





**HEADQUARTERS AND HEADQUARTERS BATTERY**  
*100th Infantry Division Artillery*



HEADQUARTERS

AND

HEADQUARTERS

BATTERY

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100th INFANTRY DIVISION ARTILLERY



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*Brig. Gen. Murphy*





When one sits down to write a history of an outfit's accomplishments since activation, what are the most vivid impressions and memories he recalls in retrospect? The places we've been? — We've seen Montbronn, Fayetteville, Columbia, Pigalle, Nashville, Septemes, Stuttgart, Piccadilly, Aix and Tucker's crossroads in Tennessee. The people we've known? — We remember a Tennessee farmer, a Southern girl, Charlie Buchanan (and his direct antithesis, Bill Spicer) a coast guardsman on the "General Gordon", a French gendarme, a Nazi burgermeister. The drinks we've imbibed? — They run the gamut from mountain dew and "Town Pump" beer to schnaps, cognac, vino and champagne. The languages we've tried to learn? — Beaucoup French, ein bissel German, Brooklynese (from Johnny Julius), Mexican (from Sandy), and a lil' bit of yo' all and "down the road a piece" vernacular from "Duds" Arnold and Odis Mixon. Or — Is it the contrasts we've experienced? — Everthing from using a slit trench in January at 0300 to the comparative luxury of the club rooms and bar at the Panzer Kasserne.

Are these the things we'll remember? Well, yes and no. But what we'll like to recall most often concerning our hitch in the Army are the friends we've made and the associations formed during the long saga of this outfit. We'll think of the fellows in our section — the guy who loaned us money, took our guard or CQ, shared his packages with us and quieted us down when we griped and fumed about red tape, furloughs, promotions, the point system, and the "lucky bums" who continually beat our "full house". Yes, we'll remember the guy who was next to us throughout those first tough days in the Army and who later gave us confidence when we craved with all our heart to return to picnics with the wife or girl-friend, big league ball games,

church, the job, bull sessions on the corner with the neighbors and meals where each food was on a separate space of the blue plate! Thus, we dedicate this portion of the book to the friendships and spirit of camaraderie which unconsciously evolved when 100 men from all over America — fiddle players, farmers, accountants — were moulded together into a combat unit. In tribute to the spirit, fortitude and guts of all these men, past and present, who made up the Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 100th Infantry Division Artillery, the following tale is told:

For the Artillery of an Infantry Division to fire effectively, communications must be the energy which keeps the mighty machine powerful — and to Headquarters and Headquarters Battery fell the task of training its personnel as wiremen, radio operators, meteorologists, surveyors and operations assistants who could apply this knowledge in direct support of the artillery fire. Tying in and coordinating communications and weather data among the four organic (and often one or more attached) field artillery battalions was a role that required much preparation. The initial training for combat began in the Fall of 1942 when on Oct 15th, a cadre from the 76th Infantry Division and 1st Infantry Division arrived at Fort Jackson, S. C. to help train the 100th Infantry Division. National and international developments at this time showed the Nazis firmly entrenched throughout Europe while our pending invasion plans for North Africa were being made final. On the “home front”, the popular juke box tunes everybody was humming included “Moonlight Becomes You” and “White Christmas”. The St. Louis Cardinals had just upset the New York Yankees 4 games to 1 in the world Series and most of us expected “greetings” from the President any day. On November 15, 1942, approximately 2,000 officers and men stood in formation as the Division flag was presented to Major General Burrell by the XII Corps Commander, Major General (now Lt. Gen. & CG of 9th Army) William H. Simpson.

The cadre skeleton of the Division soon had flesh applied in the form of trainload after trainload of bewildered, wondering rookies, who had recently told the “classification man” which branch they wanted, just as Mother had instructed! We had been thru a hectic few days of physical exams, mental tests, and had sent the sport coat home after receiving some khaki apparel from a ferocious-looking Pfc.

The train ride down to Ft. Jackson was not only a mental strain but a physical one as well; this was borne out by a glance at the motley, disheveled

newcomers tumbling from the railroad siding onto the beautiful sand of Carolina! The next few days were to bring further red tape in the form of classification, assignment and straightening out of records. Finally, they found a spot suitable for our talents and we hurtled ourselves and our barracks bags over a 2½ ton tail-gate for the first time and were transported to “home” — our battery area. Among the initial group of Headquarters and Headquarters Battery recruits were Arnold, Brown, Hansen, Cortozzo, Bill Horton, Lukach, Littlejohn, Haile, McGrotha, Sykes, Moran, and on hand to greet them were the awesome veterans, the cadremen — including Bromfield, Kuntz, Pazinko, Stoller, Monroe, Raffer, Hoyte, Yankowitz, and many others. After a warm shower and assignment to hutments, we “hit the sack”, comforting our fellow sufferers with the thought that “this life isn’t so bad after all”. The dream was rudely shattered the following morning in the form of our 1st Sergeant, Clarence (Walkin’ Charlie) Buchanan, whose foreboding figure and beckoning finger we later learned to avoid as often as possible! The topkick read

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*Brig. Gen. Buechler, 1st Lt. Heggem*

to us what seemed like reams of instructions and made his first "kill" — practicing his favorite indoor sport by assigning some of us to fatigue details, including KP.

The Division Artillery at Jackson during these early days was commanded by Brigadier General Theodore E. Buechler with Colonel Henry Holt as his able executive. Colonel Yoe (then Major) was the S-3 and Major Katz the S-2. Captain Disney and Lt. Wickham handled the S-1 and S-4 duties. By Christmas, 1942, Headquarters Battery, Division Artillery was practically at full strength. Major (then Capt.) John W. Ireland, Jr. was the CO of the green outfit — but after looking them over, he did not give up. Instead, he rolled up his sleeves in typical "John W." fashion and proceeded to analyze, train, supervise, mother, discipline, encourage, correct, command, and lead. His officer assistants at the time were Lts. Johnson, McDonald, and later Lt. Walker.

Capt. Ireland was to introduce the men to an outdoor sport they had practiced often as civilians — but never as far and with such weighty para-

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*Major Ireland*

phernalia — W-A-L-K-I-N-G!! In preparation for this first “little walk“, supply was busy issuing all the new and unfamiliar gear; cadremen tried to be patient in describing which way the canteen and first-aid packet were hooked onto the pistol belt and some men insisted on wearing their leggings inside out! We fell out, literally, looking like surrealistic men from Mars, each apparently trying to outdo the other in individual versions of the uniform's styling, drape and lines. Tired before they started, from painful, disconcerting struggles with “hospital corners“ on a bunk, folding shelter halves and making a full-field pack, the men nevertheless marched on, bearing all the tortures of blisters, hot sand, and the monotonous cadence of “hut - 2 - 3 - 4“! After 5 miles, a halt was called and tents were pitched for the first overnight bivouac; after the buttons, pegs and ropes were finally untangled, the battery settled down to an evening of under-the-stars camaraderie, thanks to the presence of numerous bandsmen and musicians.

Christmas dinner, our first in khaki, was ably served by Pete Pazinko and Lester Carl. This was a holiday — we lolled on our bunks, read and wrote letters, and measured our first few Army days with aching muscles, but stout heart.

Gradually sections were formed — Art Getz leading survey — Georgie Kuntz heading the radio boys, Allen Monroe (Comm. Chief) in charge of wire — Frank Young in M/C — Eddie Ritz & Pop Watson at Headquarters — Stan Raffer, metro — Vic Butfilowski in the medics, and Don Hoyte at the motor park. In the air section were Bob (later Lt.) Sands and Jesse Zeigler. As we were assigned to these various sections, long hours were spent learning fundamentals of communication techniques; then later, men were sent to specialist schools to develop their skills still further.

Not only did we learn our specialty well — but also practiced the trials of a foot soldier — taking general “basic“ instruction in first-aid, map reading, wielding a bayonet, digging foxholes, and most important of all — firing of the M-1 rifle. The Leesburg Firing Range tested our shooting eyes and though hampered by poor weather conditions most of the time, a majority of us did surprisingly well, qualifying as marksman, sharpshooter, or expert.

Continuation of training improved our marching under the guidance of George Kuntz — although Leist, Frawley and Burrington seemed to have two left feet as they were chronically out of step! Joe Mirabel, the erstwhile New York barrister, soon showed his prowess as machine gun corporal and

argued his cases well in field-stripping everything from carbines and pistols to machine guns and 105 - howitzers!

The "77th Division area" on Tank Hill at Fort Jackson was our home for two months after Pète Dierikx's measles had us quarantined and several cases of spinal meningitis in the Division necessitated a temporary change of area. Fort Jackson had previously been occupied by the above-mentioned 77th Infantry Division (later at Guam, Iwo Jima & Okinawa), the 30th Infantry Division and the 26th (YD) Division. Now our neighbors were the "Lion Patch" boys of the 106th Infantry Division, a spirited, aggressive outfit, whose personnel were comparatively young. These were the lads destined later to bear the brunt of Von Rundstedt's Ardennes offensive in the ETO "Battle of the Bulge", suffering tremendous casualties, but acquitting themselves nobly and valiantly in the best traditions of the service.

"Strong Man" Misso paced the battery in writing letters, giving calisthenics and generally being "eager" but his conscientiousness was more than offset by the apathy of Charlie La Bue, who once paid Kuntz 3 dollars for digging his foxhole on a "D" exercise. Earl ("this Division will never go overseas") Bishop, boasted that he was the only driver who knew the entire post by heart but reneged when a wrecker had to pull his vehicle out of a swamp one afternoon!

ASTP (the Mother of I & E and AEP) claimed men like Bill Horton, Moe Stoller, Nash, Sykes, Moran, Conway, Kwartowitz — but most of them later rejoined the battery when the program became SNAFU'D to make way for combat requirements. KP details were inexorably associated with those days, and Normandeau, Frawley and McManus continued their favorite pastime — cleaning the grease trap as Walking Charlie's "hey you" reached every hutment and all the supposedly invulnerable hiding places. He had no clemency for men returning from furlough and it was SOP to check the bulletin board at midnight for details. Hiding under the hutments was to no avail with Charlie's eagle eye, so everyone circumambulated the orderly room as much as possible.

In April, the Division formed a train guard along the 252-mile roadbed of the Atlantic Coast Line for the late President Roosevelt's inspection tour. One other highlight of Jackson included our absorption of some of the personnel of the WD Army Show which had toured the country very successfully.

When the men of an Infantry Division maneuver, their motto is "don't fence me in". So in June, July and August, Headquarters Battery moved out to the wide open spaces. Wiremen, radiomen, operations, survey and metro put theory learned in classrooms to practical field test and the individual soon became accustomed to scrub pine, sand, rain, mud, pine needles and chiggers. On these "D" exercises, we worked under simulated combat conditions, laying wire at night, and giving drivers a taste of blackout runs. It was then that we learned the meaning of "hurry up and wait", K rations, and the fact that the helmet, steel, M 1 W/strap is a handy instrument even when

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*Back Row: 2nd Lt. Wall, Capt. Smith, Lt. Col. Cardell, 1st Lt. Heck — Middle Row: Capt. Prince, 1st Lt. Heggem, Brig. Gen. Buechler, Capt. Zimmerman, Capt. Piper — Front Row: Capt. Bove, Lt. Col. Symroski, Capt. Shearon, Maj. Ireland, Capt. Smiley, 1st Lt. Wilson*

you're not wearing it. We dug with it, cooked with it, gathered fruit with it, and bathed in it — it was hot in summer and we later learned in Tennessee it was drafty in winter.

Following Ranger training, practice in storming a Nazi village, and more obstacle courses and hikes, Headquarters Battery became hardened, learned pride in the outfit with Wetterau's famous song "Headquarters & The Battery", and we proved to be seasoned and resourceful as Summer field exercises polished

off the rough spots in the overall efficiency of the battery. As proof of the hard work and diligent effort applied by the officers and men, even "Fatty" Van Dyke lost 50 pounds. Everyone had prepped and crammed for the Corps Tests, when high ranking officers dropped in on us to test how much of our training we had absorbed. Instead of questioning men in each section, Eddie Huber proved to be our sole representative as he perspired under cross-examination from the "brass"; but Eddie knew all the answers and came thru with flying colors, and a commendation from the inspecting team.

The practical phase of our training at an end, the Battery was soon to lose Major Ireland to the FAS at Ft Sill. Capt. Robert E. Shearon took over the duties of CO in August, carrying on the same high standards set before him. As his assistants he had Lt. Worth C. Wilson, Commo (later his successor as Battery CO), Lt. Roy Weaver (later Capt. and S-3 for 925th FA Bn.), and as motor officer-Harry ("Turn em over") Sager.

All work and no play makes Army life difficult to stomach at times, so the battery blew off steam periodically at informal beer parties where Ralph Bochino and Al Garafalow were always ready with some golden notes and Nash invariably came up with "Ole Man River". The bandsmen — Johny Burns, Grizina, Broceck, Failla, Damiani, were aided and abetted by Eddie ("Dizzy Fingers") Huber and Paul ("Wot'll I play?") Cavallo, on the squeeze-box. Columbia, the capitol, the Wade Hampton Hotel and the Jefferson beckoned to the boys during leisure time and many happy evening were spent at USO's, Twin Oaks and neighboring lakes. We also learned that the efficient MP's were our friends and protectors most of the time — but we felt pretty foolish when they cautioned us about saluting or unbuttoned jackets, especially with a "chick" on our arm. Perhaps the outstanding social event at Jackson was the formal dinner and dance at the Service Club which approximated a little touch of home. Other evenings were spent at the Medics' PX, guzzling the amber fluid — in the movie theatres and recreation halls — or in the day-room where Joe Sypniewski could be found playing classical "long-hair" — always a harmonious interlude after Cavallo's mad cacophony on the musical 88.

In October, 1943, the battery participated in a farewell review for General Buechler, and his successor became Brigadier General John B Murphy, who joined the 100th from the Armored Forces. Previously, Lt. Col. (then Major) Keithly had replaced Col. Yoe in the S-3 position.



During the same month of October, a husky Kentuckian was to arrive in the battery and take over the duties of 1st Sgt. from Cheerless Charlie. Before long, Bill Spicer's whistle was a familiar shrill sound and we all came to respect him for the spirit, punch and aggressiveness he injected into the battery with his chatter, tireless energy and good humor. Three other battery additions included a trio of Regular Army men, George Robison, Jim Rouss, and Edwin Engel, who brought to us the value of their Army experience, gained while serving in Puerto Rico.

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*Capt. Shearon, 1st/Sgt. Spicer*

On November 14, 1943, Headquarters Battery rolled out of Ft. Jackson in convoy, headed for Tennessee and 2nd Army Maneuvers, thus botching the rumors of early shipment overseas or extended stay in the States as "home guard" troops. The 100th was among the first organizations to conduct Winter maneuvers, as we accomplished "war games" in the extremely rugged weather of the Winter of 1943—1944. For the eight tactical problems, we were teamed at various times with and against the 35th and

87th Infantry Divisions, the 14th Armored Division, plus many supporting elements, including TD's, air and service troops. We became differentiated from the "enemy" with the issue of red or blue armbands, and soon recognized umpires and the significance of black and orange flags.

The arduous convoy trip brought us through Athens, Georgia and Ft. Oglethorpe, where the lonely WAC's were the last contact with civilization we were to have for some time. Passing fence-repairmen who were finished with the "battle", we heard tales and rumors about the "frostbite" and "hundreds" of men who had been drowned or run over during blackout operations; stories from the other guardhouse lawyers claimed we would

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*Liaison Plane at Fort Bragg, N. C.*

soon turn black due to the freezing weather. Soon, rideweary Shearon-men rolled into the assembly area a few miles outside of Lebanon and efficient training was evident as the outfit smoothly went about its business of pitching camp amid the cedars. Bill Spicer's men, all hand-picked volunteers, put up the pyramidals and officer's tents, while the rest of the battery chose the softest rocks they could find as the base for their "new home". Wiremen under Al Monroe, Pat Bomar, Carl Tull, and Jeff Oliver, laid lines and instal-

received last-minute checks for the lengthy service to which they were about to be submitted. Sid Bromfield's boys got the road dust off the sets and initiated operation of the all-important 608's, 610's and 284's. Stan Raffer's metro and Irv Bell's survey set up their precision-like theodolite and transit respectively — and trained men went about their jobs — vastly more confident soldiers than the green recruits who had left the train at the Ft. Jackson rail-siding a year previously. An air strip was reconnoitered for the "Murphy Maytag Messerschmitts" and the Cub planes soon were a familiar sight hovering over Tennessee - - observing, ferrying mail, and conducting

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#### OPERATIONS SECTION

*Back Row: S/Sgt. Cochrane, M/Sgt. Zoecklein, T/4 Gallo — Front Row: T/5 Cortozzo, M/Sgt. Braud, T/4 Reilly, T/4 McAndrews, Pfc. Tannery Missing, T/Sgt. Lukach, Sgt. Vinick, T/4 Phelps*

simulated howitzer fire. Leroy Brown (carpenter, machine-gunner and latrine digger), accomplished in record time the last-but-not-least task of blasting (with shovels) a slit trench out of the Tennessee slate and shale.

The veteran kitchen crew, composed of Pete, Alex, George, Dierikx and Chang, greatly aided by the efficient new field ranges, mastered the art of

preparing meals during motor marches within the scant space of the kitchen truck. Surmounting the obstacles of working in the field, Mess Sgt. Peter Pazinko did himself proud by turning out a Thanksgiving dinner in keeping with the finest traditions of the day—though we were in an area chiefly to be remembered for the pigs who wandered in, aiming to join the party and compete with our chowhounds. The rat-race lost no time in getting started and Headquarters Battery was off on a merry-go-round of blackout crossings of the Cumberland River - - - blitz-like attacks and retrograde movements - - - aggressive holdings and defensive tactics, with the men battling against time, the crisp weather, and the early ban against fires which later gave impetus to the standing joke, defining a “Tennessee fire” as “two sticks of wood and a 5-gallon can of gas”.

The rain, occasional snow and freezing weather dogged our movements, but inclement weather was no alibi for poor communications. The wire crews laboriously laid long lines over mountains and through valleys - - on frozen ground or in mud - - - overhead - - - and underground. They competed against the tracked monsters which paid no heed to circuits that had been laid painstakingly by frozen fingers—cold digits whose sensation of numbness transmitted a call to their owner’s stomachs for “chow” and then a defiladed fire. These were two treats usually enjoyed long after the rest of the battery was asleep. The radio boys served all night long on the sets and their fellow “night owls” included the men in S-3 Operations whose only companions were Coleman lanterns and situation maps. The meteorological section followed the weather-revealing balloons by means of skyward-floating lanterns at odd hours like 0200 and 0400. At the end of the problem, there was still work to be done, for the wire crews went out to retrieve lines already laid and plans had to be formulated for the next operation. However, even though we marveled at our own endurance, we learned it paid to relax at the end of a problem, and we did just that, er - - - more correctly - “knocked ourselves out” in Nashville — but every man to his own interpretation of “relaxation”! “Pop” Watson usually led the convoy into town with his famous yells for those periodic roadside stops! It was comical to witness on these weekends, the transformation from the grimy field soldier to the GI playboy; shaving was accomplished in icicle-dripping steel helmets, with a mirror precariously hung on a tent rope; one man could be seen going thru these contortions in his “long-Johns” while his tent-mate was ransacking the bottom of a bar-

racks bag, just retrieved from Walking Charlie's rear echelon tent-warehouse. After borrowing a cap, stealing a tie, and pressing the wrinkles in our blouse with a flat rock, we were off to Nashville, looking not exactly like the "Esquire" version of a soldier, but — egal! — this was a pass and a break from the strain of the week's problem. The hospitality of Nashville's inhabitants was congenial and many pleasant evenings were spent visiting private homes, the co-eds at Vanderbilt University, the YMHA, YMCA, the Andrew Jackson, Hermitage, Crosskeys, and for the devotees of boogie-woogie and Bacchus, "The Subway" and "Hi-Hat Club". Perhaps the highlight of the pass was a

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#### DIVISION ARTILLERY BAND

*Back Row: T/4 McMurray, T/5 Drily, Cpl. Murphy, Pfc. Craemer — Middle Row: Pfc. Lindsey, Pfc. Dunn, Pfc. Carradi, T/4 Kemper, T/4 Gonzales — Front Row: Pfc. Wilson, Pfc. Cole, T/5 Dunn*

good scrubbing, as the layers of grime were shed at steam bath or hot shower establishments.

In the middle of maneuvers, the Battery was to gain a combat-wise replacement in the form of George Reid, the soft-spoken unassuming veteran of Guadalcanal who gave us the benefit of his experience against the Japs. Other

than a few cases of illness sent back to the clearing-station, personnel changes in the Battery were negligible during maneuvers.

Chaplain Wright was counselor, adviser and friend to all on maneuvers as he led bull sessions on religion, sex, politics and Army SNAFU's in a realistic, frank and liberal-minded manner. Never too busy to serve and advise, his blazing fire was one of the most popular in the area. Another favorite rendezvous was the post-problem PX, under the guidance of "money-belt" Buchanan, assisted by supersalesman Henry ("Have you tried Ruppert's"?) Van Dyke and Karl "Pappy" ("No, we haven't any") Haile. The PX was an enjoyable institution except when we had to paddle our way into it — and many a night "Charlie" found it better sleeping on the empty beer cases than to venture out into the sea of mud — a word synonymous with Tennessee. If it wasn't freezing or raining, it was muddy-and all the slushy, brown stuff in the world seemed to have settled in our maneuver area. Most of us were spending our 2nd Christmas in the Army, but there was little of the traditional Christmas cheer, as the battery was set up in a pasture that rain had long since turned into a brown quagmire. Miserable groups of men gathered about the kitchen flies, where Pete had spread sawdust and cardboard, only to see it slide into muddy oblivion as traffic washed his efforts away. It was wisely decided to have Christmas dinner in a church outside of Lebanon. Turkey and cranberry sauce were featured, graciously served by the church ladies. A good time was had by all, and lively singing was an added attraction.

New Years Day, and all of Tennessee was a quagmire - - with the rain still pouring down — as men nursed colds, hangovers and ate K-rations in their pup tents. Trucks were hub-cap deep in muck and traction was made extremely difficult as vehicles made good use of their winches.

Captain Robert E. Shearon, who had ably and efficiently led the battery thru the problems, called us together for an orientation session soon after New Years and divulged that "this is the last problem" (muffled sighs of relief!!) and Fort Bragg, N.C. would be our next destination. Flashbacks came of the events which had transpired the past few weeks — the SNAFU problem where we moved out of an area in motor convoy and came right back to the identical spot — the capture of the survey section and the ignominious black flag they were forced to display — the time we had the enemy within rifle range across the next field with radio operators and even cooks

fanned out, under cover, to "pick off a few" — the towns like Murfreesboro, Payne's Store, West Moreland, and Bowling Green, Ky. After learning to live and fight in the field, the Century Division moved out in mid-January from the maneuver area, recalling the words General McArthur had inscribed upon the walls of the West Point gymnasium when he was superintendant there some years ago — "upon these fields of friendly strife are sown the seeds which in future days, on other fields, will bear the fruits of victory".

Leaving the wilds of Tennessee on Jan 15, 1944, the 400 mile motor march to Ft. Bragg, N.C., took us thru Cookeville, Shelby (where they opened the

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*Cpl. Smith and Pvt. Spence at DP Camp in Gmund*

movie theatre for us even though it was Sunday), and the beautiful Smoky Mts followed by the kaleidoscopic views of scenery near Asheville, N.C.

Came the looming water tower and other landmarks of "Division Area", as we once more settled down to the comparative comfort enjoyed by garrison soldiers. The transition from pup-tents and slit trenches to beds, sheets, showers, and a mess hall was accepted with youthful exuberance, and almost-forgotten luxuries such as PX's, service clubs, chapels, day-rooms, and recreation halls, were reconnoitered gleefully. Ethel ("The Eye") of PX 19 was to become a comrade to few, and "friendly enemy" of most — as she swore at us, flung us our change — and splattered us with a milkshake — all the time looking

at the guy standing next to us! Headquarters Battery usually opened and closed the beer bar with Odis, Eddie, "Moontinkle", McManus, Rouss, Frawley, McGrotha, Haney, Chang, Repass, Sandy, Pete, Frank, and Ralph Bochino being swept out with the Dixie cups nightly — then retiring to the day-room steps. Immediately after payday, the day-room was very popular with the pursuers of Lady Luck, who insisted on decorating the new furniture with cigarette traces, much to the chagrin of Jimmy ("are my ribbons showing"?) Serritella.

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*M/Sgt. Tull*

Here at Bragg, the Division passed over to the jurisdiction of the XIII Corps and the Headquarters Battery program was a review of basic training — analyzing and remedying the deficiencies noted during Winter maneuvers. All section equipment was cleaned, repaired and reserviced for further use. Full field displays in front of pitched shelter-halves were made on the ball field behind the chapel and individual deficiencies and shortages corrected. Firing of qualification, familiarization, and transition courses was completed by all men. Every man went over the infiltration course under a hail of live machine gun fire, both in the day-time and in the dark of a night lit up by sporadic tracer bullets. Field sanitation, combat intelligence, mine school,



booby traps, malaria control — these were typical subjects covered in the post-maneuver training.

Long-awaited furloughs came to many men at Bragg (the cycle had begun when the first furloughees took off from the maneuver area) and the “Tamiami Champion” carried most of the boys northward, there to spin for the home folks, tales concerning the rigors of the Winter in Tennessee. To those less fortunate, there was always the “Town Pump”, the most famous (or infamous) gin mill in Carolina, easily accessible with Main Post-Division

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*Chaplin Wright*

area busses. And along more aesthetic lines there were dances at the Anderson & Hay Street USO's, and concerts in Raleigh. The “cavaliers” enjoyed the company of Southern beauties in neighboring towns such as Dunn, Raleigh, Sanford, and High Point. Ray Hayes, Joe Reynolds and Conrad found a “home away from home” in Miss Burns’ tourist cabin at White Lake, later to be the scene of an enjoyable battery party, when we eventually found the place!!

On May 25th, the Division was transferred to XVIII Corps. But despite the transfer, the Battery participated from that date until June 2nd in the XIII Corps Command Post exercises, conducted at the AP Hill Military Reservation in Virginia. Bill Horton was acting 1st Sgt. and Henry Van Dyke was

supply Sgt. The group had advanced training in the field and tapered off with passes to Washington, D.C. — only 50 miles away — at a time when non-fraternization meant refusing to join a men's club! Upon its return to Ft. Bragg, the AP Hillers settled down to the routine of Preparation for Overseas Movement- popularized as POM.

June — and Carolina's torrid heat brought the battery a greatly appreciated respite from the humidity, as we used Myrtle Beach, S.C. for a combined training area and sea-shore playground. A famous Atlantic coastal resort, the Beach offered much in the way of enjoyment — amusement parks, salt-water bathing — swank hotels and all the accoutrements of a sea-side rest. The battalions conducted several service practices, "digging in" on the beach and firing at towed targets on the water, recording periodic direct hits to thrill the on-lookers. The "battery street" of tents was a component of our formal camp, and though orderly and neat-looking in daylight, caused many a curse to be muttered as we stumbled over tent ropes or crawled into the wrong "sack" when returning from a dance in Conway, S.C. or Myrtle Beach. Leaving this Atlantic playground with pleasant memories and a chuckle from the famous Sandoval-Repass disappearing act, we returned to the heat of Ft. Bragg. Training had become repetitious and we sometimes raked pine needles from the battery street or listened to Roy Evans' renditions of "You Are My Sunshine" and "Take Me Back and Try me One More Time".

During our stay at Bragg, the battery, representing approximately 100 men, distinguished itself in winning laurels on the fields of sport, often besting teams representing entire battalions. This was particularly true of our crack basketball team — which in the late winter of 1944 won the Gold League championship against competition from Special Troops teams. This team later lost out in the semi-finals of the Division Championship, finally succumbing to the 399th Infantry Regiment's powerhouse in a hotly contested game, the outcome of which was in doubt up to the final whistle. Personnel of the "hoop" team, coached by Lt. James ("Full o' Pep") Robinson, who later left for the Paratroopers, included Jeff Oliver, Ted Vinick, Joe Reynolds & Neil Gallo as forwards — Conrad Normandeau at center — with "Lightning" Hayes and reliable Mike McAndrews running mates at the guard slots. The latter two were spelled by Tommy Farlow, "Boulder" Frawley and "Rock" Rouss. In baseball, the names of Jim Shea, a slugging outfielder and Jeff Oliver, a flashy infielder, stand out, as Headquarters Battery, Division Artillery was repre-

*T/Sgt. Lukach "At Ease"*

sented by these two men out of the 9 first-stringers on the Century horsehide aggregation. In volley-ball, our battery team reached the Division semi-finals against 398th Infantry Regiment, with Oliver, Normandeau, Vinick and Mac as mainstays — along with Palmer, Spicer, and Giffi, Outstanding devotees of the old Scottish game included Angelo ("The Lord") Cortozzo, Eddie Braud, Harvey Zoecklein, Andy Lukach, Stig Meden, Bill Horton, and Joe Rogillio. These men racked up many pars at both the officers' and EM courses on the Bragg Reservation — with Jack Labarre, the patient, hacking duffer, finally giving up and turning caddie.

Thanks to the efforts of General Murphy, to whom the enlisted men's welfare was paramount, Division Artillery had a dance orchestra. Its members were weaned from musical infancy by the patient efforts of hard-working Ronnie Kemper. "The Kemp" is a gifted composer and vocalist in his own right, formerly with such name outfits as Dick Jurgens and Horace Heidt. He rounded into shape a group of musicians greatly in demand for "jobs" at NCO clubs, officer's parties and small combo sessions, thus helping to alleviate the monotony of a garrison existence.

Another feature of "extra-curricular" activities at Bragg was the printing of a small paper within the outfit, "The Div Arty Ash & Trash". The sheet

proved to be a lively source of news and humor and the staff composed of Vinick, Krieger, R.W. Smith, Bourret and Zoecklein, were well compensated for their efforts by the interest of the men.

Fort Fisher, outside of Wilmington, N.C., was to be the environs for .50 caliber MG classes attended by several men from each section of the battery. The group led by Lt. James Wells, had both classroom theory and practice-firing on the sand and out on the ocean — and brought their knowledge back to the other members of the battery who heard many pointers about assembly, disassembly, stoppages and operation of the .50 caliber machine gun.

Following the return from Myrtle Beach, the last field problems before POE were held, as the battalions breezed thru Corps and Army firing tests and conducted demonstrations for visiting dignitaries, newsmen, and WD officials. "O'D", "Doorknob" and Scotty buried the switchboard in the sand of Ft. Bragg for the last time and it was evident that all sections had acquired the confidence and efficiency that results from practice and repetition. At this time there was a change in Headquarters Division Artillery officer personnel — Lt. Col. Walter L. DeLange replaced Colonel Henry Holt, who was transferred to another assignment. Major Arley L. Outland replaced Major Jay Katz, who was also transferred. Another change was in the S-3 position — now filled by Lt. Col. (then Major) Harry M. Feigin. The former S-3, Lt. Col. (then Major) Keithley became battalion commander of the 373rd FA Bn.

New officer personnel in the battery during POM included Lts. Sharpe and Puryear, but it was a brief stay for both, as they transferred to other units. Before POE, Jack LaBarre left us to attend O.C.S. It was during our final training that the predominant expression among the rumor-mongers was to the effect that "this outfit will never go overseas". They cited as evidence the fact that so many men had gone to POE previously from the Infantry and new green replacements and ASTP returnees had entered the Division. Furthermore, we all took a good-natured ribbing about our status as "home guard" when the 100th participated in a multitude of parades, reviews and even had our "New York Battalion" march down 5th Avenue as a feature of Infantry Day in Gotham during a War Loan Drive.

By this time, the suspicion that the Preparation for Overseas Movement was more than a mere formality began to find foundation. In August, with POM requirements completed, the battery sent selected officers and men to attend packing and crating schools. Then began the mighty task of water-

*Fort Bragg from the air.*

proofing, packing, and loading the mass of equipment and material necessary for the functioning of a Division Artillery Headquarters and Headquarters Battery. CWO Sager's invariable question during the packing of TAT equipment was "has anybody seen Meden?" — and Stig did his usual efficient job, supervising the listing, packing, and re-checking of each "TAT" box. Then after the packing and processing, showdown inspections were held and personal equipment was checked. On rainy September 28th, packs on our back, we said farewell to Mary, Ethel, and Shorty at PX 19, and marched down in the gloomy drizzle to the railroad siding near the Special Troops ball diamond. The band played martial music which seemed a bit foreboding as we realized what it meant to leave a training camp for POE. Mental flashbacks and recapitulations were made — it had been an instructive 23 months — and we now marched with a gait and confidence not unlike the Hollywood version of a soldier. We thought of the fellows we were leaving behind — Irv Krupnick, Joel Bates, George Barnes, Henry Newton, and those who had transferred out earlier — "Goodie", Eddie Ritz, Pop Watson, "Charlie", Kwartowitz, Bill Brady, "Joe Gag", Don Hoyte, Lou Beconovich and many others. We remembered Charlie Santa's love-lorn WAC, Pete Dierikx's prize-winning rolls, foot lockers, wall lockers, "ash & trash" old

latrines, sumps, and KP! New men who joined the outfit before we left for POE included Friend Hasenkamp, Bob Long, Dick Hegger, "Hook" Norton and "Schnapps" Spence.

The train whizzed past the cotton fields and brought us up to the sector from which most of us had come 23 months before, POE, which we had talked about in jest for so long was now a reality, and walking around Camp Kilmer, New Jersey with time hanging heavy on our hands gave us the sort of restless, nervous sensation you experience before "the big game" or a public-speaking engagement. The finest equipment was issued — the Division having been given complete new paraphernalia — shoe packs, ski socks, sweaters and related items. Last minute salvages were made and everyone's duffle bag was in A-1 order for the many showdowns which ensued; the most ironical situation came when for the grand finale of inspections to end all inspections — (which had been advertised as a serious thorough check for excess personal equipment and unauthorized items, to be conducted by a Colonel from QM) — instead a Pfc. entered the barracks, checked our tent-poles for serviceability and walked out! The physical was even more perfunctory, as Albert York, who insisted he wouldn't make the grade because of poor eyesight, missed the foot bath as the line was accelerated to make way for the others! There was no point in our stripping, for if we demonstrated ability to walk in under our own power, we were accepted! New gas masks were fitted, we sniffed chlorine for the last time, they "shot" us with tetanus, and we had practical training in "abandon ship" drill. During the five days we were at Kilmer, leisure time was abundant and we whiled away the free hours in the liberally-stocked PX, made phone calls home ("can't tell where I am, Mom"), listened to the world series, went to USO shows or played pitch and catch. Unfortunately, we were one of the last outfits in the Division to reach POE, so our time in New York City for passes was greatly curtailed; most of the battery managed to get into Gotham two evenings while we were there. To the lads from the Southern states Manhattan was a H-U-G-E place filled with never-ceasing wonders. The boys who lived in New York or Jersey bade adieu to their loved ones and on the evening of October 5th we trudged with our weighty pack and duffle bag a short distance to the Jersey Ferry after a train ride from nearby Kilmer. The mental strain of the recent events plus the shoulder-biting packs induced many to stretch out and doze off while resting on the ferry. Soon we were at the gangplank of the sturdy ship which was

to transport us to another continent — a land where our comrades-in-arms had been exterminating Krauts since the D-Day invasion of Normandy the previous June.

The transportation officer at the foot of the gangplank, with the sailing list, spoke our last names and we echoed with our first and the middle initial; as Ralph Bochino later laughingly related, he wasn't sure whether or not the Army would really accept him for overseas duty, "but when the men said B o c h i n o and I replied "R a l p h F". I knew they weren't kidding"! Refreshed by the "coffee and" which had been served us at the dock by motherly Red

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*Capt. Walters, Maj. Murphy*

Cross women in natty blue uniforms — we got settled in our bunks and began to regard the physical surroundings of the boat which was to be our ocean-going home for two weeks. The "USS General Gordon", manned by the Coast Guard and staffed by the Army Transportation Corps, had been completely renovated after a number of crossings, and transformed into a first-class troop transport; most of the 5,000 men aboard were quartered in the hold where the bunks were three tiers high. Our battery was fortunate enough to be accommodated in comfortable state-rooms, where ten or twelve men had the convenience of tables, lights, mirrors, sinks and new-type doubledecker bunks. Remaining docked the night of 5th Oct, the "Gordon" eased out of

New York harbor the morning of Oct 6th, and we were on our way — exact destination as yet unknown. Life aboard transport was interesting for us because of its novelty — yet we as ground troops wondered how the Coast Guardsmen survived the monotony of their small world — the ship. Security and blackout regulations were strictly enforced and the “smoking lamp was out” meant to keep the butts away from the hatches. Because of the cramped quarters and the large number of personnel aboard, meals came but twice a day — except for the privileged characters whose “special details” entitled them to three! Other gastromic subterfuges included volunteering for KP so

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#### *Major Outland*

you could smuggle food up from the galley and we sometime wonder if the medical issue of lemons and saltine crackers authorized for our cases of Mal de Mer was commensurate with the true number of cases. (Incidentally, we tried it ourself!)

Getting our sea legs proved to be a difficult and dangerous pastime — as we rolled and tossed in bed, during calisthenics, while eating chow, or when we attempted to walk around. Some of the lads “fed the fishes” over the rail periodically, and the ballet dances accomplished while negotiating a star-board glide gave rise to the expression “Swing and Sway the Gordon Way”. Practice boat drills were held and we learned the position of our assigned companionway, with the ever-present life preserver and flashlight within



reach at all times. The Coast Guardsmen amazed us with their quick and efficient response to "dry runs" for "battle station" and we came to respect their marksmanship during pom-pom gun crew practice. Impressions of topside will stay with us — for there on calm days one encountered an obstacle course which took the form of a sprawling mass of legs, arms and bodies. Men were engaged in reading, writing, card-playing or just plain dozing. We recall a devout group of men praying on their knees at Catholic mass on the upper deck, while on the deck beneath men were also on their knees but this time to fling the obstinate ivories! French classes (for after a few days we were told our destination was Southern France) lent variety as did the movies and soldier shows sponsored by the Chaplain and M.C.'d by the Coast Guardsmen. To say that we had no anxious moments during the voyage would be false, for we experienced a mid-Atlantic storm of near-hurricane velocity — the worst in years; then too there was the large floating mine spotted just off our bow; the burning tanker we sighted — the averted collision with the "Monticello", one of our sister ships in the convoy; and the passengers who thought they envisioned the proverbial U-boat periscope, which was never verified. There was hardly any need for anxiety, for our large convoy was well protected with destroyers, and an aircraft carrier floated nearby. Passing through the Straits of Gibraltar, we viewed the famous "Rock", and the never-to-be-forgotten panoramic scenery as dusk and a salmon-pink horizon highlighted the illuminated city of Tangiers, Morocco on our right and the Spanish Main to our left. Here we were at the crossroads of two continents as we entered the Mediterranean — Africa on one side and Europe on the other — with no one cognizant of the fact that a Nazi airfield was within 20 minutes flying time of us! On the morning of October 20th, the shores of Southern France were sighted with the picturesque Chateau D'IF, immortalized in Dumas' "Count of Monte Christo", prominent in the debris-filled harbor of Marseille. That afternoon, as tiny tugs and barges met the transports, the "Gordon" sidled in and swung its vast hulk alongside the demolished pier, as we debarked across a scuttled ship. Our convoy was the first to make a landing at France's largest seaport since the area had been liberated. At the dock, we viewed the effects of war for the first time — long lines of Kraut PWs filing into barbed wire enclosures along the beach — bombed and devastated areas — ruined buildings — damaged installations — and the strange atmosphere of a city's crumbled walls, which almost seemed to whisper a story

of past action in that very spot. Now, as we alighted, well-equipped and mentally alert, we saw some of our comrades-in-arms, who had been holding the Kraut at bay — a group of ex-Anzio Paratroopers, gaunt, unshaven, dejected and grimy, yet with the cockiness and independent air that comes from being a doughboy. It was evident they had jettisoned most of their equipment down to the bare necessities — a weapon, a messkit, musette bag, and some clothing. They stared at us as we started up the road, our full packs an ironical contrast to the small sacks of the seasoned warrior — and there was

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*Francis Zero*

more than sardonic humor in their goodnatured taunts at us such as “go on home boys, the war’s over now“! The tenmile hike to the Delta Base Staging Area, at a gruelling pace, proved to be a formidable physical challenge; we tired rapidly due to the general inactivity aboard ship — the seasickness — plus the burden of a heavy pack whose straps seemed to be cutting furrows in our shoulders. The appearance of a “Becheck Charlie“ Nazi plane overhead and the ensuing blackout and ack-ack flashing through the air, did not make things easier. But the realization that this was “for keeps“ spurred the men on and there were only a few stragglers when the Headquarters Battery men, perspiring and exhausted, reached what was to be the battery area in a patch of woods outside of Septèmes, France.

The Division Artillery men had “been around” in Carolina and Tennessee — now in this new strange land of France, we soon became acclimated to the unfamiliar money, people, customs, language, and muck which was “kid stuff” after the muddy terrain of maneuvers. We surreptitiously made trades with the civilians who were sick of eating potato soup, brown bread and drinking “vino”; just as eagerly as they wolfed our “très bien” K-rations and spam — did we also find red wine and French bread wonderfully alluring. The plaintive inquiries from the mouths of scrawny kids for “une cigarette pour Papa,

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*Lt. Col. Feigin*

Monsieur”, or “un peu chocolat s’il vous plait”, attested to the misery France had undergone in her tragic defeat. The little ragged tykes waiting with the tin buckets around our chow line were a pathetic sight, and many a GI went back for seconds even though obviously satiated himself!

Nearby towns were explored — Aix being the “down the road a piece” hamlet — offering the proverbial wine, women and song. We were able to ride into Marseille a few times and saw the effect of war upon a once-gay metropolis, now dim and eerie. The only establishments open were the ubiquitous wine bistros and cafes. Devastation was evident everywhere with rubble piled high — and in the moonlight there was something ghostlike about the walls of the wrecked buildings, bizarre and grotesque in their

distorted loneliness. Down along the waterfront, the melting pot that is Marseille poured forth its daily polyglot of Italians, French, Spaniards, soldiers of many nations, Corsicans, and the omnipresent "filles de Joie" who catered to all the foregoing, as they solicited companionship along the Rue Canibiere.

In the staging area, there was plenty of work to be accomplished — unpacking the hundreds of boxes of specialist equipment and preparing it for use, as Joe Mirabel and Van can well bear out from the supply angle. Servicing vehicles and putting them into proper condition for the rugged grind that

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*Kaput Tank near Gmund*

lay ahead at the front lines, 400 miles away, was the task of Gerold Cook and his able crew. Most of us found ourselves working the "swing shift" on the docks at Marseilles; here we helped unload the huge Liberty Ships bulging to the gunwhales with precious ammo, food, parts, vehicles and other equipment which was the logistical key that later locked the Germans in our grasp. "Taking ten", we clambered aboard the ships and compared notes over steaming java with Merchant Marines and other seafaring men. Here at the docks, one could get an idea of the vast magnitude and scope of our war effort — and you suddenly felt proud inwardly to be "over here", and a part, even though a small cog, in the gigantic American Expeditionary Force!

We were not destined to remain in the staging area long, for urgent necessity required an accelerated move to the front; Seventh Army and its

three Infantry Divisions — the 3rd, 36th, and 45th — which had hit the landing beaches in Southern France and raced the Boche all the way up to the Belfort Gap from Normandy, were tired. The doughs who had slogged from the Riviera to the Vosges Mountains — not to mention Africa, Sicily, Salerno and Anzio — needed a rest. There was urgent demand for fresh troops to crack through the Nazis' strong natural defenses in the thick forest of the Vosges and break out into the Alsace plain. The 100th was the first reinforcement to appear for Seventh Army — and after an inspection by General

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#### SUPPLY

*Cpl. Minogue, T/S Cherullo, S/Sgt. Van Dyke — Missing: S/Sgt. Mirabel*

Jacob L. Devers, one combat team (399th Infantry Regiment and 925th FA Bn) was ordered to be ready to go into the line by the first of November. Thus, on Nov. 1, 1944, following a three-day motor movement to the front, Headquarters Battery arrived at Housseras, France to set up its first combat CP installation — exactly 12 days after we had landed in France — as fast a transition as any outfit ever made from boat to combat. We moved to nearby St. Benoit on Nov. 3, as General John B. Murphy, the hard riding Kentuckian, gave his artillery battalion commanders last minute briefing on the tactical plan. Up till now, the 399th Infantry (which had relieved the 179th Inf. Regt., 45th Division) was the only outfit on the line, but on the morning of Nov. 9, after sitting in the previous night with the CP personnel of the 45th (Thunder-

bird) men in Rambervillers, we were ready to relieve them completely. We did so when the 100th assumed full control at 0600 of its portion of the VI Corps front. From this date until late March, 1945, the Century was in contact with the enemy, finally establishing a record of 146 consecutive days on the line, an unprecedented period of commital for an outfit new to combat.

The 100th Division, after only 3 days of combat experience jumped off on November 12th, as part of the Seventh Army's gigantic Winter offensive. The mission was to attack the flank of the proposed Winter Line along the Meurthe

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*Destroyed Bridge over the Blue Danube near Ulm*

river, throwing the enemy off balance and weakening the center of the German line during the reshuffling of their forces. After the 397th and 399th combat teams had crossed the river at Baccarat the VI Corps plan called for them moving abreast, to clear the Northern side of the Meurthe River and drive along it toward Raon L'Etape, key supply and communications center. The muddy, densely-wooded heights of the Vosges Mountains offered the Century dough-foot little opportunity for rest or comfort as troops alien to combat had not only the elements and enemy fire to contend with, but insidious Nazis mine-fields and booby traps planted at innocuous-looking vantage points. Regardless of the price in casualties, the doughs inched ahead and following bitter clashes for hills bristling with gun emplacements and enemy automatic weapons, they

occupied most of the high ground overlooking Raon L'Etape. To accomplish this mission there had been the strength-taxing ordeals of evacuating wounded, hauling up ammunition and just plain sitting, waiting, freezing and shooting. Then when the 1st Battalion, 398th Infantry finally attained the heights of Hill 462.5, Nazi resistance was broken — we had breached the enemy defensive line and now had observation and field of fire over the entire area. The Germans were forced to withdraw from their dug-in positions as the 100th celebrated the 2nd anniversary of its activation Nov. 15 by surging forward

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*Capt. Smiley*

again. The way now was open for the VI Corps to cross the Meurthe and fan out, driving toward the Alsatian Plain. Although we had not seen the enemy face to face and our communication system necessarily functioned only in support of the courageous doughs—the men of Headquarters Battery felt the proximity of the war — while at Housseras and St. Benoit — as the flashes of artillery pieces were visible on the horizon and their reverberation came drifting in with the Winter wind. It was at St. Benoit that we ran into an old buddy from Fort Bragg days, Hughes Sharpe, who had since been wounded and awarded the Purple Heart and Bronze Star.

While the Division mission was outlined in military parlance as the taking of towns, seizing of high ground and breaching of fortifications, to the individual men of Headquarters Battery, the “big war” out there was temporarily

lost sight of as we worked hard and long at our specialist jobs; but these little cogs were the stuff of which the juggernaut was fashioned — the machine of men, ammunition, food, water and mud which rolled on to register “gains of a mile” or “10 miles” — “cross rivers” — “liberate towns” — and “crush resistance”. We thought in terms of Bill Spicer’s guard roster — “the Fringe line is out, number 3 crew check it” — or important, secret radio messages that had to be transmitted verbatim to the gun batteries. It was only when we were periodically oriented by Major Arley L. Outland, the S-2, or heard

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*Div. Arty C P Sign*

bad news such as the death of Col. Wm. A. Ellis, 397th CO and the wounding of Lt. Col. Allan Clarke, 925th B. CO, or the loss of the 375 Bn. gun section - - that the war “up there” reared its bloody head and made us double our efforts. For then we realized the importance of our seemingly minor roles on the Division team. Another close call came while we were at Baccarat and heard that Lt. Wilson, the Comm O up ahead at Raon L’Etape on reconnaissance with Major Ireland, had been wounded in the leg by sniper fire. The injury was not serious, however, and he soon returned to the task of outlining wire routes for the crews. In the lighter vein, Baccarat, the glassware town, was to serve as the inspiration for a new war tune when the song — writing duo of Charlie Phelps and Ronnie Kemper brightened things up with a catchy hit entitled “I’m Going Back-Back-Back-to Baccarat“!



Most strategy in warfare is mapped out in commander's shelters called Command Posts, abbreviated as C.P. Throughout combat, Headquarters Battery was the complement to and right arm of the C.P. — the channel through which communications and complete coordination of the four organic battalions of Division Artillery were effected. Under the overall command of General Murphy and his executive, Colonel Walter DeLange, our four battalions, 373, 374, 375, 925 (whose code names were "Fraser", "Fragment", "Frog", & "Fringe") were effectively wielded in direct support of the infantry regiments.

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*Folies Bergere*

Often attached units like the 250th FA Bn ("Cocoanut") joined us and we called upon Corps outfits for the "big stuff" — 8-inchers, 240 howitzers — when our forward ground observers and cub planes spotted suitable targets. Our S-3, Lt. Col. Harry Feigin (assisted by Major Richard King, Capt. J. W. Smith and Capt. Davis Piper) was the man who estimated the enemy situation upon reports from the S-2 and the FO's; consolidating all this information into "targets for tonight" was a large order and these officers worked relentlessly, planning and then delegating to the guns which could fire them — missions such as rolling barrages to precede a doughboy "jumpoff" — harassing fires on Kraut trucks, "chow lines", tanks, machine gun positions — interdiction of enemy-held road junctions, main supply routes and assembly areas. Before the gun batteries could unleash their "automatic howitzers", plans had to be

well coordinated; and the officers in the S-3 section had valuable assistance in drawing up data thru the work of the men in the operations section. Under Eddie Braud's leadership — Harvey Zoecklein, Bill Hahn, Ted Vinick and Paul Tannery worked eight hour shifts on a round-the-clock basis, preparing fire plans, drawing up lists of targets for the guns to smash, encoding and decoding messages and maintaining the vital "no fire line" which showed us where our Infantry troops were deployed at the current moment. Major Outland's S-2 Section, consisting of Capt. Zimmermann and Tommy Farlow, (later Lt.) collected and coordinated the information and intelligence which helped to decide where firepower would be placed. No amount of kidding or debunking the size of their ships can detract from the amazingly efficient job accomplished by Major (then Captain) Murphy's little L-4 Artillery Liaison planes — the "eyes of the artillery" which accurately located enemy targets and with the aid of two-way radio, directed and adjusted fire on such things as "50 Krauts in a draw, coordinates - - - -", "3 tanks hiding in woods behind ridge" or "flashes spotted from enemy 88's at coordinates 852-034".

Having taken the key city of Raon L'Etape, after encountering mines and considerable enemy sniper activity — the Division moved fast to press its advantage over the disorganized Krauts — now definitely on the run. Task forces and spearheads swept up the Rabodeau River Valley - - through Moyonmoutier, Senones, Belval, St. Blaise (the town where Major Leo Feichtner, Division Artillery Surgeon, delivered his first "combat baby", assisted by Mal Cornish as midwife). Gains of ten to twelve kilometers a day were registered as our wire crews and the survey section repeatedly came under mortar fire and strafing, while they sought to keep communications open. Carl Tull and Jeff Oliver conscientiously directed the repair of vital wire lines which had been ruptured by enemy artillery action, and the perseverance of the "tag, test and tie" boys enabled the fire plans and directions to reach the gun chiefs at the howitzer telephones.

At St. Blaise the 100th made a juncture with the 3rd Infantry Division as they both began a race up the Breusch River Valley. The 399th Infantry Regiment swarmed into the key town of Schirmeck and the threat of a possible German counterattack against our wide-spread forces was eliminated. Then on Nov. 26, the Division received orders to reassemble at Raon L'Etape in preparation for transfer north to the toughest part of the XV Corps sector - - - and Bitche!

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*Russian DP Camp at Gmund*

In recognition of his leadership in the Division's drive through the Vosges, General Burress was awarded the Bronze Star by Major General Edward H. Brooks, VI Corps Commander. Indicative of the action, the commandation stated that "General Burress' vigorous leadership and skillful execution of the

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*Maj. Gen. Burress awarding Bronze Stars to T/Sgt. Butfilowski, M/Sgt. Zoecklein,  
Cpl. Beilhart, T/5 Julius*

100th Division drive through terrain previously regarded as virtually impregnable, reflect great credit upon himself and the military service". Retracing our steps, the battery returned to Raon L'Etape and the "Hotel de Vosges" for a one-night stand and ate Thanksgiving dinner there. By now, the familiar pattern of loading and unloading section equipment and personal impedimenta was a matter-of-course; we arrived at new towns, set up a CP and each section chose a spot appropriate for its operations, as the reliable generators, faithfully maintained by Reynolds Burrington, provided artificial light

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*Capt. Piper*

for 24-hour functioning. Previous to any one move, a reconnaissance party let by Major Ireland and usually consisting of Lt. Wilson, Bill Spicer, Ray Hayes as driver, and Conrad Normandeau, Frank Young and Ted Vinick as novice French interpreter — struck out ahead to select installations and earmark them for the subsequent arrival of the battery. Thanks to Major Ireland's foresight and resourcefulness, the battery always had adequate shelter and accommodations.

Motor convoy took us from Raon L'Etape to Saarburg, where we remained in XV Corps reserve for several days, having learned that the mission of the 100th — this time one of the most difficult in the ETO—was to drive northeast and break the formidable Maginot Line near Bitche, the heart of the enemy's fortification system. In rest at Saarburg, we had an opportunity to relax a

#### WIRE SECTION

*Back Row: T/5 York, Pfc. Hansen — Middle Row: M/Sgt. Tull, Pvt. McCoy, T/5 Normen-  
dau, Pfc. Hasencamp, Pfc. Presseisen — Front Row: Cpl. Arnold, Pfc. Childress, T/5 Sepe*

#### MOTORS

*T/5 Walton, T/5 Hayes, S/Sgt. Cook — Missing: T/5 Santa, T/4 Moose, T/Sandoval,  
T/5 Mixon, T/5 Repass*

bit, while the indefatigable doughboys in their "rest", trained for "attacks on a fortified locality"! Comfortably installed in Pete Pazinko's new mess at Saarburt, an authentic Gasthaus attached to a large hotel, the battery enjoyed PX rations, our first beer from the States (Rupperts-OK Van?) and the long-time-no-hear voice of Ralph Bochino, just in from changing a tire on his AOP jeep! Other activities included reading and writing—the former not so much for its intrinsic value, but mainly because the American soldier's existence is "90% monotony", as someone once quoted, and he reads to while away the waiting hours. The mail of course, is the best institution in the Army, even ranking one notch above chow, for GI's are still "civilian soldiers" at best and the link with loved ones at home is all-important. Men have been known to act very strangely in their anxiety over mail; our perpetual inquiries were directed at the hard-working mailmen — Frank Young, Frank Reilly, Neil Gallo, and Mike McAndrews — master psychologists and students of human nature whose shack was always a popular hangout. In writing letters home, we utilized candlelight, flashlights, carbide lamps, and light supplied by generators — for we learned that you 've "got to write 'em to receive 'em" — although the folks back home will never understand why our correspondence sometimes lapsed. Thus, at Saarburt we had a chance to catch our breath — especially the workhorses of the 2½ ton, jeep and C & R, — Sepe, Hayes, Julius & Giffi, — who now could feel their way along roads during blackout practically by instinct alone. Every driver in the battery deserves commendation — they did their job, not being able to take time out for proper vehicle maintenance — somehow contriving to keep trucks rolling thru rain, mud, snow, and blackout. As communications is the heart of Artillery — AOP its eyes — so are trucks the Artillery's feet!

Leaving Saarburt, the battery cut up through Phalsbourg to Vescheim, a small rural hamlet mainly remembered because it was the first community where the populace spoke German predominately. We were now in the strange geographical riddle that is Alsace Lorraine, whose people's sympathies have transferred from France to Germany and back again like a political football; now claiming allegiance to France, they spoke German!

The fighting in front of the ancient bastion of Bitche was extremely rugged, as right on the heels of the doughboys, Division Artillery successively occupied the towns of La Petite Pierre and Wingen, which had been stoutly defended by the Germans.

Through all our movements there was evident the ingenuity of the American soldier — as he fashioned himself a comfortable temporary home wherever he happened to be. To the GI, there is a distinct line of demarcation between looting and scrounging (or “moonglight requisitioning”). Looting is the wanton stealing of valuables, articles which evacuees leave behind when they move out hastily. On the otherhand, the average GI, like soldiers of all armies, scrounges and “liberates” things which make life in combat a little more tolerable. Thus, since we were in buildings most of the time — furniture, stoves,

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#### RADIO

*T/4 Caponigro, S/Sgt. Anderson, T/4 Knauff, T/4 Bragers  
Missing: Pfc. Nichols, S/Sgt. Bromfield, T/5 Fray*

lamps, and padding for bed rolls were “acquired” and it was not uncommon to see five or six stovepipes obtrusively poking out of a small building. It was in these temporary homes that the Division Artymen passed much of the monotony of war, taking perfunctory helmet baths, occasionally shaving, reading, writing, playing cards, and talking about women, sex, religion, politics and women!

After the 3rd Bn. 399th had taken Wingen (near here at Struth, Ed. Huber, Jim Gately and Don Stewart at a F S Central had come under 88 shell fire) — the advance continued, as Goetzenbruck and Sarreinsberg were successively taken. Then the Infantry ran into a stone wall of German resistance when it

reached Lemberg; after a bitter 4-day struggle with plenty of our artillery poured in to decimate the dogged Nazis, the 399th "Franklin" men on Dec. 8 completed occupation and mopping up of Lemberg after fierce house-to-house fighting. Following Lemberg's fall, the 398th passed thru the 399th and moved northward toward Bitche and the Maginot line to carry the brunt of the Division's attack. The 397th continued to drive east abreast of the 398th.

Bitche was a natural fortress — the system of fortifications never before had surrendered. Even in 1940 the French had held out there until the armis-

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*Montbronn Chow Line, T/5 Cronin, Sgt. Vinick; S/Sgt. Kreiger,  
T/Sgt. Lukach, T/5 McAndrews*

tice was signed. High walls commanded the famous valley town — and into these hills had been built the four strongest forts on the Maginot Line. In addition, several smaller ones, pillbox forts, filled the gaps between the larger installations. The main forts consisted of separate casemates connected by underground tunnels and in the center of town was the vast citadel built in the 1600's by King Louis XIV of France; the steep walls of this edifice were of thick reinforced stone and installations five and six stories underground were ventilated by air ducts reaching up to the surface. The Nazis were determined to defend Bitche and when this became apparent, it was evident also that the American troops would have to unleash the full force of all their power, and battle fiercely for this coveted strongpoint.



Our Artillery and the 8-inchers and 240's of Corps Arty were brought up to pulverize the concrete casemates. But the four feet-thick concrete cupolas with seven-inch steel doors and gun turrets ignored the explosives, as our FO's saw some of the shells ricochet from the casemates and explode in the air! After Air Corps Thunderbolts dropped 500-pound bombs on the targets, M-12, 155 mm "Long-Toms" were moved up to fire at point-blank range. That turned the trick, for the Germans had to stop firing and withdraw to underground portions of their casemates; this enabled the waiting doughfeet to

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*Sgt. Vinick*

charge forward under cover of our artillery and reach the blocks before enemy guns resumed firing. With the Engineers, they went to work, tossing grenades, using flame-throwers and dynamiting pillboxes, while our artillery blasted adjacent blocks to keep the Krauts buttoned up. Finally, after days of fierce combat, Schiesseck, the toughest fort of all, was neutralized on Dec. 20th. Now the Century troops occupied positions on the outskirts of the fortress city. This was as far as the 100th drive was destined to go, for Von Rundstedt's Ardennes offensive had gotten underway. The Third Army was ordered north to help repel the Nazi drive and the Seventh extended its front to take in the area vacated by General Patton's troops. The 100th shared in this general movement to the left as the Division was ordered to withdraw

to high ground to the south and establish better defensive positions. By Dec. 22nd the shifts were completed and the front became quiet.

Headquarters, Div Arty moved at this time from Sarreinsburg to Montbronn. For a week things were static except for occasional strafings and ensuing ack-ack. Christmas Day and New Years Eve were the soberest in years for most of us but the tranquillity was shattered at 0015 on New Years Day, when the German counter-offensive, rebuffed in the Ardennes, crashed the Seventh Army front, with the brunt aimed directly at the 100th Division sector. With both the right flank (near Wingen) — and the left flank (vicinity of Rimling and Petite Rederching) exposed, the Division hurriedly deployed troops to meet the altered situation and prevent a breakthrough. The battery moved from Montbronn to Lorenzen, there to better maintain artillery control and carry out prearranged fire plans to thwart the enemy's ambitious attacks. Here local security was intensified as we dug machine gun emplacements, doubled the guard on the alert for paratroopers, and generally developed adequate defense of the CP, should the enemy penetrate in depth. But such thrusts never developed and forgetting the freezing weather outside, the men of the battery enjoyed Special Service movies in the blacked-out "theatre" at the Lorenzen Brewery.

Periodic pushes by the Boches continued to be unsuccessful. When the major enemy effort begun January 8th and continuing unabated for 2 days, achieved only minor American withdrawals in the vicinity of Rimling, the Century's sector became relatively calm. With the end of the Nazi offensive, the 100th Division sector protruded ahead of all the rest of the Army line, the only Division on the entire Seventh Army front to hold its original ground.

For his leadership in stemming the Nazi tide, Major General Withers A. Burress, 100th Division Commander, was awarded an oak-leaf cluster to his Bronze Star, and the Division was commended by General Jacob L. Devers, Sixth Army Group Commander, who wrote:

"The rugged American stubbornness of the combat elements of the 100th Infantry Division has played a tremendous part in stemming the tide of attack by superior enemy numbers. In the area of Rimling, you successfully repulsed enemy attempts to penetrate your lines; your great accomplishment forced the enemy to give up offensive action on your front; inflicting great losses to strong elements of 3 enemy Divisions, you have successfully protected an important sector in the Hardt Mountains. When the force of the powerful

enemy drive carried him into a salient in the Bitche area, the prompt and effective extension of your lines to block his advance was a splendid example of skillful maneuver. I heartily commend all members of this Division for their outstanding achievements."

At the end of the German offensive, the 100th was ordered merely to hold its position, and fixed defensive installations were set up; operations became routine during this period of holding the Winter line, and preparation for the Allied Spring-time offensive began.

Headquarters Battery's next move on January 2nd was to entrench us for an extended stay back to our Winter hideout at Montbronn, the town filled with "Maries", wooden shoes, manure piles and chicken coops. This time we moved up the street, most of the sections and the CP being accommodated in two large school buildings. The radio section was still in the lower part of town, as the three 608 operators, "Bo" Bishop, "Hot-Cross" Bun, and Ronnie Kemper (who had accomplished quickly a difficult metamorphosis from musician to communications expert) — maintained alternate shifts on the set. The town of Montbronn suggests mud even more than Tennessee, and the rubberized-leather shoepacks we had received at Camp Kilmer, N.J., became SOP footgear. Mud seems to be a curse that saves itself for war — at least it appears that Europe is dry as a bone now that we have peace! The wiremen — Conrad Normandeau, "Feet" Fahey, Earl Beilhart, Jim Gately, Rouss, Robbie and Engel — among others — all labored to tie in the numerous lines with the CP and the maze of wire overhanging the street near the kitchen looked like a trapeze net for a circus! Here the sections found themselves semi-permanent homes and "dug in" for the Winter. The radio boys — Cappy, Nick, Andy, Al Fry, Joe, Kurt, Bragers, and their newest acquisition, Bill Alford, a veteran of Italy and Africa — still maintained a vigil on the sets as "Sidney the Brow" checked the situation periodically. The metro men under "Hydrogen Harry" Krieger and Andy Lukach kept the balloons flying as Walt Anderson, Dick Smith, Nelson Eliscu and Jack Bourret noted the wind's velocity and direction at various elevations, all-important information influencing the flight of a howitzer projectile. The data was then sent down to the men on the guns, who set off corrections on their instruments to allow for the metro data. Montbronn saw the addition of several new men to the outfit as Jack Eliscu and Eddie Vartan joined the group and new wiremen included Johnny Goldoly, Tony Grosso, Johnny Piersall and Irwin Swartz-

baugh. Most of the men in the wire section were sporting their new white parkas and "snow snoods" at this time, very practical protection against the elements, along with the wonderfully warm, pile-lined sleeping bags.

"Visitors" at the CP included Tommy Dan (when we could find him) and the two pop-inner-outers, Frank Syzmanski and Bill Howard, the General's right-hand men. They usually drove in with likeable Lt. Bill Campbell, General Murphy's aide, whose modest accomplishments in addition to his regular responsibility, included volunteering for forward observer jobs and winning golf tournaments.

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#### MESS

*Rear: T/5 Chang, T/4 Faller — Front: S/Sgt. Olszyk, T/4 Sutter, T/5 Gustafson  
Missing: S/Sgt. Pazinko, T/4 Dierriex*

Among the more popular rendezvous at Montbronn were Chico Cherullo's post-office and orderly room, and Chaplain Wright's bungalow, where his assistant, Ed "Paul" Cronin was always a gracious host — ready to console, encourage, kid, bull, and do all sorts of favors for the men. Dave Smith was on DS from the battery with Chaplain Nyberg at nearby 373rd FA Bn. Here at Montbronn the CP was located in one building which also included the medics and message center — while the other school building housed the supply, orderly room, wire crews and Irv Bell's surveyors. The survey driver was George Parenti, who had replaced "Count Zoot" Maietta; at Bragg, survey

had acquired new blood in the form of "Glendale Al" Palmer and Phil (later Lt.) Searle, the boy wonder of the log and trig tables. The kitchen was well established when we took over from Mr. A. Lett, whose Gasthaus was just the thing for Pete's culinary endeavors. To supplement the old reliables like Nunez, Alex, and Dierikx, other cooks at this time were hard-working Clayton Miller and George Kerstetter. The food — best by Division taste test — put out by this crew kept the men's spirits at a high pitch. As chief dispenser of the blue plates, Jonny Kissinger, jack of all trades — musician, metro operator, and maitre d'hotel did his usual commendable job.

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#### *Bridge at Mannheim*

The medics kept occupied at this stage mainly with oral hygiene as Capt. Bove, Division Artillery dentist, by his painstaking efforts improved the overall dental health of the Artillery to such an extent that reports showed 95% of DA to be in Class IV at the time. His assistant was Bill Roff at the "bicycle pedal" — always ready with the forceps and drill. Al Gaines was the medico at the airfield and every few weeks, he returned to the battery fold, along with Jesse Zeigler and Art Wehring, mechanics at the AOP. Of the other medics, Claude Littlejohn handled the driving chores and Mal Cornish began to prove more and more valuable as a German interpreter. Two of the "old-timers", Bill McBeth, and Dick Munz had left the section. Of course, Vic Butfilowski,

the former 1st Division man, was a permanent fixture at Francis 16 — his wit, common sense, and reliability being known and recognized by his many friends throughout the battalions.

It was at Montbronn that the S-1 and S-4 sections came into their own. DA Headquarters was designated as the office of the Town Commander of Montbronn and as Col. DeLange became Town Commander, so did Major Ireland, the S-1, become the man responsible for billeting of troops, repair of municipal installations and general security of the city. From our CP stemmed directives for night patrols, local security, and clean-up details. Major Ireland organized the able-bodied men of the town into labor groups and every morning like clockwork they rode or marched off, pick and shovel in hand — to repair roads, secure adequate drainage, and generally improve the physical appearance of the town. As “straw bosses“ for this noble experiment Major Ireland utilized the linguistic talents of Harry Krieger, Irv Bell, Mal Cornish, Johnny Julius and Kurt Knauff — who acted as foremen, timekeepers, inspectors and clockers for the public works projects. The S-1 section, ably staffed by Charlie Phelps and Angelo Cortozzo, besides performing their regular administrative duties, acted as a clearing house for military billets and had an accurate canvass of space available when some units vacated the town and others moved in. At just about this stage, the Division program of passes and furloughs to Paris, Riviera, the United Kingdom, Brussels, Nancy and various rest centers was inaugurated. It was the function of the S-1 section also to allot quotas to the various artillery units and notify the fortunate individuals of the details involved. In those days, a man returning from pass was quite the envy of the entire battery, as they crowded about the fortunate Joe who nonchalantly related to the muddy troops, his exploits on the Champs Elysees, Casino de Paris, or at a London Music Hall.

The S-4 section under Captain (then Lt.) Nevin Smiley's direction, whose details were handled by Bill Cochrane, provided the men with most welcome entertainment. The S-4's primary combat function of supply and ammunition being temporarily eased, the main emphasis was now placed upon movies, USO shows and entertainment as the men really relaxed for the first time since Sarrebourg. An improvised theatre was set up next to the CP in a large hall and the men again laughed and applauded as the klieg lights shone on dancing girls, comedians and sultry blues singers whose swing through the French “foxhole circuit“ gave the boys a touch of home.

Religious devotions were an important feature of our stay at Montbronn, as the quasi-permanence of our station enabled us to hold regular services. The Protestant and Catholic lads worshipped in rooms above the CP and the men of Jewish faith held services in the Gasthaus dining room. The bareness of the surroundings did not dampen the heart-felt sentiments of the reverent soldiers who with the aid of informal prayers, portable organ, and the comforting words of the Chaplain, meditated on the destruction and chaos taking place about them.

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#### *Ox Cart in Sandhausen*

Meanwhile, in Montbronn it was evident that there was "still a war on" as the Krauts seemed to have gotten the coordinates of our movie-house; some shells came a bit too close for comfort and the next morning Van Dyke and Kemper found one of their prize latrines splattered with shrapnel. During that night a couple of 88's also seemed to have it in for the metro and supply shacks, but fortunately the shells landed harmlessly and the battery, thanks to the grace of God and the miscalculations of the Kraut gunners-kept its slate clean of casualties. On our side of the fence, while at the Winter line, we forced the Krauts down in their holes as Lt. Col. Feigin and the assisant S-3's directed white phosphorous, "Pozit", and high explosive shells toward the uncomfortable "Kamerads" of the 17th SS Panzer Division. Defensive preparations and harrassing "shoots" were leveled nightly against the towns

of Reyersviller, Hottviller, the Citadel, Camp, and College de Bitche — all designed to neutralize these installations in readiness for our doughboy “jumpoff” against them which we knew would soon be forthcoming.

On March 15, 1945, the Division launched a history-shattering operation, which ended its three-months non-offensive stand. The Centurymen jumped off with the Seventh Army in a splendid maneuver synchronized with Patton’s 3rd Army drive coming down from the north; this set up the “powerhouse play” which later trapped the Germans in the pocket formed by the juncture of the Rhine, Saar and Moselle Rivers. The 100th now methodically went to work on the business it had left unfinished in December — the taking of the Maginot Line fortress city of Bitche. In a three-regiment operation, the surprise move was rapid and complete. The 397th steamed ahead to capture the high ground north of the Fortress and grabbed Schorbach by noon. The 399th, at the same time, attacked Reyersviller Ridge to the southwest. The frontal assault was made by the 398th which sneaked forward to seize Freudenberg Farms, Fort Freudenberg, and Fort Schiesseck on the high ground NE of Bitche. The Engineers had done their demolition well prior to our withdrawal in December, and only small resistance was met at the blasted cement pill-boxes of Fort Schiesseck. Two days were sufficient to complete the engulfing attack, as Fort Otterbiel was taken, the 398th’s leading elements marched into the city, and other elements of 398th and 399th moved east to take Camp de Bitche. With the entry of these troops into Bitche, some 200 years of military defensive history was shattered — marking the first time that the 17th Century bastion built by King Louis XIV had been successfully stormed!

Close behind the conquering doughs came Headquarters Battery, Div Arty as we occupied Bitche on March 17th and viewed the highly vaunted defenses of the Maginot Line and the formidable Citadel which overlooked the city. On March 21st, we passed to XXI Corps reserve, while anticipating the impending drive into Germany. The next day, after a final check of the vehicles, including Sandy’s gas-carrying “Weasel”, the throttle was pulled back and the battery rolled ahead as we began the march to the Rhine. Whipping over the rough Hardt Mountains, the 60-mile lightning drive took us thru the Siegfried line, past the ruins of Zweibrucken, which had been nicely flattened by the “bird boys” and into Thalischweiler, where we spent our first night on German soil. It was here that Harry Arnold tramped in with his dejected-looking lot of Kraut prisoners. The rat-race pressed on the next



*Capt. Zimmerman*

- day as we finally came to a halt in Meckenheim, a few miles west of the Rhine and Ludwigshaven, where the Division junctured with elements of the Third Army.

Now in Meckenheim for a few days, we were in Corps Reserve, "waiting our turn" to cross the Rhine. By this time, the officers' mustaches were getting a bit cumbersome (for they vowed not to shave them until the Rhine was in back of us) and Captains Zimmermann and Shearon looked quite undressed when the "handlebars" finally disappeared. To establish and maintain communications across the Rhine the 100th Division Signal Company had laid four wire circuits from the Division switching central to the west bank of the Rhine at Ludwigshaven, then across the pontoon bridge and into Mannheim, where a forward switching central fed trunk lines to the assembly area. A traffic control post was located at Mutterstadt to control troop movements over the bridge. Telephones at both approaches to the bridge enabled the control officer to dispatch units to the marshalling areas and to pass convoys across the bridge.

The battery still sweated out the crossing in Meckenheim while other units received priority over the Rhine pontoon bridge which substituted for the structure the Nazis had demolished in their retreat. While waiting for our

alert, we had the pleasure of seeing charming Marlene Dietrich in a lively USO show at Neustadt and also witnessed Bobby Breen's GI Jeep show in Meckenheim. The Division administration forces of the rear echelon had finally rejoined the main body of troops — having shuttled men and equipment more than 100 miles from Sarrebourg, France to Neustadt, Germany. Also at Meckenheim, captured German military equipment proved very practical as most sections begot Kraut trailers and Bill Hahn became the proud driver of a streamlined Nazi command car which was used by the Operations Section. OD paint and white stars replaced the swastikas and German coloring, as the Cavallo-Luckach S-2 trailer became the model carry-all. After resting a bit, and enjoying a taste of some champagne which Hank Van Dyke had "liberated" as a representative of "General Patch's 7th Army" (or so he told the factory owner) — we were ready for the crossing alert. By March 30th, preparations were completed and the following day we left Meckenheim - - - traversed the pontoon bridge - - - looked the Rhine over ("just like any other river") — and set up our new CP installation at Friedrichsfeld. Here a plentifully-stocked wine cellar was discovered, ironically enough under the Chaplain's temporary residence, and the men fortified themselves for future exigencies. In this town we were joined by Lt. Lorente, French Liaison Officer, attached to us from the 1st French Army; his retinue included radio operators and

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*Crossing the Rhine at Mannheim*

*1st/Sgt. Bell, 1st/Lt. Wilson, 1st/Lt. Heck*

a faithful French Moroccan orderly, Ali, who looked fiercely proud in his first pair of combat boots!

East of the Rhine, Division troops had met but slight resistance, so we rolled on accordingly with one-night stands at Sandhausen and Waibstadt. As the Centurymen pushed towards Heilbronn, the doughboys had a treat, riding aboard tanks, trucks, and captured vehicles heading for the important Neckar river city. On April 4th, the battery moved to Bonfeld, advantageously situated for artillery control since a stout battle was expected for industrial Heilbronn, outer gateway to the German national redoubt area. The 100th doughs knew it would be a tough slugfest — but hardly figured on the fiendish defense the Germans presented in their last ditch stand before the vaunted redoubt of Southern Germany. For nine deadly days, Centurymen faced an enemy braced for defense, who fought with perfect observation from ridges overlooking the city from the east. Our doughs in order to reach their objective, had to cross the 100-yard wide Neckar River which the Kraut artillery had zeroed in perfectly from their advantageous positions. Correspondents were unanimous in naming it the “toughest fighting on the Seventh Army front” — “another Cassino” — and Drew Middleton in the New York Times reported that “- - heavy fighting continues in Heilbronn where the 100th

*Lt. Col. Cardell*

Division is fighting from house to house and almost from room to room". Slowly and determinedly, the doughboys slugged their way across. One battalion crossed just north of the city limits in the early morning of April 4th; they clung to their bridgehead despite a tormenting hail of enemy automatic weapons fire. Two more battalions joined the bridgehead with still another establishing a second force in the center of the city.

Meanwhile, seven miles above, two other battalions had swung across the river and fought their way southward to a junction with other Century forces. The pitched battle developed in intensity on all fronts, and on the fourth day of the assault, the engineers, screened by columns of smoke laid from puffing generators — completed erection of a bridge to the center of the explosive inferno. Over this temporary structure, 13 tanks and 9 TD's, plus the remainder of the 1st Battalion, 399th Infantry, crossed to join the locked struggle. German nebelwerfers and roving 88's soon located the bridge site, pounding it mercilessly, and inside of seven hours, enemy artillery had knocked it into the river. The Century's 325th Engineers then had to resume moving supplies and wounded back and forth on assault boats and ferries.

From the relatively secure battery CP in Bonfeld we saw and heard the battle for Heilbronn. It was as if we were listening to a prizefight on the radio

— we visualized the action, while the doughfeet “up there” were absorbing the punches and jabbing back with all they had. Four times the German 88’s knocked out our bridges and five times the 325th Engineers put them up! By April 10th, northern and southern bridgeheads at Heilbronn were joined, and reinforcements poured across in strength. Two days later the city itself was clear and the heights commanding it to the east and south were secured. The taking of Heilbronn meant that the way was open for a drive south along the Neckar towards Stuttgart.

Once again, the battery sped thru the fast-shrinking Reich, stopping at Frankenbach, Weinsberg, Reisach, Sulzbach, and Hertmannsweiler, in turn. By now the last round of the 180,000 pooped out by the 100th Division Artillery in combat had been fired. The thoroughly seasoned Century Division, acting as right flank of the VI Corps - - - in a move closely coordinated with the French, placed a giant pincer around the huge German industrial city of Stuttgart. This tactical move led to the capture of the prize city almost without a fight.

That action proved to be the Division’s final combat service in the European Theatre of Operations. On April 23, the battery left Hertmannsweiler for Bad Cannstatt, just across the Neckar from Stuttgart, once the proud metropolis of Schwabian Germany. The 24th of April marked the day that we were committed to Seventh Army Reserve as armored units streaked to the Danube — into Austria and formed a linkup with the Russians. Meanwhile, the highly vaunted redoubt area of Southern Germany was completely encircled and the last-ditch defense attributed to the Nazi fanatics never materialized. The month of April heralded the impending terminus of the European war, but it was tragic to the extent that within those thirty days, the G.I., lost two of his greatest friends and champions — Franklin D. Roosevelt and Ernie Pyle!

Stuttgart, once a metropolis of 400,000, famous for its parks, floral beauty and impressive buildings of classic design, was now reduced to rubble as a result of the mad decisions of the Fuehrer; gutted buildings and razed walls whose destruction was initiated as far back as 1942 by RAF round-the-clock bombings, stood as mute testimony to the folly that is “der krieg”.

Still in 7th Army reserve, we remained a few days in Stuttgart, billeted in a palatial, residential section on one of the numerous heights surrounding the key city. The pressure was off and nervous tension was now relieved by

rest. Here we awaited news of the final victory, which we felt would soon be forthcoming. We considered events of the past few weeks — which had constituted the final chase and capture of most of the “supermen“. When billets were needed hurriedly as we moved from town to town, Major Ireland was always up ahead, doing the spadework and temporarily evicting the civilians with his effective “raus, machen schnell — in dreisik minuten“. Following our committal to Army reserve, various road patrols were organized for purposes of local security. Small parties of officers and men, well armed, went about the countryside, checking papers of suspicious characters and gathering up contraband such as guns, knives, pistols, and cameras. These were usually turned over to the Burgermeister for safekeeping although it was rumored that a few cameras found their way into the hands of Allied soldiers!

Uhingen was the town we claimed next for a temporary stay; it was here that General Murphy's new executive officer became Lt. Col. Robert L. Cardell, formerly in action with the 5th Army in Italy. It was during our stop in Uhingen, still in 7th Army reserve, that the unconditional surrender of Germany brought victory in Europe. Thus on May 8, 1945, the Division officially celebrated V-E Day with appropriate ceremonies held by all units. The battery took part in a modified parade, heard messages of congratulation from high-ranking officers and we bowed our heads in reverence for fallen comrades-in-arms as Chaplain Colonel Malumphey spoke a prayer for them. Miraculously, our battery had not suffered a single fatality during combat and we owed much to divine providence.

Schwabisch Gmund was destined to be our next home and on May 10, 1945, we moved into this pretty hospital town, which was virtually untouched by the war. Our physical setup here was about the most comfortable we had yet experienced; the “Cafe Menrad“ housed the PX, recreation rooms and an ice-cream freezer which churned constantly. Pete installed the “chow“ in a corner gasthaus which provided ample dining space. After every meal it was not uncommon to see Germans of all ages, waiting with tin buckets to scrape our plates and empty our coffee cups; this was a manifestation of the food problem in Germany and the herculean task confronting AMG whose job it was to maintain law and order and supply the basic necessities of life.

Now, along with training duties, we launched upon our occupational mission within the boundaries of the 100th Division Artillery, and as such, maintained the curfew, guarded military targets, gas dumps, AMG billets,

ammo yards and other installations. The displaced persons camp also warranted supervisory guards, and security in general was the keynote of our mission as we sent out periodic road patrols ("eight to one-zero, eight to one-zero, how do you hear me, over") to reconnoiter the surrounding countryside.

At Gmund, we first learned the meaning of the word "redeployment" as our ranks were depleted by the loss of high-point men to Divisions alerted for shipment states-side. In return, we received low and medium-pointers

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#### *Review at Gmund*

from outfits like the 63rd Infantry Division. From the "Blood and Fire" outfit came Don Minogue, Art Zabielski, George Murray, Fred Miller, Herm Faller, the Gustafson boys, Lloyd Moose, Teddy Smith, Freddy Presseisen, Al Childress, Les Gadbois, Paul Garatva, Johnny McCoy, and Norm Walton. New men are not immediately "accepted" in an outfit and it takes a while before friendships form and understandings develop. These men readily made the transition and soon they were well-known and respected for their contributions to the battery's efficiency. The "old gang" started to disintegrate as first the "old Army" men left — Bert Horton, Bill Spicer, George Robison, and Jim Rouss; then the next group to go included men over the age requirement and those with physical deficiencies — Pete Pazinko, Ralph Bochino,

Frank Young, Jesse Zeigler, George Reid, Moe Repass, Leon Sandoval, Earl Bishop, Reynold Burrington, Petrus Dierikx, and "Pappy" Haile. Others who left us at this time included Don Stewart due to illness, Jim Gately, a much-deserved transfer to the states — Bert Lang to AMG work — Ross McGrotha to another outfit and Chet Fleming who left to participate in the I & E program as an instructor at the Paris headquarters. Phil Searle joined the 925th FA Bn, jumping a few ranks from Pfc. to 2nd Lt., when his abilities as a surveyor and mathematician were finally recognized. Previously Tommy Farlow had also been the recipient of a battlefield appointment and after service with the 375th FA Bn, he was destined to later return to us. We congratulated Chang, who had become naturalized and changed his name to Carlos Nunez. A welcome addition to the Battery officers was 1st Lt. Harry H. ("By") Heck who joined us from the 63rd Division. Also transferred to us at this time was 2nd Lt. David Hatch, who became athletic and motor officer.

In Schwabisch Gmund, the silver city, the battery found welcome relaxation after the dreary months of combat and along with guard at the DP camp and training duties, we managed to find time for enjoyable recreational activities. A successful dancing party with DP girls was held at the attractive swimming pool in Heubach. Numerous USO shows and concerts came our way and in the athletic department, softball was emphasized as we engaged Division teams in Geislingen or on our home field at the AOP in Mutlangen. The local frauleins proved companionable as the fraternization rulings became clarified, and certain members of the battery became fluent in the German language even before the I & E classes were inaugurated!

When Bill Spicer went back to the states, Irv Bell took over the duties of 1st Sgt. and Stig Meden relieved the latter as Survey sergeant. The medics also had new replacements at this time, namely Ed Thibault, Roy Ladwig and Frank Magyar. The first officer from Headquarters to be redeployed was Lt. Col. Feigin who went to the 63rd Division, as Major Burnside E. Huffman, Jr. took over the reins in the S-3 position.

Time off from unusually heavy guard duty at Gmund found the men enjoying "coffee and" at the pleasant Red Cross Club or taking a swim and warm bath at the Stadt Pool. As rumors of shipping became prevalent, "home" was the main topic of conversation, more than ever, and civilian aspirations, plans and ideas were aired. Men kidded each other with such expressions as "you found a home in the Army", "30-year man", "the Army



gave you your first pair of shoes“, or “you get three squares a day and a flop for no“, “can’t beat this healthy outdoor life“! All these jibes were merely travesties on actual Army inconveniences and only a soldier who is terribly homesick himself, joshes another soldier with the “you found a home“ line — for he’s trying to kid himself into feeling better.

Guard at the DP camp outside of Gmund gave one an insight and understanding of the suffering and humiliation undergone by millions of displaced persons; they had been “requisitioned from every corner of Europe like cattle,

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#### *Day room in Schwabisch Gmund*

as salve labor to accelerate the German war effort. Now, gaunt and dejected, dressed in tattered rags they represented all ages and were a heterogeneous melting pot of nationalities. Once again they began to smile and hold their heads high; slowly as transportation became available they were repatriated to their homelands. It was ironical for those DP’s who were still waiting behind the camp walls, to see German soldiers, recently discharged, going homeward-while they, the nationals who had “won“ the war, had relatively little freedom as an individual! Just one of the strange anomalies of war which sometimes seem to favor the vanquished over the victor!

The battery mascot of the canine species, dubbed “Francis Zero“, lent some excitement to our Gmund stay when she “dropped“ four puppies one

fine day, allowing an equitable distribution of one per battalion! At various times, Major King, Captain Smith (who midwived the blessed event) and S/Sgt. Cochrane, God-fathered the pups. "Fraser Zero", "Frog Zero", "Fragment Zero", and "Fringe Zero" provided the boys with many a chuckle over their cute antics as they cavorted through the CP corridors and were subsequently "shipped out" to the four Battalions as new recruits in K-9 training!

On July 7, 1945, the Div Arty prepared to take over the sector SW of Stuttgart formerly occupied by the First French Army, which had shifted

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*Capt. Smith*

westward. Thus from Gmund we came to Boblingen and the Panzer Kasserne — the former training grounds for the 7th Panzer Regiment of Rommel's "Afrika Korps". Then began a series of housekeeping duties as the bombed Kasserne area and debris-laden buildings were cleaned up for our entry. Crews of German PW's, civilian laborers, and soldiers worked several days to shape the installations into some semblance of order and comfort. The various sections were allotted rooms, and the walls were scrubbed clean of Nazi military murals, which commemorated 1914-18 victories, and military "pep talks" for the Wehrmacht, quoted from speeches by Generals Von Moltke, Ludendorf, and Mackensen.

After the battery became settled in its new home and occupational duties and training were resumed, the need was felt for a spot where the men could

relax in a social atmosphere after hours. Thus, the "Sweat-Out-Saloon" was established under the aegis of Henry Van Dyke, Stig Meden, and Ted Vinick; the bar, club-rooms, and dance floor became a favorite rendezvous after nightly movies and on Saturday evenings when the young ladies from the Polish Red Cross Nurses Home in Datzingen were our guests.

Boblingen, a small community, primarily agricultural, had little to offer from the entertainment standpoint outside of a few gasthauses; so, for diversion from the monotony of garrison life, the men drove into Stutt-

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*"Nazis at Bonfeld"*

*Rear: 1st/Sgt. Bell, Pfc. Eliscu, T/4 Haile, T/5 Smith — Front: T/5 Anderson,  
T/5 Maietta, Cpl. Reid, Pfc. Kissinger*

gart, 15 miles away. There in the Stadt Opera House, Division SSO presented musical extravaganzas, USO shows, movies, concerts and the like. A Red Cross doughnut canteen was also established and this proved to be a haven for the "coffee and" boys.

Stuttgart itself had the appearance of a ghost town — so extensive was the destruction undergone by its physical plant. Once one of the stateliest of old German cities with classical architecture, green parks and floral beauty — Stuttgart was now a shocking holocaust of ruin, one of the most badly battered metropoli in Germany. Where once had stood statues, railroad stations, libraries, theaters and apartment houses — now were rock-piles — razed walls-

debris resulting from devastating bombardment. Old women with their wagons, could be seen every day searching among the rubble, salvaging practical things. The populace now had become so accustomed to the wreckage that it was taken as a matter of fact and hardly an eye was raised anymore to meditate on the terrible destruction. Slowly, workers cleaned up the rubble, or rather pushed the piles to one side for it would take generations to rectify the damage effected. Here was a people who hadn't realized the magnitude of their wonderful God-given gifts — a picturesque land and beautiful progressive cities; so they chose to wage lustful war, destroying others in order to augment their own power and possessions. And now, they have their "new" Stuttgart, which ought to make somebody think twice before he advocates another war for aggrandizement!

During July and August the Century Stadium in Bad Canstatt was utilized for colorful baseball games between the 100th and rival Divisions. Many of the battery journeyed out to see our boys, Jeff Oliver and Jim Shea, aid the Century cause with their fielding and batting prowess. Following the portentous news of the Atomic Bomb and Russia's entry into the war, the quiet, reserved thrill of V-J day came. For us it meant cessation of training for the war with Japan, and category II in the redeployment schedule lost the tension surrounding the word "Pacific". Instead of small arms training and dismounted drill, the much heralded I & E program came into its own, and under the diligent aegis of Capt. Davis Piper, the "Dean of Div Arty University", unit command schools were established at the battalion level; after surveys of subject preferences were made, records were combed for instructors, both officer and enlisted. Textbooks were secured and soon classes ranging from livestock production to management of a small business were instituted. The battery was incorporated into the 374th FA Bn unit school and men learned practical techniques and absorbed knowledge along academic, agricultural, and technical lines. Other men received the opportunity of studying at famous civilian institutions both in England and on the continent. Until redeployment affected it, enthusiasm ran high in the I & E program; enrollments naturally were curtailed due to the effect transfers had, both on instructor and student personnel. However, for the men in the battery who were able to continue to participate in the program, it had played a vital and practical role in their sojourn here — and from that standpoint the I & E had accomplished its mission.

Transfers affected the battery personnel in ever-increasing numbers during the summer of 1945. A group went out after we reached Boblingen, including Spence, Piersall, Haney, and Nelson Eliscu. Then as the point system began to work its way down from the "charmed circle" of 85, and age became a further consideration, we bade farewell to Joe Mirabel, Nick Giffi, Eddie Braud, Al York, Sid Bromfield, Harry Arnold, Ed Engel, George Kerstetter and Clayton Miller. Officer personnel were no exception as we said goodbye to Majors Feichtner, Outland, Murphy, and Mr. Sager. The Division Artillery S-3 became Lt. Col. Charles A. Symroski when Major Huffman left for the states. Perhaps the best friend we lost was our General, John B.

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*Cpl. Arnold, T/5 Sepe and Deer*

Murphy, who had so keenly guided us through the trying days of combat with his intelligent and forceful leadership. Now, transferred to a War Department Personnel Center in the United States, he was succeeded by Brigadier General Theodore E. Buechler, the man who had supervised our early training in the States and prepared us for combat efficiency.

During an earlier search and security check, we had an opportunity while on 48-hour check-point duty, to fully observe the mannerisms and character of the German people. For the most part, docile and cooperative, they went along with the AMG and CIC programs of de-Nazification, destined

to enable them to pull up their own bootstraps and fashion out of Germany, a state the world could someday respect and admire. One could not help but feel that it was within their power as we witnessed the hard-working German farmer, the industrial and administrative progress made in cities, and small boys who formerly goosestepped in the Hitler Jugend, now playing American football and enjoying it. These were the thoughts of an American soldier at his guard post as he witnessed people scurrying to their houses before curfew — farm laborers plodding homeward from the fields, pulling carts loaded

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*"Sweating it out"*

*M/Sgt. Braud, S/Sgt. Mirabel, S/Sgt. Bromfield, T/5 York*

down with faggots for a fire — a charcoal-burning vehicle carefully hugging the center of the road — or the face of a pretty girl at an upstairs window.

Redeployment was on everyone's mind and tongue as the point system was slowly pared down. We had one false alarm with the rescission of a Division "Alert" order for September sailing; then the 70-pointers shipped out — "old standbys" like Van Dyke, Brown, Ehalt, Gaines, Sepe, Muehlberger, Parenti — and you could really see the outfit losing its original composition as replacements came into the battery. Meanwhile we waited, sweating out "hot oil" about Division movement or further lowering of the point system. While we waited, we took I & E tours to Southern Germany and Austria

— passes to the Riviera, United Kingdom, Paris and Switzerland. Entertainment helped pass the time as did social functions at our “Sweat-Out Saloon”. The SSO had arranged a fine entertainment program for us and through them, our S-4 section brought us Heifitz, Dietrich, Rooney, Breen, Hope, Fields, Bergmann, Adler, Tilton, Colonna, and Benny — not to mention previous efforts along the lines of liquor, ammunition, athletic equipment, mine detectors, and track meets!

We felt “it won’t be long now” as we jumped into category IV during October in the middle of football season. The stadium at Bad Canstatt was the scene of some thrilling pigskin contests played by the strong Century eleven. These games were colored with the “old college try” as they featured cheerleaders, a between-the-halves band, and a pretty Red Cross girl who cavorted in a drum-majorette’s costume. Versatile Jimmy Shea, who joined the Division eleven late in the season, proved to be a sparkplug in the blocking back position — and our contributions to the Division Artillery Football Club were hapless John McCoy (with 7 points on V-E day), big Fred Press-eisen, a plunging fullback, and Eddie Norton, rangy pass-snaring end.

As we go to press, everyone has just about abandoned the idea of reaching home by Christmas — and now the 64 dollar question is how long will it be after that date and what point bracket will determine the personnel to sail home with the 100th Division contingent.

Now, all the aforementioned incidents are behind us — “Buf” is married to Barbara — and we have just said “au revoir” to Cappy, Carl Tull, Al Fry, Tomy Dan, and Dick Hegger until we see them again at a battery reunion in the States. Drastic section shakeups show “Zock” as Operations Sgt., Mervin Anderson heading Radio, Jeff Oliver leading the wire boys, and Paul Cavallo dispatcher at the motor park. In what appeared to be the final shakeup, a large shipment of low-pointers from the 36th (“Texas”) Division have joined the Battery to ship home with the 100th, while we low-pointers prepare to bid the Battery “Bon voyage” as we sweat out the boat-ride for a few more months.

At this stage, the Div Artymen are looking forward to “going overseas” — this time the lady with the torch saying “welcome back, fellows” instead of “so long, boys”. The homesick, tired men of “Headquarters and the Battery” have done the job they set out to do; in every section they had the guts and humaneness to kid around and make the most of Army situations, for

they were truly "civilian soldiers", in the American tradition. As "Francis" closes station and the hour reaches 2400 on the timetable of our Army service, Div Arty can well be proud of her boys who deserved to be called American Artillerymen and truly had —

— — — "Success In Battle". — — —

This history of Headquarters and Headquarters Battery 100th Division Artillery was written by Sgt. Richard T. Vinick under the supervision of Capt. Joseph W. Smith.

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1. *Staphylococcus aureus* (ATCC 12228) was grown in tryptic soy broth (TSB) (Difco, Franklin Lakes, NJ, USA) at 37 °C for 24 h. The cells were washed with phosphate buffered saline (PBS) (pH 7.4) and resuspended in PBS. The cell suspension was adjusted to a concentration of  $1 \times 10^8$  CFU/mL.

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