles of rubble.

There was nothing to do but withdraw, we were outnumbered as well as out equipped. What chance has a mere M1 or bazooka against a battery of brass? Endless lines of men and equipment drove us steadily and swiftly to the hills. One or two patrols ventured into the city, with their main objective being the shower, set up at the far end of the fort.

Quite a few were rather successful in their attempt, until a new secret weapon was put into use. This strange device was very shapely, and the effect it had on the men brought us to the limit of our strength. We had to again withdraw, this time to a town that was not only void of those psychological bomb shells, namely WAC's, but of all life entirely.

"At last", we thought, "They'll never find us in this remote spot!" But alas and alack, they fought their battle by radio and telephone, and once again we were ordered to move out, not to make room for the rear echelon as before, but to capture another town. They were tired of being in Bitche ... after three whole days!

*Bob Clarke*



## *"Dreams"*

*Along the treacherous, muddy road,  
 A soldier shifts his heavy load.  
 He stares ahead with tear-dimmed eyes,  
 And dreams of home with mingled sighs.  
 He dreams, of his house, the shady trees,  
 The birds nest way up in the leaves.  
 He dreams of the girl he left behind,  
 As he plods along that same old grind.  
 The mud soon turns to shiny gold,  
 As the dream of yesterday starts to mold.  
 The ragged clothes become clean and new  
 And the troubles in his mind are few.  
 He hears the strain of a familiar tune,  
 The one about the stars and moon ...  
 And the very clouds begin to rise  
 As a vision reaches his burning eyes.  
 Before him stands the one he loves,  
 Guarded by a hundred doves.  
 He runs to her with outstretched arms,  
 Drawn by her magnetic charms.  
 He runs and stumbles onward still,  
 But his efforts are for nil,  
 For though the vision is in sight,  
 And will be, on into the night,  
 The world goes on its troubled way,  
 Until he can go home to stay.*

*Bob Clarke*



## *Sgt. William Levesque*

*Six foot two, eyes of blue,  
 Blond, and wavy hair,  
 Long, and strong, never wrong  
 An answer to a maiden's prayer  
 Amid cheers and shouts  
 He chases "Krauts"  
 And the pretty "Ma' moiselle",  
 Without a doubt  
 The "Krauts" take route  
 And the girls all yell like hell!  
 Now little "Will"  
 Sends a chill  
 Through every maiden's spine  
 While "Jerries" cry  
 The dames just sigh  
 "Levesque, please be mine!"  
 He had his fights  
 Through days and nights  
 And the "Heinnies" knew him well,  
 But North and Sout'  
 They know his sch'nout  
 He gets 'em all by smell!*

*A. Rubano*

# Dannstadt

*I'll never forget how very welcome (?) the town of Dannstadt looked on that very hot day in the latter part of March.*

*We had started out, by foot, from Ludwigshafen, and by mid-afternoon, the sun became unbearable. Heavy shirts and sweaters were discarded; feet began to blister on the heated paved roads.*

*After a change in orders, in which we were supposed to march to Holstadt, a welcome signpost pointed the way to Dannstadt. Upon entering the town, we noticed that the houses, like those in Ludwigshafen, all prominently displayed white surrender flags hanging from windows and doorways.*

*Little time was wasted in getting the men situated in the various houses. The kitchen and supply were set up in the same house. Hot chow was served alongside the steps of the building.*

*It didn't take the fellows long, once we were settled, to find any and all sites of possible loot. One of the places that was particularly well patronized was a German soldiers' barracks. Once it was discovered, the fellows came investigating and leaving with everything from pistols to huge, colorful Nazi flags.*

*At the time, we couldn't have been any further away from the front lines and still remain a "front line outfit". The company was in Battalion reserve; the battalion was in Regimental reserve; the regiment was in Division reserve; the division was in Corps reserve, and . . . yes, you guessed it . . . the corps was in Army reserve!*

*Movies and a shower, which were set up, were well attended. The division band played for us and some fellows were able to see the Marlene Dietrich show. Just to make an even balance, though, exercises, classes, and close order drill began.*

*The "great event", however, was the large supply of liquor the company found. It wasn't uncommon to see "Fox" company's jeep, riding around loaded down with cases of champagne.*

*About the time that everybody had slept, eaten, exercised, and drank to their full, orders came down to move out. After an eight day stay in Dannstadt, we loaded on trucks that took us across the Rhine River.*

*Richard Gabriel*





## *Crossing the Rhine*

