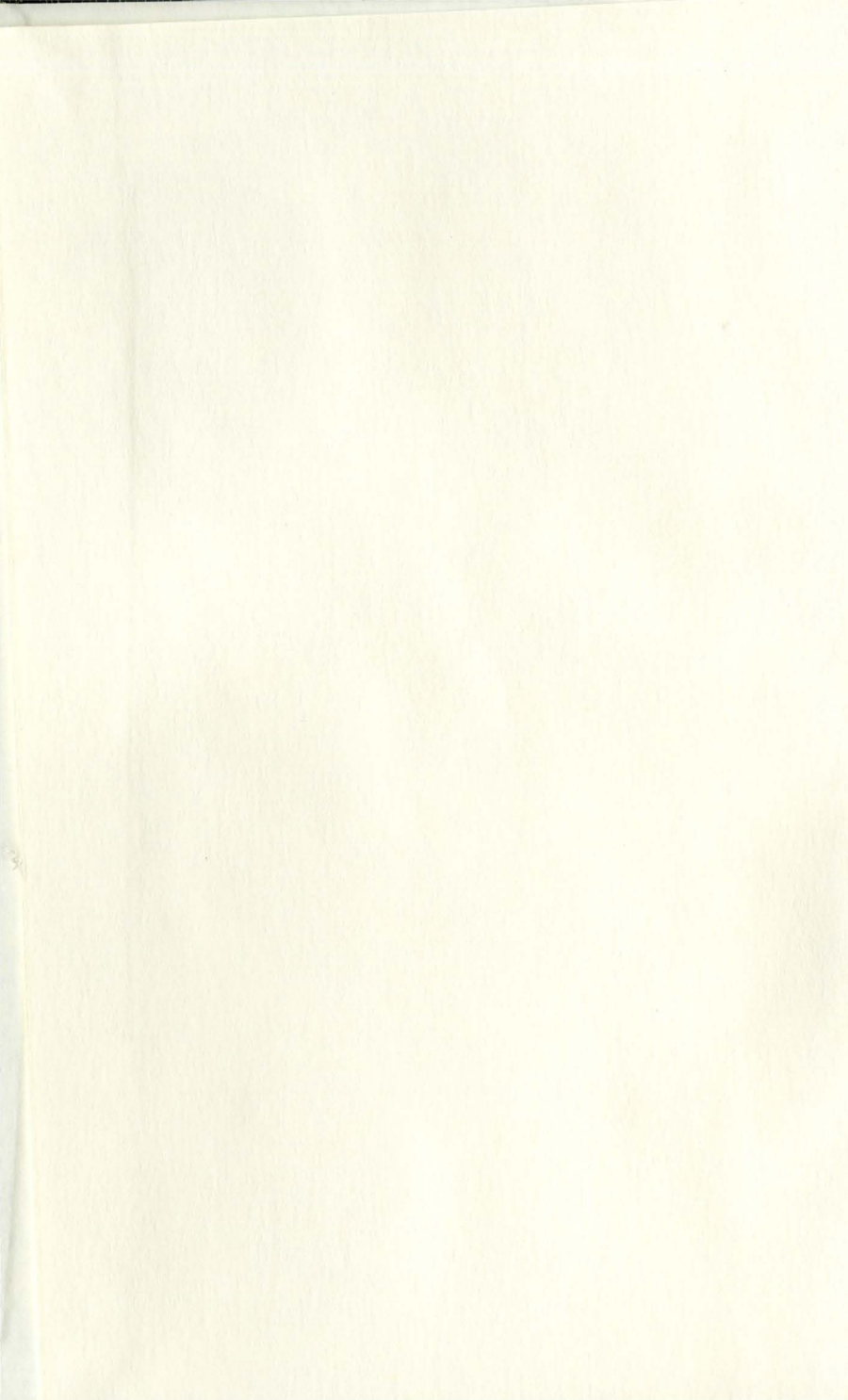


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COMBAT ACTION
III
OF
COMMUNICATION
PLATOON

1ST BN - 397TH INF.



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1945/4

Unit history

oer #5003352

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INTRODUCTION

This is not a complete story of our action in the ETO. It would have been an impossible task to keep a day by day check on all concerned but that might have been interesting and, perhaps, sometimes embarrassing. There were trips to Gay Paris and the swanky Riviera, and a few went to Brussels. Unfortunately, no two of our gang hit these places at the same time, so no gossip is mentioned. In future years, if your grandchildren pester you for a story. I am sure that if you, look at this booklet and refresh your memory, a good yarn will be forthcoming.

J. W. Crowley



HEILBRONN

A trip overseas wasn't necessary to show that the communication platoon of the 1st Bn, 397th Infantry, was the best in the division. In June, 1944, it was chosen over all other signal units in the 100th to be a representative in the Infantry Day parade in New York. When they returned from this trip they found an accelerated program going on, which, evidently, was in preparation for the big game. After a series of difficult field problems, crating and packing, we entrained at Ft. Bragg on the 2nd of September, 1944. We were scheduled to pull out at 1600 hours, and, curiously enough, we did leave as per schedule. The fact that we did pull out on time caused more swoonings than a Sinatra lullaby. We arrived at Camp Kilmer on the 23 rd and were immediately assigned to barracks. Here we underwent a series of rigid physical examinations and boat drills. Passes to New York were enjoyed by many, especially the Rebel section of the platoon. Some of them spent their leisure hours riding on escalators and elevators, while others tried to fathom the puzzle of the intricate under-ground "trolley car" system. Those who lived nearby tried to get caught up on their home work before we sailed.

On October 5, at 2101, the men, with full equipment minus foot lockers, started the trek to the rail yard. It was a bit muggy and the band that was playing didn't seem to help much. Upon arriving we

took our assigned seats and rested for the next and most strenuous part of the journey. At the ferry we detrained and started that never to be forgotten march to the boat. In a very unmilitary manner we dragged and stumbled our way on to the ferry. How we ever made it, loaded as we were will always remain a mystery. A short ferry ride up the river brought us to the 44th Street Port of Embarkation. A brass band was playing furiously in an attempt to soothe our shattered nerves. We filed out of the ferry in a hurry and lined up on the docks for a checkup. Red Cross girls distributed coffee, donuts and candy bars. This unexpected stimulant helped considerably. A quick check showed all hands present, so we staggered up the gang plank and into the belly of a huge ship. This boat turned out to be the USS George Washington and our home for the next fifteen days. We hit the sack immediately and took some well earned rest. The next morning, October 6th at 0930, a few tugs bumped us out into the river, and we knew then we were on our way. For security reasons we stayed below decks until we cleared the harbor. When we did get on deck the good old USA was just a blur on the horizon. The first few days were spent in getting acquainted with the ship, with special attention being given to the mess halls and life boats. Movies and a library were available, but the more popular games of dice and cards cluttered the crowded decks. Some of us tried to figure out what the other ships in the convoy were. A few very rough days kept most of the men below decks and that demon "mal-de-mer" invaded our ranks. Our otherwise ravenous appetites were at a standstill during this period. We saw a burning tanker one day and it brought to our minds the dangers of the task we were about to start on. Our first view of land was the coast of Africa which popped up on the port side one afternoon. Unfortunately, we passed the "Rock" in darkness and many were disappointed. The blue Mediterranean was very calm compared to the rough Atlantic. Finally

after fourteen days of sailing and wondering, our port of debarkation hove into sight. It turned out to be Marseilles. We dropped anchor at 1401 hours. After a quick meal, we started disembarking via of rope and LST at 2003. A Jerry Recon plane flew over and took our picture as we hit land. Under the cover of darkness and a smoke screen, we started the long uphill march to our assembly area. A few scattered shots alarmed us, but we found out later the FFI was out having their revenge. Upon arriving at the assembly area we picked out a spot and bedded down right away. Everyone was pretty well done in after that long ten mile march.

Our next ten days were spent in preparation for the big job ahead. Weapons and equipment were given special attention. Some of us were lucky enough to work on the docks unloading the boats. Here also we had our introduction to those ever popular K and C rations and that ever-present French mud. The rain that fell quite often did not help matters any.

On the morning of October 30 we started our journey up the Rhone Valley to the front. We did not know exactly where we were going, but the most popular rumor was placing us in the Belfort Gap. We made overnight stops at Dijon and Lyon - and then to St. Helene. We stayed here several days, and while here, we heard our first artillery barrage. Our next move was to St. Barbe where we took up positions in back of 45th Division.

Our wire section saw their first action here while laying a line to one of their OP's. On the night of November 11th the long awaited attack orders arrived in our CP. After a briefing by Lt. Misseldine, everybody went to bed in our barn and tried, without much success, to get some rest. The next morning it was snowing, but that did not matter much, as every one was up and "rarin to go" and get their first crack at the enemy. After the jumpoff it didn't take us long to realize

we were engaged in a grim battle of life and death. We encountered our first heavy mortar barrage on the hill overlooking Bertichamps, which was our first objective. In one hours time we liberated our first French town. Installations were immediately set up and preparations to push further on were made. After the first action it became quite evident that wire was the best means of contact in this terrain, although radios were carried as a safety measure. The first days of combat taught us many things. We found that every man in the platoon must be familiar with all phases of our work. We also became aware of the fact that we were one big family and commenced to live and work as such.

The next town we were confronted by was Clairupt. A forward board was installed on a road paralell to the front line companies. This area was subjected to heavy enemy artillery barrages and numerous counter-attacks but no ground was yielded. A direct hit on one of our ammo dumps caused a terrific blast, which severed most of our wire lines, but quick work by Needham and Co. restored them. Another hit on our billet caused heavy damage to our sleeping quarters, but fortunately nobody was injured. While repairing a company line, Tommy Lanese was hit by a fragment from a tree burst and had to be evacuated. This was a terrific blow to us, but it made us more determined than ever to continue our job and punish the ones who brought on the misery we were enduring. Our depressed spirits were somewhat brightened that night by a sumptuous meal prepared by Master Chef DiPeri. The menu showed Liberated Chicken, French Fries, Salad, Bread and Jam and Delicious Coffee. This was the first of many we were to enjoy while over here.

From here we pushed on toward Raon L'Etape. Although heavily mined and stubbornly defended, we entered the city on November 17. The first jeep into the city was piloted by Dupree, with Lt. Misseldine

as navigator. Right on their heels was the wire jeep, which had by-passed the engineers who were sweeping the road for mines. We later found out that this was not an unusual occurrence. A joyous and exuberent population greeted us here, since they had been under strict German rule for four unbearable years. Collaborators were quickly dealt justice here. Several hair-clippings were observed by us. An enemy sniper who had been giving trouble from a nearby church was quickly put out of action by some of our men. A few grenades and some BAR fire did the trick.

Due to the high hills surrounding the town, we encountered some difficulty in pushing on, as all our movements were under observation by the enemy. They let us know this fact by showering us with 88's every time we showed our noses. We finally broke out and moved into the town of St. Blase, where we interrupted the Jerries at their noon-day meal. A hasty retreat by them was in evidence, as hot meals were still on the mess tables as we entered. The attack was moving along rapidly and orders from higher headquarters sent us to Moyon Mou-tiers, where the heavy fighting continued. A series of well fortified emplacements had to be put out of action, and this tended to stall us for a while. Here again the wire jeep was the first vehicle into the town. Throngs of civilians showered them with flowers, wine and some long-hidden champagne. A few amorous girls in the crowd were quickly taken over by "Smitty" and "Ev". Two new men, Bob Shouldis and Walt Stollard, joined us here, and, like all reinforcements, carried more junk than the CP trailer.

There is no rest for the weary, so next morning found us pushing on to La Petit Raon. Meeting only slight resistance, the "never say die" doughs pushed on, and dug in for the night on the outskirts of the town. Morning found us on the move again, driving on Sennones. The town was heavily fortified, and a roadblock on the edge of town

was heavily mortared by the enemy. The wire crews had a busy and hot time here. A task force of mechanized vehicles, preparing to push on through the town after we took it, drew additional fire, and only quick work by our rifle companies prevented a slowing of the drive here.

The night of November 23 found us in complete control of the town, although numerous snipers in the vicinity continually bothered our wiremen, especially during the late evening hours. Here we celebrated our first holiday - in mild fashion. A turkey dinner, with beaucoup turkey, was enjoyed by all, even though our spirits were dampened by the ever present rain. The Democrats and Republicans were arguing good naturedly over what Thanksgiving was the best. Some of the "chow hounds", after seeing the size of the meal, hoped we might celebrate both of them.

By now the 19th German army was completely disorganized and were retreating rapidly to prepared winter positions. Continuing our sustained drive, we made a long jump to Champagny. This rapid move did not allow the Jerries to get set in their prepared positions, and they continued retreating southward. Here in Champagny our first phase of the Vosges Campaign ended. We flushed out many German Soldiers here, and many of the Pro-Nazis element were picked up, including the burgomister.

A few days were spent here in reorganizing the division, which had become quite scattered during the rapid drive.

We had travelled a lot and learned a lot. Orders finally came to assemble back at Raon L'Etape, and we moved out immediately. From here we went to Neuwiller to relieve the 44th Div. The next day a new order moved us to Ingweiler to take over the positions of the 45th Div. Our forward board was set up in an old flour mill. Due to crowded conditions we had to operate with a small crew. The rear CP was at

Weinburg in a beer hall. An enemy 88 hidden in a cave on the mountain gave us plenty of trouble. After six days of furious fighting here, we were set for the final push on to Wimmenau. The roadsides, as well as the road itself, was heavily mined and booby-trapped. Long road blocks, heavily mined and well zeroed by mortar, made our progress slow and costly. Here we suffered another casualty when Ben Roy Smith was hit by a fragment from a "bouncing betsy" mine. He was quickly evacuated in a jeep piloted by Lt. (Barney Oldfield) Misseldine. This same mine caused numerous casualties in the Medical Section. Charlie Co. moved ahead rapidly and late afternoon all contact with them was lost. Numerous calls by radio were made to them but to no avail. Long after dark with still no word from Charlie Co., a volunteer wire team led by Sgt. Needham started out to find them.

Having only a vague idea where they were, they took off in that general direction. Low hanging clouds and a slight drizzle helped to make the night more dark and dreary. Several times they came across enemy patrols, but the mission was to find Charlie Co., so they reluctantly let them pass. Any clashes would have endangered all concerned. Finally after several hours of groping around in the inky darkness, the lost company was found. A quick check with the CO found them low on ammo, food and water. On the return trip a wire line was laid back to our board. Very early next morning, a patrol, with Sgt. Needham the point, went back, and carried with them the much needed supplies. Next day Wimmenau was cleared and we continued on to Wildguth and Melch, and flanked the road leading to Mutterhouse. On December 9 Mutterhouse was surrounded at a heavy cost and then taken the following day. Installations were set up preparatory to the siege of Bitche. The next morning the companies moved up the road toward Bitche. It was necessary to set up a forward board, so we put one up at Peter Felipe, a small village along the road.

The companies dug in on Hill 430, overlooking Camp De Bitche.

This hill was under continuous artillery fire and a wire patrol had to be kept on duty at all times. A Jerry flak-wagon kept this hill well showered with hot steel, as well as the ever-present 88's. Misfortune struck us again here when Leon Schultz was hit one night while repairing a line. He doggedly stuck to the job but in the morning he had to be evacuated. A good boy, he was missed by all of us. An enemy patrol raided Peter Felipe one night and were driven off after raising a little fuss at the aid station. The shower unit came up to Mutterhouse one day, and right in the middle of a much needed shower, an artillery barrage forced us to take off, minus clothing. This was not easy to take, especially in December. We could see now that Bitche was appropriately named and our struggle for it was going to be likewise. Bill Hollis joined us here, and he proved to be a valuable addition.

At this point the Germans started their, and later fatal, winter, offensive. A change of plans forced us to withdraw from our positions here and take new ones in the Guising area. Our old spot was left in the hands of a cavalry group, and they were forced to withdraw later, due to intense enemy pressure. Christmas Day, very bitter and cold, found us setting up in Guising.

Numerous lines, both forward and rear, were laid. The rear CP was at Rohrbach, and it was here we ate a very hasty x-mas dinner as a new moving order was in effect. The night was spent in getting set up in Bettwiller. It was a very cold night. The pressure was on now and the wire crews were busy day and night. The rear CP was at Petit Rederching. Radios were kept on twenty four hours a day so that instant contact could be made when a line went out. A few 300's were mounted on the various vehicles in the platoon to keep us in touch with them when they were out working.

On New Years Eve the Germans started a huge counter-attack on

our front. A terrific one hour artillery barrage proceeded the attack. They hit in the vicinity of our Baker Company but were repulsed with very heavy losses. The Heavy Weapons Platoon attached to Baker had a field day with their machine guns as they mowed down wave after wave of the fanatical attackers. The enemy withdrew after several unsuccessful attempts to break through our lines. They then shifted their attack to the left of us and threw their weight at Rimling which was held by our Second Battalion.

Slight withdrawals on our flanks left us sticking out like a sore finger but our battalion did not yield one inch of ground. On both sides of us the battle raged unabated for five unforgettable days. We handled all radio traffic for one of the pressed battalions on our left. Sleep or rest of any kind was not even thought of as the men worked night and day. The Jerries finally gave up trying to push us back and we went into a defensive position. Attack now was impossible due to the instability of the Third Army front. We moved our forward CP over to Kleinmule. A very effective wire system was set up, and a call could be put to any platoon on our front. This kept our wire teams very busy. Often at night they were sent out to take care of a break or fix a short in a line. Jerry Patrols were often encountered and dispersed. One night a few men thought they saw some paratroopers alighting from "Photo Joes" Recon plane, but this turned out to be a mirage brought on by an overdose of "schnapps".

We did not have much room at this forward CP, so we split up into two crews and alternated our time between the two CP's.

Not knowing how long we would be here, we tried to make ourselves as comfy as possible. We got hold of a stove, and, with some liberated coke, managed to keep fairly warm. This same stove also served as Dip's work bench. From here he set out some very "trouncable"

dishes for us. A trip into deserted Betwiller was always good for a few chickens. Potatoes were always available. One day Needham and Dip chased a little porker all over Betwiller and finally nailed him. He was very tender in spite of the spirited exercise he had before capture. Constant checks and repairs had to be made on the equipment, so we would "zig" back and see Willie Williams who had his repair unit set up at Rahling. Our artillery, reenforced by tanks, anti-tank guns and naval guns mounted on half tracks, kept our front well covered with heavy barrages and the Jerries did likewise. For diversion the Jerries would throw a little "time fire" at our little observation planes. That hot corner leading into "Petit" will always be remembered as well as that bald hill leading into Kleinmule. Any trips through these areas was always made at full throttle. It was not an uncommon sight to see the Message Center jeep, with Dupree and Bolton aboard, zipping up the road with the codes and Stars and Stripes. We had several bombings and strafings here, and they were most upsetting. Nights, by candle light, we would read or play cards, and sometimes listen to the big British bombers droning over head on the way to some unlucky Reich city. We also saw several mass flights of our own B-17's on their missions.

On January 12, 1945, we moved over to Etting to back up the 63rd who were having beaucoup trouble in the vicinity of Gros Rederching. The companies set up in the Maginot Line. The rear was at Aachen. We moved back to our old positions when the position became more stable. Life was rather dull except for an occasional visit from the Red Cross girls who brought along coffee and donuts. The real bright moments were Dips feeds and mail and packages from home.

The natives also treated us to an occasional pie or cake. One thing that puzzled us was the fact that, although we were in France, the people only spoke German.

During this period we lost another good man in Walt Stollard. While with Bill Hollis one day near Hotwiller, a shell hit close by and got Walt in the leg. He was evacuated, and we were stunned later, when the news got back that he lost a foot. Several new men, all wiremen, joined us here.

Sharpe, Nuckols, Cordell and Jacobs were added to the platoon. Jack Gibbard left us, was commissioned, and took over the A and P platoon.

The German offensive had petered out by now and several big drives on the Third Army Front straightened out the sagging line. Preparations for our big Spring drive began to take shape. We moved back to Rohrbach on March 13th and the next day went into ghostly Hotviller. Long before dawn the next morning we jumped off. The morning, very still and dark, was occasionally brightened by flares and distant gun flashes. We had no preparatory artillery barrage so our attack carried us several thousand yards before the Jerries knew what was going on. They immediately started shelling Hotviller and all roads leading into it. Every thing was off carrier this day so all wire had to be hand carried and laid. It soon ran out so the wiremen had to run the gauntlet of shrapnel to get more. We got through a huge mine field safely and entered the woods. We were forced to dig in here as we were almost on top of an enemy rocket battery and they were firing point blank at us. Falling trees, shrapnel and sniper fire added to our danger. Before the rockets fired, an eerie sounding music similar to bagpipes, was heard.

The CP radio group of Bolt, Dip, Cordell and Woodie had a hard time convincing the rest of the platoon about this music, and to this day some of them do not believe they heard it. By noon we were out of radio contact with the rear, so Rog and Brown set up a relay station. The rockets were finally silenced and we forged ahead. The going was

pretty tough as all we seemed to be doing all day was marching up hill. Afternoon found us astride the road leading into Bitche. Our objective was the hill on the East side of it and overlooking Schornbach. Open ground on both sides of this road forced us to run across this area with great speed. Enemy snipers were numerous and accurate. A few casualties were had here, one being a medic who was fatally hit as he knelt down to administer aid to a wounded comrade. We scaled the high ground amid sniper fire and a new kind of fire, forest fire. It was hot enough as it was and the burning woods made it a little hotter. We hit our objective around four in the afternoon and dug in for the night. Dip, Hollis, Bolt, Cordell and Woodie spent a very uncomfortable night in a five man hole. Rog and Brown kept the relay going all night with a load of dead Jerries for company. The CP group had no rations or water, so Sgt. Niles assisted by Joe Kane and Sam Nuckols brought them up.

He found the group late at night. How he found them in that pitch black is another one of those mysteries. During the night an enemy ammo vehicle in the woods below us tried to pull out, but a few well placed Cannon Co. shots quickly "blitzed" it. Enemy rocket and artillery fire was very heavy during the night. It seemed to be grazing the hill we were set up on. Hotviller and Schornbach were on the receiving end. Other elements of the division had pushed into Bitche and our long siege ended with success. The enemy was pushed out on to the roads, and took a terrible pounding from our Air Corps. The Jerries in their retreat had felled many large trees across the road, so the next day was spent in clearing them.

On St. Patricks Day we moved up to Wallhausen and Walshbron. On the roadsides leading to these towns, evidence of the effectiveness of our artillery was quite clear. Many enemy dead as well as blasted forts and emplacements were seen. Wallhausen was quiet, so we moved

to Walshbron. Some stiff resistance was encountered here. Heavy fire from some well concealed self-propelled guns was constantly cutting our lines. Here the 71st came up and moved through us to Pirmassens. By now the enemy was in full retreat and we pushed to Petersburg via truck and tank and anything else with wheels. The roadsides were cluttered with all kinds of abandoned enemy equipment. Hundreds of dead horses and burnt enemy vehicles added a very unpleasant odor to what appeared to be a very pleasant and quiet country. This was Germany and everyone was impressed with the healthy looking people and prosperous looking farms. An overnight stop was made at Petersburg and a systematic search of the town netted some very fine souvenirs. Liquid refreshment was also found and enjoyed. That night several new tenors blossomed out in song. Early next morning a few planes appeared and they were driven off by some AA fire. We had breached the so called impregnable Sigfried Line without much trouble. We continued our motor march to Alsheim and Oppau. Prisoners were numerous and having no place for them we directed them to the rear where they were picked up. At midnight on March 25, we reached the Rhine River. The companies set up in a factory of the big IG Farben Industries. Communications were set up during the night and numerous enemy patrols kept us on the alert. Morning came and with it a terrific artillery barrage. The outfit on our left was crossing and the Germans tried, without success, to repel them.

The shelling was so heavy that it was difficult to distinguish what was going and what was coming. By noon it quieted down a little. On March 26th, we moved to Eppstein and reorganized. We had moved over a hundred miles in a few days and we had to wait for the rear echelons of the division to catch up. We spent a few days here cleaning up and sleeping in beds. Easter Services were conducted by the various chaplains and very many men availed themselves of the opportunity

to attend services for the first time in many weeks. A few of us were lucky enough to go and see "Legs" Deitrich who was putting on a show at Division.

We crossed the Rhine under smoke at Mannheim and moved south along the smooth auto-bahn to Schwetzingen and Offersheim. Radio was the principle means of communication as it was impossible to lay wire at the rate of speed we were moving. Scattered resistance along the way was quickly wiped out. Waldorf and Eichtersheim were taken on successive days. On April 4th we moved to Frankenbach. From here on we knew we were in for a tough battle as the enemy was throwing all available men and equipment into this area. The companies fought their way to the banks of the Neckar River at Heilbron. One of our tanks was hit by panzerfaust fire here but the Jerry who fired it never lived to tell about it. Wire lines between the two CP's were constantly being hit by artillery so the wire men had a busy time keeping them intact.

The Neckar was crossed by assault boat at 0500 on April 6 in the face of a devastating artillery barrage that for a time threatened to forestall our attempt to gain a foothold on the opposite shore. By daylight a little ground was gained - a doubtful foothold secured. The wire and radio teams were loaded down with their equipment. Rocket and artillery fire increased in fury as the day wore on. Snipers seemed to be behind every pile of rubble. The CP was finally set up in a brewery. Installations were quickly set up. Two lines were laid across the river and they required constant attention. Before we were through here a total of 17 lines were laid across at the ferrying point. Several attempts by the engineers to get a bridge up were unsuccessful. Smoke pots were set up to cover their actions but the wind cheated them out of their effectiveness. Tank destroyers were dashing madly about the quiet side of the river trying to get a shot at the enemy armor on the

opposite side. The need for armor on the front was becoming acute so it was decided to ferry them across.

Radios were going night and day to keep communications up in case of a wire break. Rog, Nick, Noah and Bolt had the 694 ready at all times in case the regimental line went out. Webbie and Brown handled innumerable calls on the switchboard. Louie, Dip and Steve were badly shaken up by much too close shell explosions while repairing a line but stayed right on the job. Sharpe was popping off snipers from the roof of the CP. The Gator and Needham were always at the riverbank to keep an eye on that river line. Valday, Burt, Draper and Vineyard kept the rear board in hand. Ev and Nance were busy on the lines to the river bank. The "Reb" was over on the hot side. We had a 300 on the roof of the rear CP and it didnt take Woodie long to change batteries especially after those rockets started landing in. Company lines were hot trails and snipers added to the dangers the wiremen were confronted with. Airial support helped, but you can't drive them out of cellars with P-47's. Prisoners, both male and female, were pouring in by the hour. A few beligerant citizens were also picked up. Numerous fires at night lit up the bloody battleground. Counterattacks were thrown back repeatedly. Louie found a few bottles of Scotch and every body had a much needed stimulant. Every house and building was a fortress by itself but we managed to inch ahead bit by bit. While on his way to the CP, Lt. Misseldine was hit by a sniper and had to be evacuated. Operating without our leader was difficult, but we managed to pull through. Individual cases of heroism are too numerous to mention. Here in our hardest fight every one performed in a devoted and courageous matter. After nine hectic days the city was declared free and the Germans were denied the use of their last rail center in Southern Germany. A bright spot in the otherwise grim battle was the finding of many valuable souvenirs. We moved to the

outskirts of the city on the afternoon of April 12th. and set up for the night. It was very quiet as most of the enemy in this area were now dead, wounded or prisoners. The populace seemed quite stunned by the turn of events. White flags appeared in many houses. The once beautiful city of Heilbron was a mass of ruins.

Our next move was again southward in the direction of Stuttgart. Our first stop was Weinburg. A little resistance was encountered outside the city but was quickly wiped out. A creamery in operation here gave us some milk, ice cold, and we all drank a good share. The same night we moved to Lehensteinfeld. The companies were pretty well scattered now, mopping up, so no wire was laid. The wiremen set up several radio relay stations so contact with all units could be maintained. A rapid crosscountry move took us into Lowenstein. On the way Rog had a handset shot out of his hand by a sniper but Noah stepped on the gas and got out of range before any further damage resulted.

The Germans were in full retreat now and only a few die-hard Nazis tried to stop us and they indeed died hard. The next few days were a nightmare to all of us. In a series of lightening moves we took town after town. A brilliant night move netted us six more towns, but almost cost us three men plus the radio jeep. The Gator, Bolt, and Woodie got mixed up on the roads and spent the night riding around the Reich. Before dawn the next morning they were "captured" by a Recon Group of the 103rd and returned to join the CP group who were then approaching Schorndorf. We were right on the heels of the Germans as several explosions, bridges being blown, were heard as we entered the town. No contact could be made with the rear so a 300 was set up on the roof of a barn and immediate contact was made even though the distance was ten miles. (Ft. Benning take notice.)

The next night another crew had a very exciting time. Bill Hollis, Rog, and Bride were looking for Baker Co. along a road when a vehicle

with lights fully on was spotted coming in the opposite direction. Unable to identify the vehicle due to the darkness, they turned their jeep around and prepared to move if necessary. By this time the vehicle was on top of them. Suddenly the company they had been looking for appeared, along the sides of the road. They had heard the approaching vehicle and were waiting alongside the road to ambush it. A hot fire fight ensued and the radio jeep and its passengers were right in the middle of it. The lighted vehicle was the lead element of a German convoy and they were completely wiped out. The boys were a bit upset until the situation was clarified. Another lightning night move into Lutzenbach netted us hundreds of prisoners and a few tanks. We did not rest here but continued on into Plochingen. The road to this town was very hot. Many Germans gave up along the road, others moved around in the woods sniping at our men and vehicles. A heavily armed patrol tried to get back into Lutzenbach but were driven off by the Gator and a tank, plus a platoon of Able Company. All units of the Battalion moved up the following morning, the 23rd. of April. Prisoners by the hundreds came streaming out of the woods and they were quickly impounded. Rear Echelons planned to move up but a few snipers discouraged them, and they remained behind until a few riflemen cleared them out.

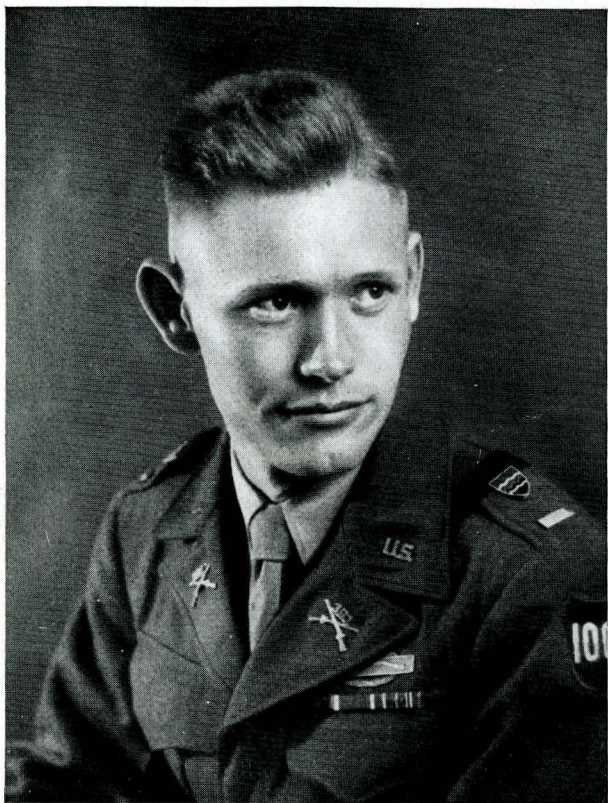
We moved to Heniengen the next morning but a change of orders brought us back to our starting point the same day. Next day we got some good news. We went into that much dreamed of 7th. Army Reserve and rest. Our successes of the previous days enabled the French to get into Stuttgart, and we moved into that city on April 26th. to assist in the policing. A company party was held here and a nice feed was put out by the kitchen. On April 30 we moved to Sussen and celebrated VE day there. It was not a very loud celebration as our job was only half done. May 11th found us on the move again and this

time to Laupheim. The pressure of battle was off now and we were easier to get along with. The job of occupation made a lot of work for the wire section as the companies were well scattered among the small towns. Later moves placed us in Deggegin and Weil-der-Stadt, and finally back to Stuttgart. Now we are sweating it out in Flandern Kaserne, or should I say Kings Kozy Kottages. Lt. Misseldine came back to us at Sussen. Leon Schultz, after a tour of the Repple Depots, joined us at Laupheim. Everybody was happy to see them back. Our other unfortunates are back in the states. We will see them when we get back. We hope Smitty, Walt, and Tommy will greet us on the dock. Two other men, Adam Kling and Murray Braverman, left us due to sickness and did not return. One of our former switchboard operators, Seymour Vigdor, was fatally wounded at Heilbron.

We have tried in brevity to give you an idea of where we have been and what we did. Cases of individual heroism are too numerous to mention. We are not looking for praise, we just wanted to finish a big job and get home.

The augmented wire section of Sgts. Needham, Baiza, Cpls. Everly Nance, Pfc. Williard, Bridenstine, Hollis, Kane, Burt, and Shouldis were in constant danger. The radio and Message Center crew of Crowley, Rogers, Nichols, Noah, and Bolton had their exciting moments while following JMK around the Reich. Our platoon leaders, Lt. Misseldine and Sgt. Niles, were always in there pitching when there was work to be done. Sgt. Diperi and Cpl. Thomas worked both wire and radio. Reenforcements Nuckols, Caudill and Sharpe performed notably. Sgt. McTighe took care of the Message Center duties and he was ably assisted by Runners Hersey and Kopcyck. Dupree delivered those codes in record breaking time.

We had some good times and some bad ones. Our job is done, now we want to go home. Lets hope it is soon.



ALVIN MISSELDINE

1st Lt. Teton City, Idaho.

Entered service Feb. 13, 1940. Regular Army. National Guard in 1939. Served with Signal Corps at Ft. Douglas Ft. Monmouth, Camp Crowder. After a stay at Majave Desert Reassignment Depot and Fort Ord, Shipped to the Pacific and served in Hawaii and other islands. Went to OCS at Benning and then to Camp Wheeler and the 100th Div. Single.



J. LEWIS NILES

S/Sgt 362 Cabot St. Beverly Mass.

Entered at Devens and assigned to the 100th. Attended Comm.
School at Benning. Married and has one daughter.



SALVATORE M. DIPERI

S/Sgt 3250 48th St. Astoria LI, NY

Entered army at Ft Upton in Dec. 1942 and assigned to the
100th. Benning graduate. Married.



JOHN J. NEEDHAM

S/Sgt 14 Hulbert St. Roxbury Mass.

Entered at Devens and assigned to the 100th. in Dec. of 1942.
Single.



J. WOODROW CROWLEY

T/4 37 Elm St. Andover Mass.

Entered in Dec. of 42 and was assigned to the 100th via of Devens
Single.



WILLIAM T. WILLIAMS

T/4 294 Parrish St. Wilkes Barre, Pa.

Entered in June of 41 and served at Camp Wheeler IRTC. Discharged and reentered in Jan. 42. Assigned to 29th Div. Went from here to War Show and then to the 100th in Dec. of 42. Signal School at Crowder. Married.



STEPHEN T. BAIZA

T/4 1317 Avy St. Hillside NJ.

Entered at Dix in Dec. 42 and assigned to the 100th. Benning
graduate. Married.



ROBERT VALDAY

T/5 9 Boulevard Terr. Allston Mass.

Entered at Devens in Dec. of 42 and assigned to the 100th. Married
and has one girl, Victoria Ann.



ELTON E. ROGERS

T/4 Route 3, Hattiesburg, Miss.

Entered in Sept. of 43 and assigned to AA at Ft Eustis. Joined the 100th in Feb. 44. Married.



ARL M. THOMAS

T/5 Worthington, Fla.

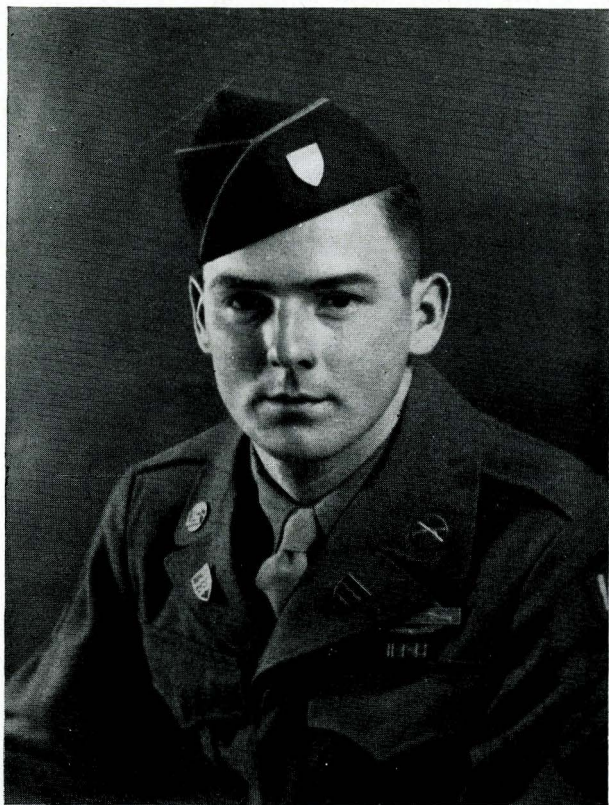
Entered at Blanding in Sept. of 43 and served at Columbia Air Base and Daniel Field, Ga. Went to Georgia Tech and Georgia Teachers College via of ASTP Single.



HARRY L. EVERLY

T/5 236 Bethesda St. Zanesville, Ohio.

Entered army in June of 43 and assigned to 281st F A Bn. Transferred to Air Corps and the 364 CTD. Joined the 100th in April of 44. Single.



THOMAS DUPREE

T/5 1216 Oakland St. Shreveport, La.

Entered in July of 42 and assigned to the 89th Div., Air Corps and then to the 100th in April of 44. Married and has a son Thomas Jr.



WILLIAM H. NANCE

T/5 Route 3, Oskaloosa, Iowa.

Entered army in March of 44 and assigned to IRTC at Camp Fannin. Joined the 100th in August, 1944. Single.



NELSON P. BOLTON

Pfc. Route 1, Quakertown, Pa.

Entered army as ASTP student in January of 44. Served at Benning and then went to the 100th in March. Single but Hopeful.



ALTON BROWN

T/5 310 Spring St. Smyrna Ga.

Attended Georgia Univ. in ASTP and came to 100th in April,
1944. Single.



WILLIAM HOLLIS

Pfc. 15 Water St. Galina, Kansas.

Entered in June of 44 and went to the paratroopers at Benning.
Joined the 100th at Muterhouse in Dec. Married.



JOSEPH KANE

Pfc. 5853 Hoffmann Ave. Philadelphia, Penn.

Entered in March of 43 and assigned to 75th Div. Went to Air Corps with 436th CTD. Joined 100th in April, 44. Single.



KEITH BRIDENSTINE

Pfc. Terry, Montana.

Entered in July of 43 at Ft Douglas. Attended Northeastern as
ASTP student and joined the 100th in Feb. of 44. Single.



ROBERT SHOULDIS

Pfc. 2118 36 St. Parkersburg, W Va.

Entered in Nov. of 43 and assigned to 97th Div. Spent some time in England before coming to the 100th at Sennones in Dec. Single.



SAMUEL NUCKOLS

Pfc. Norton, W Va.

Entered in Sept., 1944 and went to IRTC at Wheeler. Joined the 100th at Petit Rederding in March, 45. Married and has two children, Sam Jr. and Judith Anne.



SUMNER NICHOLS

Pfc. 515 West 9th St. Erie, Penn.

Entered in March of 44 and sent to Camp Wheeler IRTC. Joined
the 100th in August, 44. Single.



FENTON WEBB

Pfc. 1516 No. Center St. Terre Haute, Ind.

Entered in Sept. of 43 and assigned to AA at Eustis. Served at
Tyson and joined 100th in May of 44. Married.



JAMES NOAH

Pfc. 47 Mansfield Ave. Pittsburg, Penn.

Entered at Meade in March of 44. IRTC at Wheeler and then to Benning. Joined the 100th at Eppstein. Married and has two children, Robert and Catherine.



SCHULTZ, SHARPE, DRAPER, CAUDILL

These four men left us before we had a chance to tabulate their army careers. Leon Schultz lives in the vicinity of Greenville, Ohio and is single. He was wounded at Bitche and returned to us June 6th, only to be transferred out soon after. Chester Sharpe lives at 208 Brown St. Dayton, Ohio. He is married and has two children. Fred Draper, an old 100th man, is married and lives with his wife and little boy at 55 Pontiac St. Roxbury mass. Damon Caudill hails from Newport, Kentucky. He is married and has child. His adress is 126 Columbia St.

Some of our men left us for various reasons and are not pictured in this booklet. Tommy Lanese of Brooklyn was hit at Clairupt and did not return. He was with the division right from the time of his induction in Dec., 1942. He is single at the latest writing. Ben Roy Smith of Fort Worth, Texas left after being hit at Wimmenau and is now in the states. He served with the Ranibow Division before joining the 100th when it was activated. Walter Stollard hails from Pennsylvania. He joined us at Sennones early in December. He was wounded at Bettwiller and later returned to the states. Adam Kling and Murray Braverman took sick and nobody ever heard from them. Al Burt of 43 Portland St., Worcester, Mass. was working with the CIC at this writing. He is married and his wife is in the Wacs. He came to us from the AA early in February of 44. He attended the Communication School at Ft. Benning. Jack Gibbard, a radio operator, left the platoon in February and took over the A and P platoon after receiving a commission. He came to us at Bragg via of the Air Corps.



PETIT REDERCHING



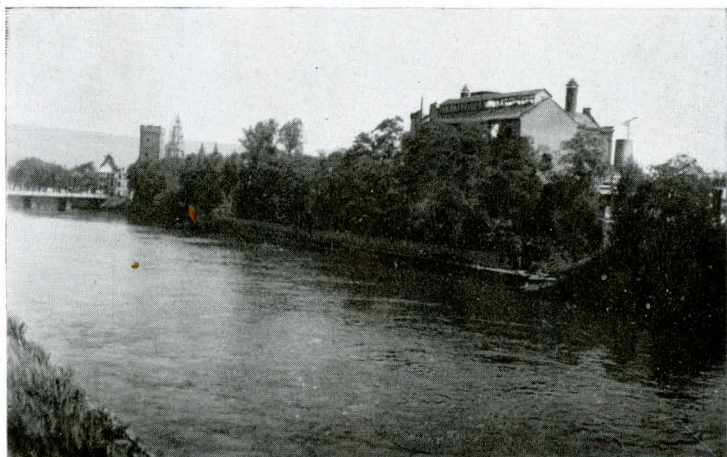
HEILBRONN



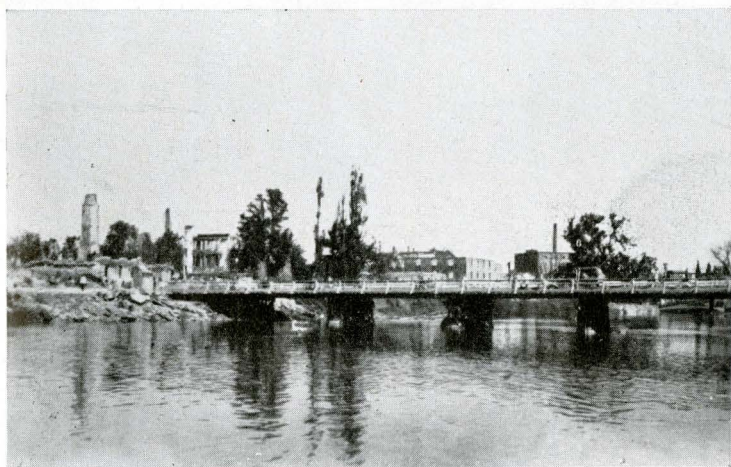
HEILBRONN



HEILBRONN



CP AT HEILBRONN



HEILBRONN



CHOW LINE



WASH LINE

