

74. JAPAN SURRENDERS

On September 2, Japan signed the unconditional surrender papers in Tokyo Bay on the US Battleship Missouri.

On the same day each of us received a late edition of the August 20 issue of the "397th Regimental Review", the Regiment's newspaper. A wide red ink swath crossed out the original 3-inch high headline "HOMEWARD BOUND". Thus the rumors that we were not going home in September were confirmed. All of us had both a sad and a happy face. We were disappointed that we were not going home. We were happy that we would not participate in the assault of the Japanese Home Islands.

75. OCCUPATION DUTY II

We settled (again) into occupation duties. Each week more of the "old men" transferred out of the company to start their journey to the States and discharge. The schedule for each of us to return was determined by our points. We received one point for every month on active duty and two points for each month overseas and 5 points for each decoration. Men with or over 85 points were shipped out in May. The men with about 70 were leaving now. I had 65.

On September 4, I was ordered to a 3-day training session at Vital, France on the new 57-mm recoilless rifle. This unusual weapon was successfully used in the last days of the war. A gunner and his second could load and fire a 57-mm shell from his shoulder. A larger, jeep mounted, recoilless rifle fired a 105-mm shell. After one day of classroom training, I was able to hit a large can of gasoline sitting on the rear deck of a partially destroyed tank at 600 yards. Pinpoint accuracy - and I am not a particularly good marksman, certainly not using artillery shell sized projectiles. On September 12, after the training was completed, the three of us from the 100th attended an all night party and dance celebrating the liberation of the city one-year ago. The three of us could not drink all the available wine, champagne or whatever they served. I slept much of the next day before returning to the division.

During the following week I was called into the Company H HQ. Our First Sergeant asked me, "Would you be interested in conducting a small German Circus to various division units"? I said "Sure, that's a different detail than being assigned Sergeant of the Guard at various posts around the area at night". I reported to Division Special Services. The Circus was owned and operated by two women with a staff of 10 people. Their special performances involved music, songs, juggling, clowns, high wire, dancing and dog acts. My job was to contact the Special Services people in each of the three regiments and arrange for transportation, housing, food and an auditorium stage setup for the circus. I suppose we had 5-6 shows over a 3-4 week period. I enjoyed the work and got along well with the many people involved. Between 500 - 600 men and officers attended each show; 3-4 General Officers attended one performance. Then one day it was all over and I reported back to Company H.

All troops in the Stuttgart area were invited to a Bob Hope USO Show in the last week of September. Some 30,000 troops crowded into the Stadium on a hot, dry evening. We had a great time laughing at Bob Hope and Jerry Colona. Our eyeballs popped at the young, beautiful, scantily dressed Hollywood starlets Bob Hope brought with him. Actually, anything civilian was wonderful to behold.

Every weekend and on holidays we were involved in a division, regiment or battalion parade. I have no memories of marching in a parade on October 5, 1945. However, Company H was photographed on that date while marching in a parade near Stuttgart, Germany. That picture is on the 100th's Web site. Scroll down to the menu buttons and click on the "Photos" menu item. When the web page comes up, scroll down to the bottom, to the heading "Occupation, 8 May – January 1946", then click on the 4th star for the picture "5 October 1945: The 397th Infantry Regiment passes in review...". Then go to the 2nd picture.

When I first saw this picture on the web site I looked for a familiar face, including my own. The officer in front (on the right of the photograph) did not look like Captain Laudone. In addition, he has only a single shining bar on his steel helmet, indicating a Lieutenant. Then I looked at the faces in the first row; usually the tallest officers and NCOs were placed in the first row, the tallest toward the right column (on the left side of the picture), the shortest toward the left column. I could not recognize the first soldier. However, there was no mistaking the next, my Platoon Sergeant Pat Miele. T/Sgt. Miele and I were about the same height but he was heavier than I was. I studied the four men on his left; the two middle soldiers looked physically similar to me. I could see some of my face and body in each soldier! Then I wondered if I was with the company on October 5, 1945. I reviewed my personal papers in my scrapbook and found the answer. At 9 AM, October 5, 1945 I was granted a 72-hour pass to visit Paris, France. I suspect the parade was in the afternoon. At that time I was on my way toward Paris and could not have been in the picture. But, for my families' historical interest, that's me in the middle of the front row; that's the way we looked when marching in mass formation - you pick out the correct face!

76. PARIS – OCTOBER 5 – 8, 1945

I felt lucky to be granted a 72 hour pass to visit Paris from October 5 - 8, 1945. Getting around in Germany and France on a railroad was easy; the railroads were the first transportation system to become operational. In addition, almost every large city had a US Army Transient Center. Any soldier carrying official orders could find a bed and meals at the mess hall. In Paris I did the usual tourist things; trips are arranged for us at minimum cost. One of the areas of Paris that attracted all soldiers at night was what we called "Pig Alley"- that's where all the girls were! All too soon I had to return to Company H in Germany.

77. TRANSFER TO MILITARY GOVERNMENT – KASSEL, GERMANY

When I returned from Paris I was told that the division had received another official alert to go home. Each soldier returning with the division needed 70 points. Those of us with less than 70 points knew that in a very few days we would be leaving the 100th for another assignment.

About October 10th, Captain Laudone called four of us into his office. We recognized each other as former ASTP students who had joined Company H in March 1944. He informed us that we did not have enough points to go home with the division and that he wanted to give us our choice of available options: we could join the 71st Infantry Division for occupation duty in Berlin or transfer to a Military Government Regiment somewhere in Germany. While we discussed this issue, Captain Laudone remarked that he was very satisfied with our performance with the company over the past year and one-half. He also commented that each of us had always completed every assignment in a satisfactory manner, that we were always where we were supposed to be at the appointed time and we had never given him any significant problems. We expressed appreciation for his remarks. My choice was the Military Government.

In a day or two my orders were cut; I said good bye to the members of my section and the other old guys, packed my gear and left for Kassel, Germany. Kassel was located about 160 miles north (and a few miles east) of Stuttgart. The city had been fire bombed by British bombers, killing many Germans civilians; most of the buildings were in ruins.

On 15 October, I reported to HQ, 2nd Military Government Regiment. The following day I was assigned to Detachment E-4, Co C, 2nd Military Government Battalion at Kassel. My new job was the Mail Clerk for the detachment, which was in charge of the rehabilitation and government of Kassel. The former Mail Clerk showed me the various facets of the job, then 2 days later transferred out for the States. I took over his quarters in a private home. The German woman owner provided maid service for 6-8 American soldiers, who had sleeping quarters in her house. Each of us provided her with some food, candy bars and cigarettes.

The Detachment Headquarters was in the Scholss Wilhelmshohe, a large, old castle on a hill at the outskirts of the city. The 18th-Century Schloss Wilhelmshonhe served as a royal residence from 1807 to 1813, when Jermone was king of Westphalia. It later became the summer residence of German emperor Wilhelm II. The great palace stood at the end of the 3-mile long Wilhelmshoher Allee, an avenue that before the war had run from one side of the city to the other. In the fall of 1945 it was a one-lane street lined with high piles of rubble on each side. The Palace had sustained several bomb hits. The giant 18th-century statue of Hercules that crowns the Wilhelmshohe heights was an astonishing sight, standing unharmed on a massive, red-stone octagon.

All mail, which concerned the city government, came into my office. Much of it was classified material. I was provided a "Secret" security clearance and ordered to open and personally distribute the mail to the officers in charge of the various departments. Most of the paper work dealt with finding the best persons (that is non-Nazis) for city government jobs. I soon learned what it takes to jump-start the recovery of a large city: housing, food, roads, water, electricity, garbage removal, parks, etc. In a short time I was able to distribute the mail and finish early - before lunch. Then I would go to the Enlisted Men's (EM) Club and start partying early.

78. PROMOTION AND ELECTION AS PRESIDENT OF EM CLUB

In early November I was promoted to Staff Sergeant. A few days later, I was ordered to report to the Commanding Officer. He asked if I was interested in being considered for the position

the ship you must be in AAA physical condition. My legs and arms were red and raw from scratching. Would I be kept in the ETO until my Scabies condition improved?

82. CAMP TOP HAT, ANTWERP, BELGIUM

On February 27, we arrived at Camp Top Hat. We walked through mud, several inches deep, to one of many 10-man tents heated by an oil stove. The next morning the ground was frozen under 5 inches of snow. The inspections started after breakfast; everything about us was checked and rechecked before we were cleared for boarding. Unbelievably, I passed all the inspections. I began to lose faith in US Army rumors!

83. SS VASSER VICTORY

We packed our gear, loaded on trucks and were driven to the docks on the morning of March 3. Our rusty Victory Ship, the 465 foot long Vasser Victory, sat waiting for us to board. After 1,400 troops were loaded, the engines were started and we moved away from the dock.

We were told over the loudspeaker that the ship had a top speed of 18 knots. We bitched about the slow progress the first few days. The civilian Captain later explained that the Scheld Estuary contained many German oyster mines. This underwater mine was fabricated from materials that made it impossible to locate them. They had settled on the bottom in the mud, waiting to be detonated by the vibration and pitch of a ship's propeller. To lesson the risk of irritating one of these mines and causing it to explode - the Captain kept his speed low. To make his story more convincing as to the danger involved in this area, he announced that the hulls of 37 ships remain in the Estuary. The most recent was the ALDER Liberty, which "got it" only a week ago. He concluded, "So boys, now you can relax".

The second day on the water I saw a familiar face. I walked up to Pfc. Dave Lether, from Holladay, UT, a former Jeep driver from the 1st Platoon, Company H, 397th Infantry Regiment. We were delighted to see each other. We had long talks about the guys who had gone home before us and those who would never go home.

The Vasser Victory passed the Azore Islands at 8 AM on March 8; the crew estimated New York City in 4 1/2 days. We settled down to a routine: Sleeping, eating, talking, playing games, reading books, watching movies and serving on KP duty. Our lives were regulated by the times that meals were served. The breakfast and dinner meals were excellent, copious and well prepared. The noon meal was a cup of soup in a metal canteen, some coffee and a Nab. Those who served on KP did not have much to clean up after that meal. KP duty was usually reserved for the lower ranks (Pvt. & Pfc.) - but almost all of those ranks were still serving in Germany. Most of us on board were staff sergeants or higher; I served as a KP for two or three days.

The Ship Captain had charted a straight course to New York City but a heavy storm crossed our path. Many troops became seasick. We lived through three days of tossing and turning in that 5-day storm. I was on KP duty at the time the ship was pushed sideways by a large wave; we "walked down" the side of the wave, bouncing as if the wave had steps. Everybody grabbed on to something that was attached. The stepping down motion jarred all the pots and pans loose and they slid all over the tipping floor causing pandemonium. I felt a deep fear that

the ship might roll over and sink. As I recall, the captain later announced over the loudspeaker that the ship had rolled to within 5 degrees of capsizing.

The excitement of getting close to the USA was like an electric charge. I could not sleep well as the number of days shortened. One night I was near the bow, looking down over the railing, toward the water, watching the white bow wave. A GI walked up and we started talking about tomorrow, next week, next month, etc. I don't remember what he planned to do but his comments on my thoughts and wishes had a profound effect on my life. I told him that I had not decided about my future life work but I liked the outdoors, I didn't mind getting dirty, and I wanted to build something to improve our society - maybe Civil Engineering. He said, "Gee, that sounds like Petroleum Production Engineering and one of the leading colleges is the University of Pittsburgh right where you live". I had not heard of Petroleum Engineering. Gasoline and oil came from service stations, didn't they?

On March 11, while still out of sight of land, the Vasser Victory passed nearby a ship that was loaded with German Prisoners of War on their way back to Germany. Many of us commented on the life those POWs lived in our country compared to how the Germans treated their POWs. We were bitter even though the war had been over 10 months.

I wanted to see the Statue of Liberty. On the way out of New York City in October 1944, none of us were allowed up on the deck, so we missed the Statue. About 5 AM on March 12, the Statue became visible through the early morning mist. All the ship flags were raised and every GI rushed to the left side of the ship. Over the loudspeaker the Captain ordered one-half of us to immediately go to the other side of the ship or we would capsize. We passed the large sign "Welcome Home – Well Done" along Riverside Drive.

84. NEW YORK CITY

About 4 hours later a tug boat pushed us toward the New York City pier 82-34 at 42nd St. Pfc. Dave Lether and I waited together to leave the ship. Our unit was the last to be called. Along with about 700 troops we boarded the second ferry to take us across the Hudson River to New Jersey. The Red Cross was waiting with coffee and donuts; an Army Band played for us. All 1,400 of us boarded a waiting train and left immediately for Camp Kilmer near New Brunswick, NJ. I had made a great circle; I was back where I had left the USA about 18 months ago.

85. CAMP KILMER

When we arrived at Camp Kilmer, the first order of business was an evening meal. We were served a full course steak dinner and were encouraged to return for as many seconds as we wished. After the meal we were briefed that our unit would be dissolved and we would be classified for discharge, reassignment or reenlistment. They promised that our stay at Camp Kilmer should not exceed 48 hours. Furthermore, we could expect to be sent to a Separation Center near our hometown where the average stay was 3-5 days before discharge. After waiting in long lines we each called home with the welcome news.

86. FT. MEADE – DISCHARGE – MARCH 18, 1946

On March 15, I boarded a train for the Separation Center at Ft. Meade, MD where I had entered active duty about 33 months before. During the next two days every part of my body, my clothes and my records were inspected – I passed all inspections. On March 18, I sat at the side of a desk in front of a young 2nd Lieutenant, who questioned me on my service, dates, locations and decorations. A very young Corporal sat beside us typing my Honorable Discharge Certificate. The officer asked if I was interested in joining the US Army Inactive Reserve for three years. He explained that I would not be required to attend any meetings, and my enlistment would save my S/Sgt rank in the event I was called into active service. I declined, having had enough US Army duty over the last 33 months. The officer signed my discharge and said, “Sergeant, your country is proud of your service and thanks you”. He shook my hand, handed me my discharge and sent me to the paymaster. I received \$350 and change for separation pay and was told I was free to go home.

My thoughts drifted back to my US Army enlistment on April 28, 1943; I had enlisted for a period of the “Duration of the War plus 6 Months”. WWII was officially over on September 2, 1945. Six more months was March 2, 1946. Today was March 18, so the US Army had extended my enlistment by some 16 days. My final thought on this subject was, “Who cares, I am a civilian now! Whoopee!

At 3:46 PM, I sent a Western Union message to my mother stating “Arriving at 12:51 P&LE Station, Love Bill”. A bunch of us went to Charles Street in Baltimore to celebrate; as evening approached I boarded a train for Pittsburgh. Nobody was at the Pennsylvania & Lake Erie Station to meet me. For some reason lost in the mists of the past, my family went to the Pennsylvania Station. When they realized that no train was scheduled to arrive from Baltimore they asked about the other stations. They were told that a train from Washington, DC had arrived at the P& LE Station at 12:51 AM. Shortly afterwards we had a happy family reunion.

87. HOME – THE CIVILIAN

I proudly wore my uniform for a couple of days, showing off my Combat Infantryman Badge, Purple Heart ribbon, three battle ribbons and stars plus the Distinguished Unit Citation ribbon along with my S/Sgt stripes, patches and overseas bars. Then it had to end; mother and I took a train into Pittsburgh and spent about \$400 (of my parents’ money) for several complete sets of civilian clothing. I joined the 52-20 Club. Discharged Pennsylvania veterans received \$20 dollars a week for 52 weeks, to assist them in their transition to civilian life. I had money and new clothes – I was back into civilian life! (Two pictures of my family and me as a civilian are included in the snapshots and documents section).

I received a letter from the US Veterans Administration awarding me, as I recall, a 10 % disability. A month later the VA wrote to withdraw the disability award. I did not request a review of these actions, to my parent’s dismay. I was of the opinion that the US Government was compensating me enough with the GI Bill and the home loan program. Now (May 15, 2001) that I have celebrated my 76th birthday, and with the leg wound causing me some problems, I have requested the VA to review my case.

SOME AFTER DISCHARGE EVENTS

A week or two after my return home I began to investigate the profession of Petroleum Engineering and submitted an application to the University of Pittsburgh. On April 29, 1946, my mother baked my favorite food, a Chocolate Devils Food cake, for my 21st birthday. During the middle of May, the Department of Engineering, University of Pittsburgh, notified me that they had accepted most of my completed ASTP courses, credited my Army service and assigned me as a 1st semester Sophomore – the time in the Army was not wasted. My mother and father offered me my former bedroom, if I wanted to live at home in Oakdale – home cooking went with the bedroom offer. I accepted their kind offer and began planning for the course work, which was to start on June 6. I visited the University of Pittsburgh campus and signed up for the GI Bill – as a single veteran I received \$110 each month for living expenses. All my books and class costs were fully paid. This also included such items as an expensive slide rule and drafting instruments.

My father asked me to cut the front lawn and to help him plant tomatoes in our back yard on the usual last day of frost in the Pittsburgh, PA area - May 30, Memorial Day – the chores around a home never stop.

On June 6, having changed my mind about joining the US Army Inactive Reserve. I enlisted for a three-year period. I received three years of satisfactory military service toward my 20 years (for retirement) from this period of service. On the same day the University classes started. I carried 18 credit hours during the summer semester, studying English Composition, Engineering Physics, Historical Geology and Field Surveying. Each weekday I took a 45-minute train ride from the Oakdale Station to the Fourth Avenue Station in Pittsburgh and then a 20-minute electric streetcar to the Pitt campus. When a class was scheduled for late evening, I rode the bus home 15 miles to Oakdale. I maintained that schedule for two years.

During the summer of 1948 I worked for the Petroleum and Natural Gas Research Section of the Bureau of Mines, US Department of the Interior in Franklin, PA as an Engineering Aid (Engineering Trainee) at an annual salary of \$2,394. At the end of August 1948, the Supervising Engineer, Sam Taylor, offered me a professional position (GS-5), when I completed my final semester and received my BS Degree. I accepted. Graduation for the Class of 1949 occurred on January 27, 1949. A few days later I said goodbye to my parents and boarded a bus for Franklin, PA. The next day I reported for work with the US Bureau of Mines as a Petroleum and Natural Gas Research Engineer.

I served in Franklin, PA, 1949 - 1954; Morgantown, WV, 1954 - 1963; Bartlesville, OK, 1963 - 1970; Juneau, AK, 1970 - 1973; returned to Morgantown, WV as the Research Director, 1973 - 1975 and then to Washington, DC, 1975 - 1979. My highest rank in the Civil Service System was an Executive Grade (GS-16), which is equivalent to a Major General in the US Army. On the last day of August 1979, I retired from my position with the US Department of Energy in Washington, DC, with over 34 years of service (counting active Military service).

On January 24, 1964, the State of Oklahoma certified me as a Registered Professional Engineer, No. 5986. The Oklahoma Society of Professional Engineers accepted me into active Professional Membership on February 26, 1965.

While working I continued my education with Graduate Studies in Petroleum Reservoir Engineering at the University of Tulsa, 1965 - 1967. While in Alaska I completed all course work for a Masters in Public Administration (MPA). My transfer to Morgantown, WV at the end 1973 stopped work on my Thesis, "Comparing the Offshore Oil Production Laws of Alaska and Louisiana". The degree work was never completed.

In June 1950, when North Korea attacked South Korea, I applied to the US Army for a commission as an Infantry Officer. In December 1950 I was commissioned a 2nd Lieutenant, Serial Number 0-1917544, and assigned to the Active Reserve. I expected to be called for Active Duty but the US Army never called. I served in various US Army Active Reserve positions as an Infantry, Engineering Corps and Military Police Officer attending monthly meetings and two-week periods of active duty each summer. My most interesting assignment was in Morgantown, WV, during the period 1958 – 1962, when, as a Captain, I served as Commanding Officer of Company A, 325th Combat Engineer Company, 100th Infantry Division (Training). In that time period the 100th was assigned as an Active Reserve Training Division with units in WV and KY. Strange Coincidence! The reader may recall that Company A, 325th Combat Engineer Battalion was attached to my regiment during the war in Europe. During January 1945, under my direction, they used TNT charges to create foxholes, in the frozen ground, for our machine guns.

On May 1, 1965 I was transferred to the Retired Reserved with the rank of Captain, with over 20 years Active and Reserve service. On April 29, 1985, on my 60th birthday, I received a Certificate of Retirement from the US Army and began to receive retired pay. (A copy of these certificates is included in the snapshots and documents section).

On September 29, 2001 US Congressman Jim Kolbe of Tucson, AZ, awarded me the Bronze Star Medal and the Combat Infantryman Badge at a military awards ceremony. Joelle's Granddaughter, Elizabeth A. Lenz pinned the awards on my shirt. After the awards ceremony I showed Congressman Kolbe several WWII mementos: 1) my picture taken at Hottviller, France on March 15, 1945, 2) the 100th Infantry Division shoulder patch and 3) my "Sons of Bitche" membership card. He asked for a picture and held the items for the camera. (A picture of Congressman Kolbe and me at the awards ceremony is included in the snapshots and documents section).

My US Army decorations, badges, unit award and campaign and service medals are:

DECORATIONS

Bronze Star Medal
Purple Heart Medal
Good Conduct Medal

BADGES

Combat Infantryman Badge
Expert Infantryman Badge
MKM 30 Cal M1 Rifle

UNIT & RIBBON AWARDS

Army Distinguished Unit Award - Rimling, France - January 7-9, 1945

CAMPAIGN & SERVICE MEDALS

America Campaign Medal - For service outside the US for 30 days during 1941 - 1946

European-African-Middle East Campaign Medal - For service in the ETO for 30 days

My ribbon has three battle stars on it for the Rhineland, Ardennes-Alsace and Central Europe campaigns

World War II Victory Medal - For service between 1941 - 1946

World War II Occupation Medal - For service in Germany for 30 days between 1945 - 1995

Cold War Victory Commemorative Medal - For honorable service between 2 Sept 1945 - 26 Dec 1991

EPILOGUE

Fifty-six years ago we experienced terrible days and nights of rain, mud and snow in the Vosges Mountains of Eastern France, bitter cold and deep snow drifts in the Alsace region near the German Border and dark, smelly, moist concrete fortifications in the Maginot Line. Most of the time every one of us was scared to death, physically and mentally exhausted and just plain miserable. Unless you have been in battle you can't imagine the feeling of living in wet darkness or in a snow covered deep hole for long periods of time. However, most of us were young, strong and had the ability to bounce back quickly. We considered the war as a great, terrifying adventure, but at the same time we hated every moment of the misery and fear. Each of us was severely tested and found equal to the task; none of us would want to go through such an extremely harsh ordeal again. We think often of our friends who did not return with us.

The date today is April 25, 2001. Many articles report that WWII veterans are dying at the rate of over 1,000 each day. Less than half of us are still living.

“The tale is told. The sun shines as brightly as before, the sky sparkles with the trembling stars that make the night beautiful, and the scene melts and gradually disappears forever” - Written by Winston Groom in his book, Shrouds of Glory.

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APPENDIX A

THE ROAD FRANK HANCOCK AND I TRAVELED TOGETHER

While reading Frank Hancock's WWII story I noted that we began our WWII experience at the same time: he left Baltimore, MD on May 27, 1943; I left Pittsburgh, PA on June 15, 1943. We were separately ordered to report to Ft Meade, MD and after a week or so were shipped, in the same group, to Fort McClellan, AL for basic infantry training. After successfully completing that training, we both studied basic engineering under the Army Specialized Training Program (ASTP) at The Citadel, Charleston, SC. When the ASTP program was disbanded we were separately assigned to heavy machine gun platoons in sister infantry regiments assigned to the 100th Infantry Division at Fort Bragg, NC. When our advanced infantry training was completed we traveled overseas on the same ship; and went into combat with the 100th. After the Japanese surrendered we both transferred out of the 100th for separate assignments with the 2nd Military Government Regiment in Kassel, Germany. Both of us independently vacationed for a week in Switzerland. During late February 1946 we were both assigned to the 378th Medical Collecting Company, and traveled by train to Camp Top Hat, Antwerp, Belgium. We boarded the same Victory ship for the USA and were processed through Camp Kilmer, NJ. We were transferred on the same orders to and discharged from Ft. Meade, MD in mid-March 1946 - WITHOUT ONCE MEETING EACH OTHER! We finally met face to face in 1997 at a 100th Infantry Division Association Convention.

APPENDIX B

CORRESPONDENCE AND A VISIT WITH PFC. OWEN LINDSEY'S MOTHER

After the war was over in May 1945, I wrote to Owen's mother asking if she wanted to know of the circumstances of Owen's death. She wrote of her interest in the details, stating that she and her husband did not receive anything except the citation that came with Owen's Silver Star award. We began to correspond. She sent me many packages of food; those packages were limited to five pounds. She complained that she had much more to send.

In a letter dated January 7, 1946 Mrs. Lindsey wrote that she had received a Christmas card from Lloyd Barnhouse of Painesville, OH. He was one of our squad machinegun ammunition bearers who were with Owen on November 19, 1944 when the fatal attack took place. He was seriously wounded during the attack.

She wrote immediately but Lloyd Barnhouse did not immediately respond. In a letter to me dated February 22, 1946, she wrote " ...one night I had a call and found that he and his wife were passing through the city (Decatur, GA) and came out to see us. We insisted that they stop over with us, but they were on a trip to Florida and most eager to be on their way but promised to stop on their return - in a few days they were back since they were not able to get living quarters. So they arrived back on February 11 and are still with us. We are enjoying every moment of their stay and are going to keep them another week we hope. He as you must know was very seriously wounded on the day Owen was killed. He stayed in hospitals until this past November 16 - one year lacking two days and has under gone 9 major operations - his legs were badly hurt from hand grenade wounds and were in casts for quite sometime - shrapnel went through his back and came through tearing part of his intestines and

he has 9 inches of rubber tubing to replace - he doesn't know how he survived and needless to say spent many months in agony. He was hit around two o'clock in the afternoon and wasn't picked up by the medics until the next day with the wounds and loss of blood and the awful weather, its certainly a miracle that he is living besides what he's had to go through since then with the operations, etc. He didn't know the other fellow that got away that day was killed before the war ended until I told him that you had told us and he said this fellow came by and told him that they were the only ones left...”.

Shortly thereafter in 1946 my mother, Sarah Eckard, began to write to Mrs. Lindsey. The two mothers carried on a correspondence with each other for more than a decade. In 1958, I took my mother on an airplane trip to visit Mrs. Lindsey in Decatur, GA. We all had a very enjoyable visit.

After the war was over the US Government began to ask the relatives of soldiers buried in foreign soil whether they wished the remains to be returned to US soil. The alternative was to leave their bodies in American maintained cemeteries in Europe. Mrs. Lindsey, acting my recommendation, decided to leave Owen's remains in Europe. Owen's father died shortly after the end of the war. Owen is buried in the American Military Cemetery near Epinal, in the foothills of the Vosges Mountains along with 5,254 other Americans most of whom gave their lives in the campaigns across northeastern France and beyond into Germany. I have visited the graves of Owen Lindsey, Robert Gorell and Frank Rosse, three times. My last visit was in July 2000.